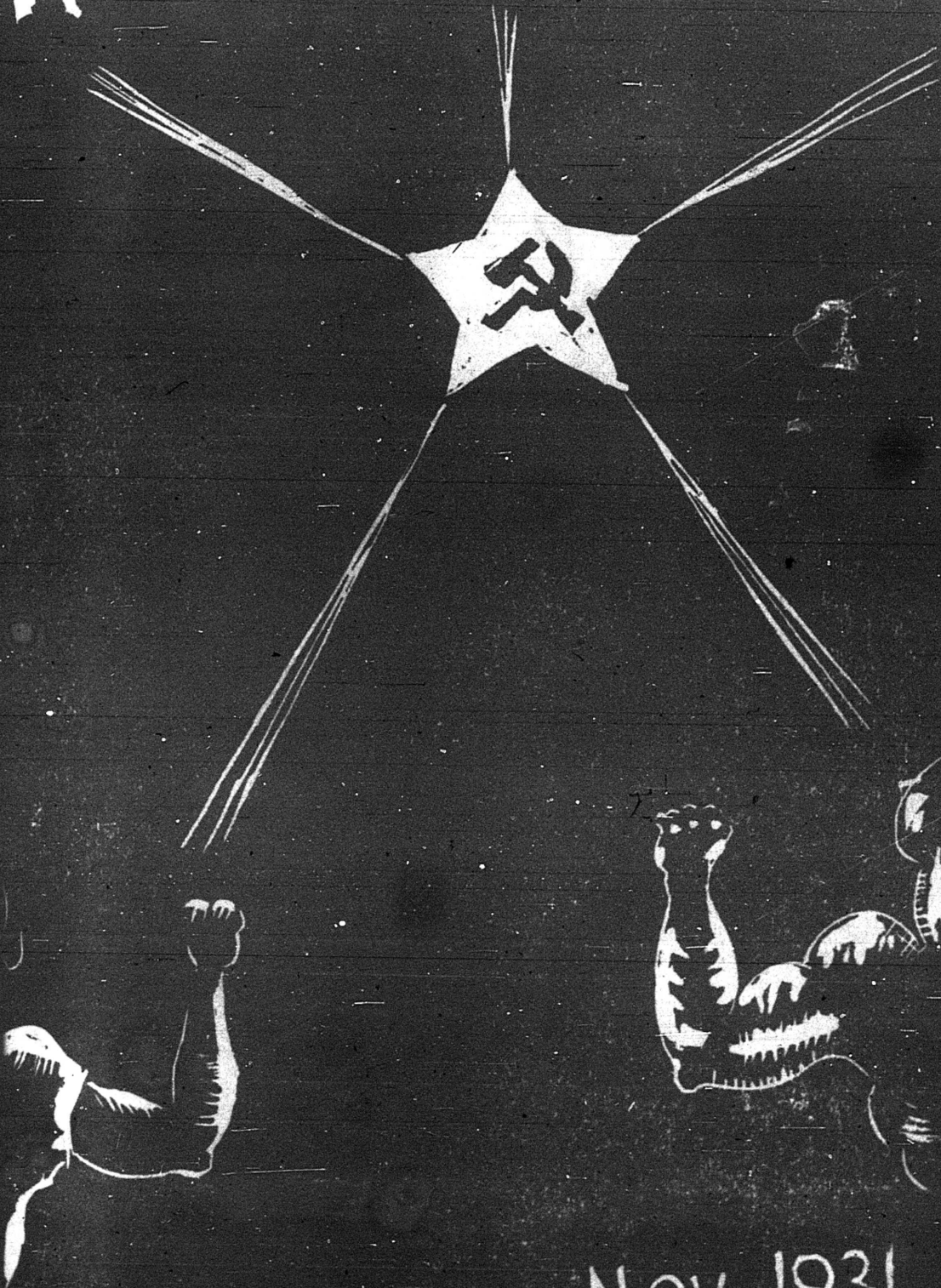


WORKER'S

THEATRE



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THEATRE
IS
A
WEAPON

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NOTICE: NEW ADDRESS OF "WORKERS THEATRE"

Do not read this Magazine

before you read this

A mimeographed Magazine

is better than no magazine at all. To get material for performances every month; to get hints for artistic, political, and organizational improvement of your own group, to get news on the activities of the other groups in this country and in other countries, - in a mimeographed form, that is better than not to get any plays at all, than to be without steady contact with the work of our comrade-groups.

But there is a limit

for the efficiency of a mimeographed Magazine. A mimeographed Magazine may satisfy the needs of those who are active in the Workers Theatre Movement, but it reaches only a small portion of all masses which we must interest and activise for our "Theatre is a Weapon" movement. The bringing out of a mimeographed Magazine requires too much technical work and time which could be used for other activities. The technical limitations of the mimeographing method excludes many valuable features as for instance illustrations. Therefore:

"WORKERS THEATRE" must be printed

when it shall not only keep pace with but also promote the growing Workers Theatre Movement in the U.S.

"WORKERS THEATRE" can be printed

as soon as we have the relatively small means to secure the first three printed issues. As all the members of the editorial board volunteer as unpaid workers, we need only \$ 300.- This sum can be raised: by donations, by a substantial increase of subscriptions, by an increase of bundle orders, by the income of special affairs arranged by Theatre Groups and other organizations.

It can be done soon

and easily when every comrade and every group do their best for a better magazine; that is for a better help to their own work.

START WORK TO-DAY!

"WORKERS THEATRE" MUST BE PRINTED!

THE NEGRO ON BROADWAY

by H. Elion-- W. L. T.

If the negro worker feels a little discouraged with the injustice of the capitalist system that imposes its slave conditions upon him even worse than upon the white workers, with discrimination against him on the job if he has one, in the restaurant, hotel, apartment house, movie, theatre and any other bourgeois controlled institution he turns to, that grows with the general worsening of the economic status of the working class, and should he look somewhere for consolation and turn to Broadway "to take in a show" he will find even there a reminder. Suppose he succeeds in getting a seat somewhere in the balcony of "George White's Scandals", providing he can pay the price. Here's the explanation he'll get in the song "That's Why Darkies Were Born":

Brothers! Sisters! What must be, must be!
 Though the balance is wrong,
 Still your faith must be strong,
 Accept your destiny,
 Brothers, listen to me:
 Someone had to pick the cotton,
 Someone had to plant the corn,
 Someone had to slave and be able to sing,
 That's why darkies were born.

The bourgeoisie is very kindhearted. It readily supplies the answer to its weary slaves. It spends millions of dollars to supply the ideological explanation to the exploited and enslaved. "Accept your destiny" is the advice they give to the exploited and oppressed negro. Someone has to do the dirty work so that the rich may enjoy the product of his labor.

It would be a mistake to assume that Broadway occupies its time mainly with negro problems. The white worker as well as the negro is fed on such songs and plays as will keep him content with his miserable conditions.

This is the kind of stuff all workers are fed in the theatres, burlesques and movies. The movies and theatres are now conducting a special campaign for relief. Every possible means will be utilized to show the working class during these trying times that capitalism does its utmost to provide food and clothing for the needy. The bourgeoisie know how to utilize its art against the interests of the working class.

The workers must, therefore, learn how to utilize art as its weapon in the class struggle. The workers' theatre is gaining in influence thruout the country. However, there is one

main shortcoming in our organizational work. We have so far failed to draw in a sufficient number of negro workers into our theatre groups.

The negro workers who are oppressed and exploited by the bourgeoisie even more than the whites must not be left to Broadway for the advice to accept his destiny. Only the workers' theatre can show the negro the real reason for his exploitation and discrimination. It is up to every workers' theatre group to make every possible effort to draw in negro workers into this activity so that the workers' theatre may serve the interests of the negro as well as white workers.

EXTRACTS FROM MINUTES OF FIRST ENLARGED PLENUM OF THE
INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' THEATRICAL UNION
HELD IN MOSCOW, 25TH OF JUNE-2ND OF JULY, 1934

The Question of Cadres and Theoretical Education.

The growth of the workers' theatrical movement in the majority of countries and the more complicated problems with which it is confronted, raises at its full height the question of the theoretical preparation of experienced and Marxist-educated leaders. In the education of cadres we must start from the principle that the basis of methodical and artistic preparation is political preparation. Attaching great importance to the education of cadres directly in the process of work, the workers' theatrical organizations must take steps for the continuous and systematic theoretical preparation for which purpose it is necessary to organize episode courses and schools for the study of the fundamental problems of the tactics of the class war and also of the forms and methods of artistic agitation and propaganda. Besides this, it is necessary to practise the calling of consultations and conferences for instructional purposes and to work our individual problems connected with the workers' theatre.

Considering the impossibility of the organization of the systematic preparation of highly qualified forces for the workers' theatre in capitalist countries, the Enlarged Presidium of the I.W.T.U. instructs the Secretariat to secure through the appropriate institutions that among the students of the Institute of Red Professorships a few places should be held at the disposal of the workers' theatrical movement in capitalist countries. The same thing should be done in the theatrical high-schools and in the courses for producers.

From MOSCOW, U.S.S.R.
SEMPERANTE,
SEPT. 13, 1931.

Dear Comrades,

It is quite some time since we received your letter signed by Com. Ulmar. Do not think, however, that the tardiness of the reply was caused by our unwillingness to correspond with you. The fact of the matter is that we are very busy. The Semperante (Always Forward.ED.) Theatre is very popular and its performances are greatly in demand. Preparation for new productions also take up a great deal of our time.

Let us begin. This letter is being written to you by the founders of the theatre, A.V.Bykov and A.A.Levshin, who are still in charge of the artistic work of the Semperante.

As you understand, the main aim of the theatre of improvisation is the lifelike reflection of current life. Like all the theatres of improvisation that preceded us, Semperante is essentially a real revolutionary theatre, one reflecting the life and the ideology of the masses of the workers. We in Russia are living thru a great epoch of socialist construction, the building of a new life the like of which was never seen before. And we the children of this epoch, willy-nilly and irrevocably, must reflect it on the stage. The difference between an actor of the ordinary theatre and an actor-improvisator consists in the fact that the former conveys only those ideas, thoughts and words which are given him by the playwright who may be a socialist, a conservative reactionary or a capitalist theoretician. In the theatre of improvisation we come in contact with the real creation of the actor proper who creates both his thoughts and his words. And if one is filled with revolutionary ideology one cannot speak from the platform words or convey ideas foreign to that ideology. No matter what problem must be solved on the stage we will always approach it from the "class" angle.

In addition to the above, during a revolutionary upheaval, the sympathies of the masses are with just such peoples' theatres which castigating the elements inimical to their class, discuss from the platform only the nearest and most sensitive questions concerning the workers.

Our themes do not concern themselves with day-to-day items however as this would make the plays too short lived-- ringing today-- aged tomorrow. On that account our repertory is based on themes of large social import. "Socialist construction", "sorties of the class enemy", "our slackening or weakening fronts", these are some of the examples of themes we work on.

Having chosen the theme, we begin assembling the factual material. Newspaper articles, periodical talks with responsible workers on controlling publications, factory wall-newspapers-- in a word, anything in actual life that will illustrate our theme. And after this (this task is assigned to one individual, the scenario writer) the entire material is arranged for a definite subject. The scenario writer marks out the line of action, the intrigue, the interrelation between the characters, and divides the scenario into acts or episodes.

The next step is the general discussion of the scenario. The entire collective brings in corrections and suggestions. I wouldn't advise you to approach collective playwriting in any other manner; it is absolutely necessary for one individual singly to work out the skeleton of the play and only then to begin developing it collectively.

After that each actor begins individually to build the "image" of his character in line with the play. For perfect assimilation of the part the actor must not only know all the psychological characteristics of the character, he must also know his biography. Without these you will never be able to outline distinctly the character and characteristics of the hero you are playing. In this manner you can always say: his social environment is such and such; the roots, say, of his criminal tendencies lie in that or that; he is good because of such and such economic conditions, etc.

When the "images" are ready we acquaint them with each other in small skits, sometimes even unrelated to the subject of the scenario. Each actor must know what type of stage wife, brother, friend, enemy, he is going to have. We place ourselves in these studies into various relationships and situations, trying to carry these situations to psychologically logical conclusions.

With the completion of this work we may say that the rehearsals are completed. We are ready to perform-- but we will here tell you a secret. We do not yet feel ourselves perfect improvisators enough to be able to perform the play proper without a minimum of rehearsing, i.e. without a preliminary rehearsal before showing the play to the audience. And so we rehearse according to the scenario. Incidentally we have cut out from our vocabulary the word "rehearse" and replaced it with the word "work". For in order to play extemporaneously one must work hard, one must make a study of the technique of word-creation, one must undergo a prolonged period of training. The themes being also difficult and complicated, we introduce in the course of the rehearsals with the scenario writer, time and again, changes and corrections into the scenario proper.

Even when the play is at last shown to the audience, it is not yet in its final form. The play is continually reshaped, filtered, the unnecessary material is thrown out, necessary material is added. Current life and events also necessitate additions of daily corrections, amplifications and elimination of outdated elements. In this manner the text is continually renewed, the play and the actor live and with them the audience, feeling as it does how the play vibrates with life. The audience helps us also considerably in our work by carrying on with us a lively and extensive correspondence.

In reference to lighting equipment that you ask us about, unfortunately we have to do without them for a time, the apparatus costs too much, a great part of it has to be imported. Besides, for the past five years our theatre has not had a permanent playhouse, every performance is given in a different theatre. This has a bearing on the intensity of the light and the focal placing of the lights, necessitating several types of equipment, and this is beyond our means.

Music plays a great part in our performances. This music is not altogether realistic however. It merely colors, underlines the moods at certain moments.

These, comrades, are some of the basic things that we have wanted to write to you about. Now I hope we shall be able to establish a more active correspondence.

We beg you to do the following. First, assemble all the material about our "Semperante Theatre" that you can get and send it to us. Next, send us the most interesting plays reflecting the class struggle in America. For the present we shall be satisfied with these two requests. More when we hear from you.

Dear comrades, we all are following the same road, both as concerns the methods of work as well as the general problem of the liberation and unification of the toilers of the entire world.

With comradely greetings,
A.V. Bykov
A.A. Levshin

SONG IN THE CLASS STRUGGLE

by I. Feder

When yet in his primitive state man had already expressed his sorrows and joys in song. For singing is just as natural and essential for each one of us as sleeping or breathing. With the advent of industrial capitalism however, when large sections of the agrarian and urban population were thrown into factories and mines, and their standard of living reduced to the status of an industrial peon, the urge and desire for song was lost. And capitalism has given the toiler a substitute. Instead of the natural, healthy, joyous song that surged from the workers' soul, it gave him a mechanized, sexy, jazzy music, a music that deafens and deadens the senses, a music of sexual impotence, in short, of decay.

The bourgeois culture and morals are bankrupt. This much the more far-sighted bourgeois thinkers concede. They fall into moods of despair and bleak pessimism and portray for us the future in the darkest colors. We class conscious workers however, look upon the progress of history with different eyes. We apply the Marxist interpretation to history which teaches us that the fall of capitalism is inevitable, that the future belongs to us workers. Upon the more class conscious workers rests the great responsibility of coming to the toiling masses and propagating the idea of communism.

We workers should not bewail the decaying bourgeois culture. We must create our own proletarian culture. We must create workers' music, workers' songs. We must again revive singing, the joy of singing hopeful, buoyant songs en masse. We must organize proletarian choruses that should be trained to sing in unison and harmony, that should perform at all our affairs, stimulate the militant spirit of the masses, spread revolutionary song among them, so that the revolutionary proletarian song will encourage the workers in their fight against the capitalistic yoke, for their final liberation.

Music has a tremendous power. The bourgeoisie know how to utilize this power for its own interests. Its armies march and fight to the strains of music. We do not value enough the influence and potency of the emotional power that music possesses. Here in America this domain has been almost wholly neglected. We do not yet comprehend the importance and necessity of the organization of a net of workers' choruses to spread and popularize the revolutionary proletarian song among the great masses. It was the revolutionary song that helped to stimulate the revolutionary upsurge of the masses both in the French Commune and in the Russian revolution.

Our choruses must be pure workers' choruses. We must under

no circumstances permit them to become professional. Every worker can join a chorus. It is not necessary for him to possess a good voice. In time his voice will improve and he will find he can sing.

The text of our songs must be of a strictly revolutionary character and under no circumstances a sentimental, lyric outpouring. The music must harmonize well with the text. It must be a strong, joyous, emphatic music that should stimulate, inspire and enthuse the masses to fight. Only those music directors should be accepted who are psychologically and ideologically fit for it. In time the choruses will develop their own able leaders.

The workers' choruses will surely attract an element of workers that is as yet hard to reach. As they join our choruses we will reeducate them and so draw them into our movement where they will be able to make themselves useful in the various activities.

It is very essential that all the members of the various dramatic sections should join the choruses. This will enable them to develop their voices, improve their diction, and have a better idea of vocal expression, etc. This will be of great help to them in their dramatic activities. Not only will we create a proletarian theatre but a good one too. We have the material, we have the facilities. All that we need is will-- strong, steadfast will.

Comrades from all parts of the country write to "WORKERS THEATRE".
J. Hardy, Baltimore: "I have received your Oct. issue of W.T. and it's the first time I ever saw the magazine. I wish I had known of the existence of this magazine before".....

Y.C.L. Buffalo: sent subscription right after receiving sample copy of magazine.

Com. Newcomb of Dram group being organized at present in Tacoma:
".... Enclosed find money for which please send 5 "WORKERS THEATRE" at once. Please rush!....."

John Reed Dram Group, Philadelphia, new organized: Please enter our subscription for a period of one year to the "WORKERS THEATRE" and arrange to send a consignment of 20 copies each month....."

WHAT DID YOUR GROUP DO UP TO NOW?

SEND IN YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS
YOUR BUNDLE ORDERS

TO "WORKERS THEATRE", Distribution Dept
16 West 21st Street, New York City.

DON'T WAIT! - ORDER IMMEDIATELY!

PLAYS

"STEP ON IT."

----- by Tric .

Scene:

A factory room. On the walls, at equal intervals from left to right are signs that read "NO ADMISSION", "NO SMOKING", "NO TALKING", "NO RESTING", "NO LOITERING". Five workers are placed along the rear wall with their backs to the audience, standing in front of a long shelf or bench, and one after another, in rhythmic intervals, they beat upon pieces of tin that make clinking sounds. If there is a curtain the rhythmic clinking is heard before the curtain goes up. If there is no curtain, the clinking is heard without any other sound for two or three rounds. When the workers begin to talk they talk in a low voice that is scarcely audible for one round and then their voices grow louder. The workers will be designated by the numbers 1,2,3,4,5.

Characters: Boss; Green, Musta, Priest, TUUL, 5 Workers.

Enter Boss at left.

Boss: Step on it, step on it, step on it! Faster, faster. One, two, one two. That's the stuff. Step on it. (Exits at left)

1. Worker: I am sleepy.

2.: I am tired.

3.: I am sick.

4.: My feet hurt.

5.: My head hurts.

1.: The wages have been cut.

2.: The hours are longer.

3.: We must work faster.

4.: The fines are bigger.

5.: Lunch time is shorter.

1.: Wage cut 10 per cent.

2.: Sixty hours a week.

3.: Output doubled.

- 4.: 20 per cent more fines.
- 5.: Fifteen minutes for lunch.
- 1.: We work
- 2.: and work
- 3.: and work
- 4.: and work
- 5.: and work (etc. for three rounds)

Enter Boss: Talking again. Who's talking? (They all keep quiet) Nobody answers. Nobody will tell me. Everybody fined five cents for talking.

- 1. (Still in a low tone)
Our wages cut.

Boss: What's that?

- 2. Hours longer.

Boss: Did you say anything?

- 3. Speed-up.

Boss: (Touching No. 4. on the shoulder) Here you, stop work and tell me what's up here.

- 4. We have no time to stop
- 5. We work
- 1. and work
- 2. and work
- 3. and work
- 4. and work
- 5. and work (etc, while the boss is talking)

Boss: Read the sign. It says "NO TALKING". NO TALKING. NO TALKING.
(Shrieks together with the men) You must work and work and work and work. They're driving me crazy. (Touches No. 4 on the shoulder) Put down your tools. Get out of here. You're fired. (The men pay no attention but keep up their rhythmic chanting and clinking) Don't you hear me, my man. You're fired. What's that?

- 1. (In the same low monotonous tone)
We must strike.
- 2. Strike.
- 3. Strike.
- 4. Strike.
- 5. Strike (etc. while the Boss runs from one to the other and shrieks)

Boss: You must work and work and work and work. (The voices of the men grow louder until the Boss finds himself saying)
And strike!

Boss: Help, police, help, help.

(The men crowd around him, rythmically shouting Strike, Strike. The crowd him off near to the door at the right. The boss keeps shouting; Help, Help, until a new voice says: Help.)

New Voice: Help, help, I'm bringing help boys. I am your helper. Don't you know me? I'm Willima Green.

(The men stand back to the center of the stage and the speaker at theright is discovered to be a man with a worker's cap on his head and bearing a sign on his chest: BUY ME. I HAVE A UNION LABEL

Green: What's the matter boys? Ain't the boss treating you right?

1. Wages cut 10%.
2. Hours longer.
3. Output doubled.
4. 20% more fines.
5. Fifteen minutes lunch.

Green: I'll make a report.

1. We must eat.
2. We must rest.
3. We must live.

All five: We must strike.

Green: The union can't afford it. Get to work now. Step on it.

1. We are hungry.
2. We are tired.
3. We must strike.

All: We must strike.

(They approach him, shouting rythmically: Strike, Stri Strike)
(Same business as with Boss. A new voice is heard)

New voice: Help, help, I'm bringing help. Don't you know me? I am your brother.

(The men stand off to the center. The speaker at the right is discovered to be a man in a long black cloak with glasses and a hat. He speaks as the men stare at him.)

Of course I am your brother in a spiritual sense. All men are brothers. Even your Boss is a brother. You must remember that. You must not be hasty. I am not hasty. I am a student. I am a Marxist. And yet I am more than a Marxist. Why? Because I keep up with the latest revolutionary books. And I know the latest statistics. I know everything. And I help everybody. You want to strike. I like a good strong strike. My name is the Reverend Muste, and I' am here to be your leader. Everybody get in line and do what I do.

(The men form in a line with Muste at the head. They march around in circles and follow Muste's gesticulations. As Muste marches, he shouts STRIKE, rythmically, with each movement. All the movements are slow and staccato. He raises his hand, clenches his fist, brings his elbow below to his side, strikes his fist forward. Repeats with other hand. Manipulates the march so that the men are back at their benches. Picks up a hammer and strikes on a bit of tin, while the men, as if hypnotized, pick up their hammers and strike at their bits of tin, all the time mechanically repeating: STRIKE, STRIKE.

Muste: Step on it, step on it, step on it, Faster, faster. (But they all throw their hammers down)

All; No! We must strike!

Muste: But you've had your little strike. No disorder. Perfectly legal and the most exquisitely revolutionary gestures. What more do you want?

1. More wages.
2. Shorter hours.
3. No speed-up.
4. No fines.
5. An hour for lunch.

Muste: Now, now, if you studied as much as I have you would know business is bad. We are in an era of deflation, or is it inflation? It doesn't matter. Either way this is no time for a LONG strike. Of course I am a revolutionary, you understand, and I am only too glad to help. That is my motto. HELP. Help the workers. Help the capitalists. And show them how to help each other. Yes, that will solve the troubles of this troubled world. Help. What a sweet sound there is in that word. Help. Help.

All: We must strike! (They push him to the right. Same business as with Boss. Muste shouts: Help! Help! Help!
While the workers shout: STRIKE! STRIKE! a new voice is heard)

New Voice: Help, I' am bringing you help. And do not touch me. For do you not see I am a man of God, and my person is holy.
(The men stand back and a priest in a black cloak and a mask and a cassock is revealed).

Priest: Unruly men! Has not God said, "By the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat?" Why are you not at work?

1. Wages cut 10 per cent.
2. Hours longer.
3. Output doubled.
4. Fines bigger.
5. Fifteen minutes for lunch

All: We must strike

Priest: O vain men. Why do you bargain with God? Did Jesus bargain when he was nailed to the cross? Jesus was meek. Jesus was mild. He suffered for you. What are your sufferings compared to his? The nails in his hands. The nails in his feet. And the agony for three days and three nights.

1. I have worked years
2. and years
3. and years.
4. In this little hole
5. Day after day.
1. I worked
2. and worked
3. and worked
4. and worked
5. and worked.
1. But the wages are cut.
2. The hours are longer.
3. We must work faster.
4. The fines are bigger
5. Lunch time is shorter.

Priest: Fools, fools, fools, vain carnal fools. Know you not that life is short, that life after death is eternal?

2. Worker: The hours are long.

Priest: What will you say when you must spend centuries in hell? What will you say when you have nothing to eat? You fools. What will you say when you burn all day and burn all night and you can never rest? Have no thought to the sufferings on earth, Brothers. They are only what your bodies feel. But your bodies will rot and disappear. Your souls will remain forever. And if you endure your lot on earth you will be sure of eternal bliss in heaven. He that believeth in me shall have joy everlasting. Be happy that Christ died for you. Be of good cheer, for your deliverance will come, saith the Lord. Hallelujah, Hallelujah, and selah. Amen. That's a good boy. (One by one the men take up their hammers and strike slowly and rhythmically and then faster as the Priest talks faster) That's a good boy. (He quotes some psalm in rhythm with the blows of the hammers saying his words faster and faster in an apparent desire to speed up the work.) As the men work faster the Priest chants rhythmically: Step on it, step on it, step on it, faster, faster, faster!

Enter a man with a blouse on which is embroidered TUUL.

TUUL Organizer: Comrades your wages have been cut. Your hours are longer. You must not let the bosses grow fat on you any longer. You must strike.

1. Priest: Who art thou, satan? Know you not you are in a house of worship?

TUUL Org.: I know I am in a house of sacrifice but it will be a house of revolution. Comrades do not follow these false leaders. You can lead yourselves. Elect a strike committee. Keep firm on your mass picket lines. Strike against wage-cuts.

1. God will punish us.
2. Life is eternal after death.
3. We must obey the holy law.
4. By the sweat of thy brow.
5. Shalt thou eat.

TUUL Org.: Comrades, is he eating by the sweat of his brow, this priest? He is feeding on your sweat, comrades. He is feeding on your blood. He is not your friend, comrades. He tells you lies to make you work for him. He is your enemy, he is the enemy, the enemy of the working class. Look!
(The TUUL Org. tears off the mask from the Priests face and the cassock off his head, and Muste stands revealed.)

Muste: Help, help, I'm only here to help you. (The men leave their work and crowd around Muste. The TUUL Org. tears off Muste's dark glasses and his hat, and his cloak, and Green stands revealed.)

All the workers: It's William Green. We don't want him. Out with him.
(They crowd around him to rush him outside)

TUUL Org.: Wait a minute. Take off his cap and his sign. (Workers' Boss stands revealed.)

Boss: Now boys, now boys, get back to work. I'm the boss here.

All the workers: Why, it's the Boss.

1. We thought it was the Priest.
 2. We thought it was William Green.
 3. We thought it was Muste.
 4. And it's the boss.
 1. He still has clothes on.
 2. May be it's still a disguise.
 3. Maybe he's the devil.
 4. There is no devil. That's a priest's lie to frighten the workers.
 5. Let's take off more clothes and see.
 1. Take off his coat.
 2. Take off his vest.
 3. Take off his shoes.
 4. Take off his shirt.
 5. Take off his pants.
 1. He's disappeared.
 2. No here it is.
 3. It's a rat.
 4. Now it's a cockroach.
 5. Now it's a bedbug.
- All: STEP ON IT! STEP ON IT!

"Mr. Box, Mr. Fox and Mr. Nox"

by Will Lee adopted from the "New Russia's Primer".

Scene 1. Three workers with red megaphones. No 1 points North-East,
2 points North, 3 points North-West.

1st Worker: America
the highest industrialized country
with 120 million people,
40 million work for
10 million who possess all
the wealth.

2nd Worker: America
of sixty story buildings
endless miles of concrete highways
of huge steel bridges
millions of autos
tractors, aeroplanes
subway tunnels
built by 87% of the people
for 13% who possess all.

3rd Worker: America
where 40 million workers
who toil daily
to create all this
filling up the warehouses
with food and merchandise
suddenly

All: CRASH

1st Worker: Crises

2nd Worker: Speed up

3rd Worker: Long hours

1st Worker: Wage cuts

2nd Worker: Unemployment

3rd Worker: 12 million workers out of a job.

2nd Worker: 28 million workers on starvation wages.

1st Worker: Why?
While thousands of gallons of milk are poured into
the rivers and creeks of Illinois.

2nd Worker: In western states grain is burned instead of fuel.

3rd Worker: Every year potato crops are left to rot in the.

1st Worker: Millions are dumped in the Potamic River.

2nd Worker: On cotton plantations they breed a boll weevil to destroy the crops.

3rd Worker: Manufacturers spend millions to purchase and destroy old automobiles and steamships.

All: What does this mean?

1st Worker: While workers are starving.

2nd Worker: While workers strike for shorter hours.

3rd Worker: While workers strike for living wage.

All: Have people lost their senses?

1st Worker: To burn corn

2nd Worker: spill milk

3rd Worker: destroy crops

2nd Worker: destruct automobiles and ships.

All: While there are millions of workers in need of these things.

1st and 2nd Worker: Why is this done?

1st, 2nd and 3rd Worker: Who profit by it?

Scene 2

Mr. Fox (appears on the stage with a bag in his hand labeled: \$50,000.-, as he goes to the centre of the stage he speaks)

Fifty thousand dollars, it must not remain idle. I must double it triple it, until some day I'll be the richest man in the world. I'll live easy and happy. (In the center of the stage, he drops the bag, opens up the paper and starts searching) Business, business, ah for a good business,..... applesauce factory...(shakes his head)no.. baloney shop..no..garbage collector..no..hats..hats..HATS, at last a business is found. Hats, everybody wears a hat. (Yells) Agent, Agent, AGENT. (Agent appears, they go to the left) You must find me the best spot in this country for a hat factory. (They go into a huddle bickering)

(Mr. Nox appears, same actions as Mr. Fox)

Mr. Nox: Fifty thousand dollars! I must have a business. How could one be happy without a business? I'll mix in the best of society, speak of the best things and eat the best of foods. (going thru the paper) Now let me see what shall it be? Armchairs.. (Shakes his head) no.. ballon factory.. no.. dum-bell shop.. no.. gas business.. hats, hats, HATS. Hats shall it be, everybody wears a hat. A man's character lies in his hat. Agent, Agent, AGENT. (Agent appears and they go to the right) Get me the best spot for a hat factory. (They go into a huddle and bicker.)

(Mr. Box appears)

Mr. Box: (Repeats action) Fifty thousand dollars, ah a business, a business is the only thing for a man who has any sort of individualism in him, and a business it shall be. (Going thru paper) Will it or will it not be that is the question. Automobiles.. (shakes his head) no.. beads..no..chicken.feathers..no..hats; hats, HATS. That's what it shall be. Hats will make me rich. Agent, agent, AGENT. (Agent appears, they stay in the center) I want the finest spot in this country for a hat factory. (All 6 in a huddle for a moment. The three bosses exit in different action as the agents greet them.)

Agents: (together) May you grow rich and happy.
 (The agents get on their knees and start searching the floor for a spot to start their business, looking thru a magnifying glass they cross each other a few times, before they find their spots. Mr. Box on the lft, Mr. Nox in the center and Mr. Fox on the right. They take out a desk and a chair. Three agents clap their hands together, a page boy enters with a sign; Flowers if possible.)

OPEN FOR BUSINESS....SUCCESS (Page boy exits)

(Mr. Box's agent puts a sign on the desk:

THE HAT THATS IT BECAUSE IT FITS.

(Mr. Nox's agent places sign:

THE WORLDBEST CONSTRUCTED HAT ACCORDING TO
5.381 SCIENTISTS

Mr. Fox's agent places sign:

YOU CAN'T GO WRONG, MONEY REFUNDED IF YOU DO.

Three agents exit, the bosses enter take their seats. Off stage is heard:

The ruggedness of individual competition is the backbone of our present society.

(Mr. Box rings bell.

Foreman 1: (Agent now foreman appears) "Good Morning, Mr.Box.

Mr.Box: Good Morning, I must have 25 thousand hats, full speed, prompt delivery - no delay.

Foreman 1: Yes Sir! (exit)

(Mr.NoX rings bell, Foreman 2 appears)

Foreman 2: How are you, Mr.NoX?

Mr.NoX: Fine! Without delay 50 thousand hats, even if you have to speed them up - hire them young - but pay them less.

Foreman 2: O.K. (exit)

(Mr.Fox rings bell, Foreman 3 appears)

Foreman 3: Top o' the morning Mr.Fox.

Mr.Fox: Same to you - get young help, must have 100 thousand hats, shortest time possible, speed them up, longer hours, not one cent extra.

Foreman 3: K.O. (exit)

Mr.Box: (rings the bell) Double the order.

Foreman 1: (putting his head out of the curtain and pulling it in)
Fine!

Mr.NoX: Triple the order.

Foreman 2: (repeats action) Yes Sir!

Mr.Fox: Full speed ahead!

Foreman 3: (repeats action) K.O.

(There is a moment of silence, then there is heard a clang of a bell or a siren.)

Foreman 1: (Runs in and out) We hit the limit Mr.Box - competition - all heads are filled - warehouses overstocked.

Mr.Box: No excuse - lower prices 20 cents - beat them, send in my stenographer.

Foreman 2: The public has stopped buying - competition has filled all orders - we are being undersold 20 cents.

Mr.NoX: Stop - Fire all old hands - lower prices 40 cents, send in my private secretary.

(Stenographer enters to Mr.Box)

Foreman 3: We are being attacked by our competitors 40 cents cheaper.

Mr.Fox: Lower the wages - get greenhorns - sell the hats 60 cents cheaper - send in my personal secretary.

(Private secretary enters to Mr.NoX)

Mr.Box: (To stenographer, she nods yes to each idea)
We have been undersold - we must get rid of our hats before our competitors - so I have planned a national wide advertising campaign in "The Daily Azmas" and the "Saturday Evening Host" and that will do the job - here it is.
(Hands it to stenographer who reads automatically)

Stenographer: YOU HAVE ONLY ONE HEAD BUT THAT DOES NOT MEAN AT ALL THAT YOU SHOULD ONLY WEAR ONE HAT. EVERY AMERICAN SHOULD WEAR THREE HATS. BUY THE HATS OF MR.BOX
(Stenographer smiles, nods her head, exits. Mr.Box rubs his hands and gets to work. Personal secretary enters to Mr.Fox)

Mr.NoX: (To private secretary) I have started a campaign to defend our factory from our competitors - so I am planning a national wide radio campaign by the "Snappy Yappy Boys". That's our plan - now here is your slogan.
NOX'S BEST CONSTRUCTED HAT CAN BE EXCHANGED FOR YOUR OLD ONE AND ONE DOLLAR. FOR ONLY ONEDAY! TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS MARVELOUS OPPORTUNITY. BUY NOW!
(Private secretary exits, Nox gets to work)

Mr.Fox: (To personal secretary) I have laid out a national wide billboard advertising campaign to rid the warehouse of all surplus hats and this is how we shall do it - there will be painting of a beautiful nude girl on a white horse carrying a banner. Read it.
MR.FOX ANNOUNCES TO THE PUBLIC A THREE YEAR INSTALLMENT PLAN ON ALL HIS HATS. NOT ONE CENT EXTRA. YOU CAN NOT GO WRONG. MONEY REFUNDED IF UNSATISFACTORY.
(Exit personal sec. Fox gets to work)

Foreman 1: (Runs in) I lowered prices - I fired old hands - I cut wages - but the public refuses to buy.

Mr.Box: Close the factories! What the hell do you think I make hats to pay wages - No - But to make money.
(Foreman 1 exits, Mr.Box takes sign and exits.)

Foreman 2: (Runs in) Mr.NoX, listen, I fired old hands, I cut wages, I fired half of the workers but the public refuses to buy.

Mr.NoX: The hell with them. Let the machines grow rusty, what do you think I bought machines to make hats, no to make money. Close the factory.

(Foreman 2 exits, Mr.NoX takes sign and exits.)
 Foreman 3 : (Runs in) Mr.Fox, stop, I sold hats sixty cents cheaper, I hired greenhorns, I slashed wages, I put the advertising campaign into full force. But the public refuses to buy.

Mr.Fox: The public be damned. What the hell do you think I built a factory for, to feed workers? NO! I built a factory for profits and if I can't make profits, shut the factory. Sell it for wreckage.
 (Foreman 3 exits, Mr.Fox takes sign and exits)

SCENE 3 Mass recitation. Six characters.

1.	One year passes	4	In America
2.	Now Mr.Boodle	5	The capitalists
3.	Mr.Foodle	6	Without a plan are
4.	Mr.Noodle		
5.	Start	1	In the Soviet Union
6.	The race	2	The workers
5 & 6	For profits.	3	Have a seeding campaign
1	This	4	In America
2,3	is capitalist production	5	The capitalists
4,5,6	Production for profits.	6	Destroy crops
1	You	1	In the Soviet Union
2	Who toil daily	2	The workers
3	In the mines	3	Increase production
4,5	To heat the world		
6	On the farms	4	In America
4,5	To feed the world	5	The capitalists
1	In the shops	6	reduce production
4,5,	To clothe the world	4	and
		5,6	increase unemployment
3	Are you in agreement with this type of living?	1	In the Soviet Union
		2	They make
		3	What is essential
1	Individually	4	In America
2	Your voice	5	Hundreds of factories
3	Is a whisper	6	Consume
4,5	Collectively	1	Raw materials and energy
6	Your voice is	2	In order
all	an industrial demand.	3	To make
		4	What is
1	In the Soviet Union	5	Altogether
2	The workers	5,6	Unnecessary.
3	Have a plan		

- | | | | |
|------|-----------------------------|-------|---|
| 1 | In the Soviet Union | 3 | Which means |
| 2 | Where workers rule | 1,2 | Increased production |
| 3 | There is | 3,4 | Increased consumption |
| 4 | Seven hour day | 5,6 | Better education |
| 5 | Every fifth day- a rest day | | |
| 6 | Free doctor bills | 1 | In the Soviet Union |
| 1 | Free hospitals | 2 | The mines |
| 2 | Free maternity leave | 3 | Farms |
| 3 | With full pay | 4 | Shops |
| 4 | Free nurseries | 4,5,6 | Belong to all. |
| 5 | Compulsory education | 1 | And |
| 6 | Old age pension | 2,3 | Worked |
| | | 4,5 | To share |
| | | All | equally. |
| 1,2 | WHY | | |
| | | 3,4 | Are you in agreement
with this type of living? |
| 3 | Because | | |
| 4 | In the Soviet Union | 1 | Individually |
| 5 | There are no | 2 | Your voice |
| 6 | Boxes | 3 | Is a whisper |
| 1 | Boxes | | |
| 2 | Noxes | All | Collectively
As one class
Our power is victory. |
| | | | |
| 3 | In the Soviet Union | 1,2 | The workers |
| 4 | The workers | 3,4 | Of the Soviet Union |
| 5 | Are building | 5,6 | Have shown the way. |
| All: | Socialism | | |
| 1 | Under | | |
| 2 | The | | |
| All: | Five-Year Plan | | |
| | | 3,4 | Workers of the World |
| | | 1,2 | In your hands |
| | | 5,6 | Lies the power |
| | | 3,4,5 | To build and rebuild |

All: UNITE AND FIGHT
CLASS AGAINST CLASS.

The following plays for workers' theatre groups are available at the
Workers' Laboratory Theatre, 799 Broadway, Room 330

UNEMPLOYED - Capitalist gets a clergyman and Bill Green to quiet the unemployed, but a Communist leads the real struggle.

FIGHT AGAINST STARVATION - Miners on strike.

LYNCH LAW - About the Scottsboro frame-up of nine Negro workers.

IT'S FUNNY AS HELL - Unemployed delegation comes to a fake "relief" conference.

AN ONE WITH BRAINS - One worker, in a line of workers trying to get jobs at a factory, "knows it all".

IN THE CONGREGATION OF THE RIGHTEOUS - Church and strikes.

THE BIG STIFF - Dr. Hoover and Dr. Green try to cure sick capitalist Uncle Sam.

MR. GOD IS NOT IN, by Harbor Allen - Working woman visits heaven to get help from God, but God is too busy with rich man to do much for people like her.

THE FIGHT GOES ON - Textile strike play, in simple verses. Published Oct.

THREE OF A KIND - Election play - worker sees thru the three parties of capitalism. Published Oct.

I'LL TELL YOU HOW TO VOTE - Election revue, including Hillquit, Thomas, Broun, Jimmie Walker. Mass recitation at finish.

MR. BOX, MR. FOX, MR. NOX - Based on an incident in New Russia's Primer, cleverly showing how capitalism works out. Published Nov.

STEP ON IT - To break a strike, capitalist takes on various guises, Muste, priest etc., but a revolutionary worker shows him up. Published Nov.

THE GROGGY COMPASS - American newspapermen come to a land of forced labor. Written by a Soviet dramatist, A. Chikarkov. Only four characters.

ART IS A WEAPON - Mass recitation making clear the class nature of art, and the aims and methods of the workers theatre.

SOLIDARITY - Mass recitation explaining the Workers International Relief.

SAVE THE DAILY WORKER - Mass recitation.

Most of these plays call for from six to ten characters. Often two or more small parts can be played by one actor.

WORKERS CHILDREN'S THEATRE

CHILDREN'S THEATRE WORK IN THE PATERSON STRIKE

by B. Reines, W.L.T., N.Y.

In Paterson, after two weeks of trying to get young workers to take part in plays — efforts which I continued all the time, but without success — I turned to the children. Com. Sacks in the miners' strike had also found it hard to get strikers active in theatre work and had found the children of the strikers not only willing but eager to put on plays. So it turned out in Paterson.

Children of the strikers under revolutionary leadership were organized in the Young Textile Pioneers, the children's section of the National Textile Workers Union. The newly organized ones were too young and tongue-tied to take much part. But there were more than a dozen "old-timers", children who had been Pioneers one, two, and three years. Many of them had taken part in dramatics before.

Here is the daily record of the work:

SATURDAY, AUGUST 15. Women's Department of the strike asks whether the Pioneers can have a play ready for a women's mass meeting on Wednesday afternoon. I'll try. Also, some Pioneers ask to put on a play for the strikers.

MONDAY, AUGUST 17. Fast work begins. Morning — leader of children work and I go over play: "Milk for Miners' Children (Sept. issue of "WORKERS THEATRE"), revising it slightly and introducing more action into the plot. Right afterwards, I met with some fifteen Young Textile Pioneers, read the play and had a discussion, bringing out the conditions of the children of the striking miners. Afternoon — had copies of the play typed, met with the children again, cast the play, and rehearsed it briefly.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 18. Morning — children come to rehearsal, have all learned their parts. Short rehearsal in afternoon, short rehearsal right after supper.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19. Morning — short rehearsal. 2 o'clock, short run thru play on stage. 3 o'clock, performance at mass meeting. Lively performance. Good work in characterizations by two or three of the Pioneers. We had staged a play in two days! (Secret of course, was that the children had learned their parts overnight — a result of the fact that they were very much interested.)

THURSDAY, AUGUST 20. Pioneers want to start on another play. I set rehearsal for Monday, leaving a few days free in order to prevent monotony.

MONDAY, AUGUST 24. Morning — reading and discussion of play: "The Fight Goes On!" (Oct. issue of "WORKERS THEATRE"), which I wrote over the week-end. Play is based in general way on Textile Strike. Purposely in entirely different style than Miners' Children's play. In simple verse, with rhythmic textile work movements, and a short mass recitation at finish. We have a brief rehearsal each day this week, with fluctuating attendance. Hard to maintain interest of children in same thing daily for six days in a row.

For costumes we made a boss's high hat with white dollar sign and a cop's hat, both out of cardboard, which we then painted. A striker's wife sewed two strips of dark blue cloth together. We stuffed this stiff with newspaper, and thus had a cop's nightstick which looked real and yet could be bounced off the players' heads without damage. We put a dark coat on the "Boss", stuffed his belly big, and there he was. For the Labor-Faker we borrowed a panama hat and a flashy tie, and pinned a sign "A.F. of L." on his chest.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 30. Pioneers present "The Fight Goes On!" to audience mainly of children at Pioneer Field Day. Goes over fairly well. Some players not sure of their lines. Again rest for couple of days.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 1. Pioneers agree to play to-morrow afternoon at another women's mass meeting.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 2. Morning — short rehearsal. Afternoon — repeat performance of "The Fight Goes On!" Fine performance, great applause.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 8. International Youth Day. After attempted young workers' demonstration is broken up by police, Pioneers give their fourth performance during strike and third performance of textile play. Audience mostly young workers.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 9. I had spoken to the leaders of the Pioneers about dramatic work. They agreed it should be a regular part of Pioneer activity. Now, after the Pioneers have had this experience I think the time ripe for organizing them into a permanent theatre that would continue to function during the coming school season. So this afternoon we meet for this purpose. I have planned the meeting carefully, and the organizing proves a simple matter. On the basis of the experience of the Workers Laboratory Theatre, I am careful to draw out and activate the children fully, so that they can feel they are building something themselves. The experience is useful enough to give in detail.

First comes the election of a secretary, who takes the names and

addresses of all Pioneers who want to be members of the theatre. — Then I lead a discussion of what a Pioneer theatre could do. Having fun, helping the Union with programs, drawing in school-children and putting on plays about school, were some of the points brought out. — Next comes the choosing of a name, then a discussion of organization. The majority vote for the name "COMMUNARD THEATRE" (of the Young Textile Pioneers). Tuesdays at 7 pm is set as the regular meeting time during school.

After a short talk about the three phases of theatre work — plays and playwriting, directing and acting, costumes and scenery — I propose that the children elect a Theatre Committee of seven — six plus the secretary. Done. Term of office is set at two months.

Then, after my suggestion that the Pioneers write the next play themselves, comes a discussion of what the next play should be about. (The Women's Council had asked that the Pioneers put on a play at their mass meeting Friday night.) Most of the Pioneers present participate. They decide to have a play in two scenes — the first in a striker's home, the second in school. Rehearsal is scheduled for Thursday morning, and the meeting of the Communard Theatre adjourns.

Immediately afterwards I have a short meeting with the Theatre Committee. The Com. divides itself into the three sections as discussed at the full meeting. I explain the different activities briefly.

The playwrights want to write the play at once. So I set times for meeting with the directors and technical sections, and sit down with the playwrights. They get to work, talking and writing. I make suggestions now and then, but they do substantially the whole thing themselves. The product is nothing wonderful, but it's a straightforward play, emphasizing the campaign for free food for the school-children of strikers and unemployed workers. The Pioneers are actually in the midst of such a campaign now.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 10. In the morning, before the rehearsal, I meet with the "directors". They make good suggestions about the casting. I go over certain simple elements of directing with them, as applied to this play. — After the rehearsal, I meet with the "technicians". They talk seriously about costumes and props, and make a complete list of what they want for the performance. Altho up to now these two Pioneers have not shown much of a sense of responsibility, they each take it upon themselves to get certain parts of the costumes and props. And they go ahead and do all they have said they would. — During the day, I type the play and parts.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 11. Three short rehearsals during the day. In the evening, two days after organizing, the Communard Theatre of the Young Textile Pioneers presents its first production: "Free Food For Workers Children." (Publ. in the Oct. issue of Workers Theatre). It is also the fifth play-performance by the Pioneers during the strike. The first scene, with a girl Pioneer playing the mother,

does not go very well, but the schoolroom scene (except the little girl's fainting) goes over grand --- better than it deserves. Another two day production.

This account leaves out the many personal details, the occasional mishaps and the last-minute appearance of several players without whom the play could not have gone on.

Whether or not this Communal Theatre continues to function depends mainly on the leaders of the Paterson Pioneers. Only if the leaders see to it that some capable comrade is assigned to guide the dramatic work, can the Communal Theatre maintain itself successfully.

NEWS FROM THE CHILDREN'S FRONT

WORKERS' CHILDREN'S THEATRE GROUPS did not send in any reports of their work or news of their groups so far. All news published in this issue were received accidentally from individual comrades. There are many pioneer groups thruout the country doing dramatic work at present. Why not let the other groups benefit from your experiences. All leaders of groups should see to it that the group sends its reports to "WORKERS THEATRE". Also material is wanted. This section is for the Children's groups and the groups must work on it or it is not necessary to have a Children's Section.

THE YORKVILLE PIONEERS, the same group that started dramatic work without any leader or director, has continued this work. On Oct. 3 and 4, the pioneers gave 3 successful performances of "Broadline" (Publ. in Aug. issue of WT) at affairs of the YCL, Yorkville. The plays were received with great enthusiasm, both, by the children and by the adult workers. The group is waiting now for the Nov. issue of the Magazine and expects a good new children's play for its use.

THE CHILDREN OF THE MODERN SUNDAY SCHOOL, BROOKLYN, a progressive but not yet revolutionary organization, are rehearsing "The History Lesson" (Publ. in this issue) for an affair of the school, the annual "winterfest". At request of the Dram Buro, the Prolet-Buehne sent one of its members to lead the work of the group.

Childrens Groups as well as adult workers' theatre groups should send in their orders for "WORKERS THEATRE" at the end of each month.

WATCH THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMBINATION SUBSCRIPTIONS:

	REGULAR	COMBINATION
"WORKERS THEATRE" and "NEW MASSES"	\$ 3.--	\$ 2.50
"WORKERS THEATRE" and "COMMUNIST"	\$ 3.50	\$ 3.--
"WORKERS THEATRE" and "SOLIDARITY"	\$ 2.--	\$ 1.50
"WORKERS THEATRE" and "NEW PIONEER"	\$ 2.--	\$ 1.75

"THE HISTORY LESSON"

A play for Workers' Children.

By Betty Weinstein, Brighton Beach Workers Club

Cast of Characters: 15 School Children
Miss Jones, the Teacher.

It is about fifteen minutes before school has begun. The children between the ages of eleven and thirteen are very noisy. It is an 8A class in an east side schoolroom and most of them are raggedly dressed. Marie and Jonny are talking in an undertone.

Johnny: Gee, Marie, but it's tough, I didn't even get a chance to study our history lesson. I had to sell papers until late at night. With the old man dead and Ma making so little it's tough on me.

Marie: Don't I know it? My Dad is out of work himself and mother has to take in washing and our teacher is always telling us that this country is the best and most prosperous country in the world. But, listen, they say that in the mining section it is dreadful. They haven't even got any.....

Sammy: (listening in at the door) Cheese it everybody, cheese it Johnny, teacher is coming.

(They all make a dart for their seats as Miss Jones comes in. She is well dressed and bears a healthy and robust appearance.)

Miss Jones: (suspiciously) I heard noise when I was at the end of the hall. Monitor, was the class quiet?

Monitor: Yes, Miss Jones, very quiet.

Miss Jones: Hm. I thought you would say that. Always sticking together. (Sits down, fixes her hair, powders her nose and then calls the roll). Well, I am glad to see every one is present. We will now begin the morning inspection. Everyone in line! Helen, your blouse is dirty and torn, your mother should mend it.

Helen: Mother is very tired Mam, you see we are seven in the family.

Miss Jones: Well Helen, that is why we have laundries.

Helen: We can't afford that expense. You see Father isn't working.

Miss Jones: (Under her breath) Lazy or drunk, I suppose, like most of the east-siders.

Helen: No Mam, you see.....

Miss Jones: That will be all, Helen. Johnny, your shoes couls be cleaner and the patch on your trousers is almost coming off.

Johnny: Oh that? You see I was playing in me back yard when I rips me pants. Anyway there should be more playgrounds for us kids, so we won't get runned over like me sister Maggie.

Miss Jones: John McQuire, your English is abomnable and you may take a demerit for impudence. You should pay more attention to your studies instead of playing all day. (Johnny makes face behind her back) Well, this class doesn't look any too clean. Remember, children, that wise saying "Cleanliness is next to Godliness". You may all go to your seats now.

Marie: (Whispering to Johnny) How did you really tear your pants, Johnny?

Johnny: Well, last week I was shining shoes when a cop sees me and breaks my box and when I gets fresh and he starts in chasing me. I ran about two blocks when.....

Miss Jones: Will this class be quiet! Johnny, stop talking to Marie. This morning we will begin with our history lesson instead of the usual arithmetic lesson, for a very special reason that will please you all. How many have studied that lesson? (All raise hands) Hm, we shall see. Johnny, what great event took place in the year 1812?

Johnny: Aw, a slaughter.

Miss Jones: (Horrified) Why, my dear boy, what do you mean, a slaughter?

Johnny: Aw, you can't fool me. Before my pop died he used to tell me that a war was just a fancy name for a slaughter. My pop he got wise after he was gassed in the war.

Miss Jones: (Dismayed) Children, children, that is entirely wrong. A slaughter is a brutal murder committed for no reason at all. War is a glorious event, fought for the honor of our country and for the protection of our men, women and children. Do you see your mistake, Johnny?

Johnny: But Ma says that they left her and her five kids to

starve when they dragged pop to war. We did not get any protection against starvation.

Miss Jones: That was noble sacrifice on that part of our soldiers. And the soldiers that fought in the World War are being amply repaid for it. And if their souls are asleep in Flanders field, their families are being comfortably provided for.

Johnny: (Whispering to Marie) Applesauce, that's all.

Miss Jones: What was that? Johnny, you will have to change your seat. You are endangering this class with some of those outlandish ideas of yours. You know many boys have gone to the reformatory for less than that. Now, to proceed with the War of 1912. Marie, can you tell me, what famous battleship took part in one of our many victories?

Marie: It was "Old Ironsides".

Miss Jones: Very good. Yes, children, "Old Ironsides" was a grand old battleship. But it is not grand anymore. It is old and crippled and cannot be used anymore. But here is the surprise: the government has decided to rebuild it and they are giving you the privilege of helping. What do you say to that?

Sammy: (Perplexed) What do you mean, Miss Jones?

Miss Jones: Well, each one of you will contribute a few pennies and thus we will be able to raise 10,000 Dollar thru-out the U.S. This money will go to the noble cause of rebuilding that glorious battleship "Old Ironsides"

Sammy: What do we need battleships for? Will there be a war again? Hasn't the government enough money to pay for that?

Miss Jones: Why, of course, the government has enough money to pay for that, but don't you want to feel that you had a share in this noble cause? And Sammy, every country must have battleships in time of war or peace. You ought to know that, your Dad fought in the World War

Sammy: Yea, so he did. Dad is old and crippled, too. But the government don't raise any collections to build him up again.

Miss Jones: (Straightening up) That is ridiculous. But we have to proceed with the collection. Marie, how many pennies will you contribute?

- Marie: (With spirit) You see, Miss Jones, I have a tin box here which says that 1.— will feed a miner's family and ten thousand dollar will feed ten thousand families, so what do I care for an old battleship that doesn't do anybody any good. Me for the starving miners.
- Miss Jones: Why, Marie, dear, there are no starving people in this country. Only those that are lazy and don't want to work, starve. They don't deserve the charity some of our kind-hearted citizens give them. — Sammy, how much will you contribute? I know, you will give something. You are smart. You will set an example for the other boys.
- Sammy: I think the same as Marie does. And I am sure my club leader will not approve of our giving our money to any old battleship when so many people are out of work and starving.
- Miss Jones: Club leader? Club? What the very devil has possessed this class? Marie; stand up. What is the name of this club?
- Marie: (Frightened) It's the... it's the...
- Voices: The "Pioneers"!
- Miss Jones: The "Pioneers"? Oh yes, I have heard of those rough-necks. All those that belong to that organization, will please stand up. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. Horrible, horrible, I shall notify your mothers at once. That will settle you.
- Johnny: Our mothers know about it. They made us join up with that club. Our mathers say that is where all workers children belong.
- Miss Jones: What corruption. Children, don't let your east-side environments corrupt you. Why don't you join a nice, clean, fine organization like the boy-scouts and the girl-scouts?
- Harry: Because they are for the rich and run by the rich. Why I once tried to get into that organization, but they snubbed me because I was poorly dressed.
- Miss Jones: No, no, Harry, you misinterpret their actions. Why they do a good deed every day.
- Minnie: Oh yes, they help a nice old lady across the street. But they don't help the starving people like the workers clubs are doing.

Miss Jones: Children, do be quiet! It is getting late and I will pass the box around. If we can raise 1 Dollar you will all be dismissed early. (Passes box around and only one clink is heard) This is terrible. You will all stay in after school. Mrs. Smith, the principal, will deliver a severe lecture to this class.

Johnny: We will stay in after school, Miss Jones, we will listen to Mrs. Smith's lecture, but it ain't no use, we are Pioneers first, last, and forever.

(Lunch bell rings)

Miss Jones: We will attend to you Pioneers. - Class is now dismissed for lunch.

(Class rushes out noisily. They are heard singing

One, two, three,
Pioneers are we,
We 're fighting for the working class
Against the bourgeoisie.

End of Play. ...

NOTE: Basis of above play was taken from news item: Glorious old battleship "Old Ironsides" has recently been rebuilt from the pennies of school-children.

Editors' Note: This play, as all the other plays for Workers Children, published in former issues of "Workers Theatre", lack the same thing: they are weak from the point of view of propaganda value, altho they have other values. - The article on "Outline on Workers Children's Plays" could not appear in this issue. It will be published in the Dec. issue of "Workers Theatre".

LIST OF WORKERS' CHILDREN'S PLAYS

available at "Workers Theatre", 10 W
21st Street, New York City, N.Y.

"READLINE", a play, written by Spanish Workers International Relief Scouts.

"Beginning of a Children's Theatre Group's Meeting in the Strike area"
A dialogue, as it really happened between the organizer of children's group and the strikers' children. Can easily be changed into a good strong propaganda play.

"Milk for Miners' Children", a play about the miners' strike.
"Free Food for Workers' Children." By the Command Theatre, Paterson

REVIEWS

CRITICISM WANTED!

Something is wrong with this section. And here is the mistake: the writers of the reviews visit the various performances with the purpose of writing criticism. They criticize the performance in accordance with their definite idea of what a workers play should be. They are active in the workers theatre movement, and their reviews must, therefore, be considered as self-criticism. That is certainly useful and helpful. But we need more: we need direct and steady contact with our audience. We want to learn what the workers expect from us and what they think of our performances. We therefore ask the visitors of our performances to write what they liked and what they disliked in the plays, and to let us know their recommendations as to how to improve our work.

The group should, before each performance, encourage the audience to this kind of proletarian constructive criticism.

This section should not be written for the readers but by the readers.

TWO GROUPS AND AN AGITPROP GROUP.

By J.E. Bonn.

The opening affair of the Convention of the Jewish Workers Clubs (in the Manhattan Lyceum) featured a little Workers Theatre Spartakiade. The Jewish Dram Group of the Coney Island Workers Club, the Jewish Dram Group of the Prospect Workers Club, and the German Agitprop Group "Prolet-Buehne" gave performances.

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The plays had the following propaganda themes:

Coney Island Group: Anti-religious

Prospect Group: Strike

Agitprop Group: Soviet-Tempo

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The play of the Coney Island Group, by the Jewish bourgeois writer Scholem Aleichem, is a character study of a prerevolutionary rabbi who is the obedient tool of a prerevolutionary governor in Russia. What does this teach against religion? A shlemaker or a lawyer could have taken the same anti-proletarian attitude providing that they

had the same mean character as the rabbi. The play reveals the same mistake which we also find in proletarian anti-religious plays. The character study of a despicable or ridiculous clergyman does not expose religion at all, unless his attitude and actions are exposed clearly as a result of religion.

The Coney Island Workers Group gave a good bourgeois play. But we want revolutionary plays.

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The strike play of the Prospect Group has a correct - but broken - proletarian line. Broken by stage effects taken over from the bourgeois art theatre. It is good revolutionary propaganda to show a class conscious unemployed proletarian and his family resisting all the temptations, and intimidations of bourgeois relatives, friends and charitable societies. But why destroy the spirit of militancy by an artistically arranged group of strikers (overflowed by blue and pink foot lights) singing an old sentimental Russian folk song and finally falling asleep? It was a good idea to end the play with an action of class struggle. But a parade of strikers walking around the stage six times shows neither struggle, nor the necessity of struggle, nor the result of it.

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The Prospect Group gave a revolutionary play. But we want good revolutionary plays.

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The Agitprop play of the Prolet-Buehne, "Tempo! Tempo!" deals exclusively with the exhaustive speed-up tempo of decaying capitalism and the encouraging tempo of Soviet construction. All means of the Workers Theatre are used. But not as more stage effects. They are always the expression of the revolutionary contents of the play. "The play combines its contents with a form which lends to the performance a vigour and effectiveness rarely achieved by a production" writes a reviewer in the Sept. issue of "Workers Theatre".

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The Agitprop Group gave a good revolutionary play.

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The Jewish workers liked the performances of the Jewish groups, but they responded with militant enthusiasm to the play of the German Agitprop Group, even tho they understood only half of the language. A strange fact. Which has to be analyzed, and from which we must draw our lessons.

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Are the Germans better actors? No! Have the Germans better directors? No! Have the Germans a more developed technical apparatus? No! - But why the different responses of the audience?

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Here is the answer: The two Jewish Groups are (still) just Workers Theatres. The German Group is (since the last two years) an Agitprop Group.

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The reactions of this evening were a good demonstration of the value of Agitprop plays. Those who look sceptically at this work, simply don't understand it. They think, "real" theatre, "adopting the superior methods" of the bourgeois stage, is full of life, art,

and entertainment, while Agitprop work, in their opinion, is dry, artless, crude, and - "narrowing the field of the Workers Theatre".

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In case the facts of this evening do not convince these sceptics, let them try to solve this puzzle: Why did the workers react more enthusiastically to the dry and crude propaganda than to the colorful art, taken over from our enemies?

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Is the difference between the two methods really a difference of style and technique? The performance proved the contrary. It is a difference of approach towards our task. A difference of spirit - that goes beyond style, technique and language.

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The theatre players are actors. The agitprop players are fighters. This is the fundamental difference.

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We admired the splendid acting of the talented Jewish comrades. We followed with interest their successful work in "filling out" the characters of the plays. And we forgave them all shortcomings, because we knew they had neither the time, nor the education, nor the experience of professionals. - But when the German Agitprop players appeared, a wave of revolutionary enthusiasm, of militant spirit, of proletarian discipline swept over us. We experienced an act of class struggle - and not a theatre act. To be or not to be talented, was no more the question. To be or not to be class-conscious, militant, revolutionary, was the question - put before the audience.

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These three performances taught us more than three hundred theoretical articles: The problem of the American Workers Theatre is not the working out of the relationship between content and form, not the handling of style and technique of play-directing, but: how to best obtain the political education and activation of the groups. This is the only basis for our style and technique. That means: a decided and rapid turn to the Agitprop method.

"THE EXPLOSION"

Produced by the Ukrainian Dramatic Group

Reviewed by A. Prentis.

This play, based on sabotage in Russia, tells in five long acts and a still longer prologue, the story of a "white guard" colonel who having shot a man is forced to escape, and utilizing the passport of a communist engineer whom he had had executed, becomes the manager of a plant in Russia. While in this position he is still carrying on intrigues and attempts to get rid of two communist engineers, Sergei and Blashko. In the course of the play it develops that Sergei is the son of the man whom the colonel killed and Sergei's sweetheart, Maya, is the colonel's own daughter whom

he, in his flight, had to abandon in care of his secretary, Rostakov and who grew up with Sergei. Rostakov turns up now a beggar, recognizes the colonel, attempts to blackmail him, and not getting any satisfaction, tells all. The colonel is led out to be shot.

The play, produced after six rehearsals, was given a creditable performance. Considering the fact that most of the actors are amateurs Sergei, Mayka, Casadanov did very well. Blashko did well altho a trifle too strenuously, the communist was not convincing. All the praise for the evening however goes to Rostakov—Azorsky. As an actor he is excellent. As the director of the play he deserves some criticism.

An analysis of the faults of direction, however, must not be considered apart from the basic flaws in the play, namely, the length of the play (it lasted from 7 P.M. to 12) and the injection of comic relief, so dear to the heart of all bourgeois playwrights. All the lengthy discussions should have been condensed and the action speeded up. The play would then have gained immensely in dramatic value.

Azorsky, capable actor that he is, in the role of comedian, actually drew all attention away from the actors developing the plot and concentrated it on himself. After a short while on the stage his very appearance was greeted with laughter, in spite of the seriousness of the moment. As a result, the play did not convince, it merely entertained. Moral for directors — all actors must be directed to act in harmony with the plot and re-inforce it rather than attempt to stand out by themselves.

There were several other flaws in production. A great deal of time could have been saved in setting the stage, by using black curtains for all the scenes. It would have looked better and would not have been so amateurish.

Time and again we are told by directors of language groups that they must have full-length plays, that their groups demand plays about conditions in their home country, that they must give their audience curtains and scenery and lights and wigs and make-up — in this play. The chances are that the directors themselves are at fault, preferring perhaps that type of play as being more familiar. As for the audiences, they, likely as not, will be just as interested in a play dealing with a dramatic incident in the life of a Ukrainian miner in Pennsylvania as in one in the Ukraine — if effectively done. As for the length of plays, scenery, etc., it does not even need repeating that short length plays are easier to produce than long ones. And theatrical effects can be produced without make-up, costumes, etc., if you just make up your mind to do it.

Did you already elect a comrade from your group to take care of the circulation of "WORKERS THEATRE"? If not — do so in your next meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

TO ALL GROUPS IN THE COUNTRY!

This section must become the main part of the Magazine. It must reflect the activities and aims of all groups, so that the accomplishments and shortcomings can be exploited by all.

Contribute your share for the improvement of the Magazine. Do it immediately and in an organized way. Appoint a comrade to send in regularly the report of your group.

This Magazine must become the place where the workers theatres of the whole country meet in order to improve their tools for a more efficient struggle against the common enemy.

From: Workers International Relief
District No. 9
Minneapolis, Minn.

Dear Comrades:

We are organizing cultural departments in all of our branches. We have instructed them to elect cultural directors, form groups for dramatic work, singing groups, orchestras, and anything else along this line that the comrades were interested in and had ability in. In Minneapolis we already have a cultural group working.

Now what we need is material for them to work with when they get organized into a group. Where can we get revolutionary plays, recitations, etc.? If a group of comrades show some initiative in dramatizing their own struggles where can they get guidance in putting them across in a convincing manner? There are many revolutionary songs to which many workers know the words, but no one seems to have a very good idea of how the tune goes, is there any place where we can get a hold of the music to them? If you know of any other material that we can use will you tell us where we can get it?

Fraternally yours,
Dist. Secretary
Workers International Relief

This is just one out of a great number of communications asking for material and advice. The activities of the workers theatres are increasing, and the urgent need of a central organization of all theatre groups for better cooperation and better exploitation of the existing material is obvious. It is in the interest of every

group to cooperate with the Dram-buro by forming Dramatic Councils as preparation of the Workers Theatre Union in U.S.A.

From: "Solidarity Players"
Boston, Mass.

Dear Comrades:

We have received your communications and all the literature you sent. We have already sold seven copies of the Worker's Theatre.

Of the material you sent us we already had "The Groggy Compass". We are now rehearsing it with the intention of putting it on November 13th, at a local (Roxbury) celebration of the Russian Revolution. The mass recitation "Art Is a Weapon", has not yet been read and discussed by the group.

We have read the report of the Moscow Conference and feel that we have much to learn from it. We intend to set aside an evening to discussion of the report. When we are through discussing it we shall send you a report of the discussion.

We are at present busy collecting material for the season. Comrade Pevzner has sent us a number of plays. We distributed these among the members of the group, instructing each comrade to read his play and to be able to give a synopsis of it, together with a criticism of the content of the play. If the group thinks that the play is suitable for production, we shall then read it in full and discuss it. We hope in this way to save the time required to read each play in full. We hope to be able soon to start work on something else along with "The Groggy Compass".

We discussed the possibility of going to Lawrence, but decided that we had nothing appropriate to present. We shall try to prepare a few members in the future for just such occasions, for we realize that this is our real work.

Comradely yours,
Solidarity Players.
Boston, Mass.

This letter shows that there are many ways of activizing the membership besides playing. Activities like play reading, play adapting, directing, designing should be carried out by all members of the group. Concerning the report of the Moscow Conference: What are the other groups doing about it? Do they also feel that they "have much to learn from it?" Are they also going to have a discussion on it? Will they also send a report of the discussion? We expect with great interest the next reports from the "Solidarity Players" in Boston. They know what "their real work" is. We feel that we have much to learn from them.

NEWS

THE WORKERS DRAMATIC COUNCIL OF

NEW YORK had two sessions in Oct. The old members of the Dram. Buro were ratified and three new members were elected by the council. There are still three seats open; one each in the organizational, artistic, and repertory department. The dram groups are asked to nominate capable and active comrades for these functions. - The delegates of the various groups pledged to assign as many comrades as possible for participation in the Nov. 7th Pageant. The task to write the pageant and to organize the production was given over to the Dram Buro. - The main subject of the session was the preparation for an active participation in the election campaign. An election propaganda play "Vote Communist" was written by a committee of three and performed by a special agitprop group composed of members of the Proletcult, the Prolet-Buehne, and the Workers Laboratory Theatre. Six performances were given on the street and received with greatest enthusiasm. A detailed report on these election activities will be published in the next issue. - The fourth session of the Council will be held on Monday, Nov. 16th, at the Workers Center, 35 E 12th Str. at 8.30 P.M. sharp. On the order of business: Discussion of the International Theatre Conference in Moscow, mobilisation of the N.Y. groups, preparation for a National Workers Theatre Conference in U.S.A. All theatre groups of Greater New York must be represented.

DRAM BURO.- All requests for material, information, and assistance should be sent directly to the Dram Buro, and not to individual groups. The new address is: 16 West 21st Str. N.Y.C. The regular meetings are being held every Monday.

WORKERS LABORATORY THEATRE, N.Y.

gave 3 performances of the election revue "I'll tell you how to vote" during October. - Bookings for Nov. so far the following 3 performances: 11.8. "Fight against Starvation" (Lithuanian Chorus) 11. 21, Boro Park. 11.27. "Mr. Fox, Mr. Box, and Mr. Nox" (Finnish Workers Club, 15 W 126) - Members of the WLT participated with members of other groups of the Workers Dram Council of N.Y. in an agitprop play "Vote Communist" that was performed six times in the streets during the recent election campaign. Members of the WLT also took part in the Nov. 7th Pageant at the Celebration of the 14th anniversary of the Revolution. - A plan of work for the next months is being formulated now.

PROLET-BUEHNE, GERMAN AGITPROP

TROOP, N.Y.- prepared during Oct. "Something must be wrong", a propaganda play for the German Communist paper "Der Arbeiter", a German election agitprop play, and a group recitation "The Workers have a Fatherland". The first two plays were written by the group, while the last one was taken from J.R. Becher "Der Grosse Plan" ("The Great Plan"). - The members of the group participated in the preparation and performances of the election play "Vote Communist" and were also in the Mass Pageant at the Celebration of the 14th anniversary of the Revolution. - The group has for

Nov. 10 bookings, and already 3 for Dec. The following performances will take place: 11.3. "Tempo! Tempo!" - "Scottsboro" (Foreign Born Affair, Manhattan Lyceum), 11.7. Mass Pageant, 11.8. "The Workers have a Fatherland" - Recitations (German Workers Club, Labor Temple) 11.14. "Hoppla! Wir Leben!" -

"Scottsboro" (Tremont Workers Club 1610 Boston Rd) 11. 14. "Hoppla!" - "Scottsboro" (Women's Council, 808 Addie Ave) 11.19. "The Workers have a Fatherland" - Recitations (German Workers Club, 785 Forest Ave, Queens,) 11.20, "Liberty" - "Belt" (Women's Councils, Irving Plaza) 11. 21. "The Workers have a Fatherland" - "Tempo! Tempo!" (C.P. Sect. 5, 2800 Bronx Park East) 11.27. "Tempo! Tempo!" (Finnish Workers Club, 15 W 126) 11.28. "ILD Agit-prop play" (ILD-Br. 45, 445 E 84) 12.5. Full length program of 5 plays (IWO, 5 Belmont Ave, Newark) 12.12. "Work or Wages" - Group recitation (Naturefriends, Philadelphia) 12.19. Propaganda play for Women's Council (Women's Council 23, 350 E 81)

THE RED PLAYERS, N.Y. recently organized, gave already several successful performances of "Sep on it". The group has bookings for the following affairs: Workers Anti-Religious League (Harlem Br.) Bronx Hungarian Workers Club, Nov. 14. 735 Westchester Ave, and Communist Party, Sect.7, Brooklyn.

THE DRAMATIC SECTION OF THE PROLETARIAT takes an active part in the proletarian theatre movement. The group which participated in the street performances during the election campaign and in the Mass Pageant on Nov.7th, is now rehearsing the play: "Mr. Fox, Mr. Box, and Mr. Nox" for a performance at the YCL affair on Nov.21.

THE SCANDINAVIAN BLUE BLOUSES, N.Y. have been organized in the middle of Sept. and gave their first performance already on Oct. 25th, at an affair for the Scand. revolutionary weekly "Ny Tid". They presented two mass recitations: "Scando-America" and "The Proletariat" which were received enthusiastically by the workers. - "The Party a poem dedicated to the Swedish Communist Party, is now in rehearsal. - The group elected a delegate to the Dramatic Council and a "Workers Theatre" agent.

THE UKRAINIAN DRAMATIC GROUP, N.Y. s section of the United Ukrainian Toilers organization, founded in 1918-1919, and, since the Cultural Federation Convention, has been reorganized with the aim of putting on regularly plays dealing both with the life in their home country and in this country. - The group performed in Oct. the full-length plays "The Explosion" (reviewed in this issue) and the one act play "Help the Miners", translated from the play in "Workers Theatre". At an affair at Manhattan Lyceum on Nov.15th in commemoration of the October Revolution, a play written by the group as well as a mass recitation will be given.

JOHN REED DRAMATIC GROUP, PHILADELPHIA, which has recently been organized commenced already with "It's funny as Hell" is in rehearsal for a performance at the Unemployed Council's affair on Nov. 21st. "Mr. Fox, Mr. Box, and Mr. Nox" is being prepared for TUUL-Bazaar on Dec.11th.

BLUE BLOUSES STUDIO, CHICAGO, on its repertory a WIR agit-prop play, a propaganda play for "Daily Worker", and the sketch: "The Crossword Puzzle".

THE SOLIDARITY PLAYERS, BOSTON, sent in an interesting report on their activities, which is published in full length in the correspondence section of this issue.

THE WORKERS SINGING AND DRAMATIC GROUP OF HOUSTON, TEXAS, has been officially established on Oct. 24. The group which was created by two former members of the WLT and Prolet-Buene, N.Y. about 10 weeks ago in order to supply a program for a picnic of the ILD and IWC of this city, has been active ever since during the weekly meetings of the "Daily Worker Reading Club" and also of the "Workers Esperanto Group". The official establishment of the group, however, was not feasible until now, when the comrades realize the organizational and agitational value of a steady functioning group. The group presented an Open Air Vaudeville on the picnic mentioned above. The main feature of the program was the miners play "Marching Guns", (originated by the WLT in 1929) which found a good response all around. Since then the group concentrated on the rehearsing of old and novel workers songs, some of the last being written and put into music by members of the group itself. - The singing proved to be a most effective attraction to young workers who were sympathetic with the movement but rarely attended meetings before. Some boys from the farming district around the city, hard to be organized, have been won as members.

THE ANGLO-AMERICAN WORKERS CLUB OF MOSCOW has organized a dramatic group with the aim of spreading cultural development among the English speaking workers in Moscow. Though the members are writing plays from their own experiences, material from the American groups is wanted.

IN THE RED SPOTLIGHT

DO WE PRAISE STALIN?

We certainly do. Do we read Stalin? We certainly do - once in a while. Do we learn from Stalin? You find the answer, when you read the following passage from Stalin's speech on "New Conditions, New Tasks" and find out if you take the same bolshevik attitude in face of new conditions and tasks in the workers theatre movement: "Is our production programme accomplishable or not? Most certainly it is. It is accomplishable because all the conditions necessary for its accomplishment exist. It is accomplishable because its accomplishment depends on us, ourselves, on our ability and willingness to make use of the vast possibilities at our disposal----- The reality of our plan consists in live people, you and me, our will and our labor, our readiness to work in the new way, our determination to carry out the plan. Have we got that determination? We have. Well, then, our production plan can be carried out, and will be carried out."

Which directors of which group used this language not only to win the comrades but to make them enthused for participating in the election play on the street or in the revolution pageant for the anniversary celebration or for any other task of the group?

What we need is - leaders!