

WORKERS SCHOOL LIBRARY

WORKERS THEATRE



*BLACK AND WHITE
DANCE BY RED DANCERS OF THE W.I.R.*

**MARCH
1933**

**BROADWAY
AND THE ART THEATRES**

**MAXIM GORKY'S
NEW PLAY**

**FIFTEEN YEARS
OF THE SOVIET THEATRE**

**THE PARIS COMMUNE -
A MASS RECITATION**

NEWS

REVIEWS

CORRESPONDENCE

10 cents

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V. 3. No. 3.

workers theatre

ORGAN OF THE LEAGUE OF WORKERS THEATRES OF THE U.S.A.
42 E. 12th ST. NEW YORK N.Y. SECTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF THE REVOLUTIONARY THEATRE

The first International Workers Theatre Olympiad will take place in Moscow, USSR, from May 24 to May 30, 1933. Countries as far off as Japan will send groups to participate. Unfortunately, the League of Workers Theatres of the U. S. A. is unlikely to send a group. Here in the U. S. A. we have only recently overcome difficulties that arose from a wrong form of national organization. We expect to make a financial contribution to the Olympiad Committee. And in the future, we expect to be in a position really to take an important part in the work of I-U-R-T.

This Olympiad will be a mass review of the creative achievements of the revolutionary working-class. It will be a demonstration of solidarity on the part of the workers and farmers of capitalist countries with the workers and farmers of the USSR. It will be a mass mobilization of the theatrical weapons of the toilers in defense of the new life being created in the Soviet Union, and against the approaching imperialist war.

Next month, we shall publish an article dealing comprehensively with the Olympiad.

Marx Anniversary

March 14, 1933 is the Fiftieth Anniversary of the death of the first great leader of the modern workingclass--Karl Marx. Thinker, organizer, revolutionist, he founded scientific socialism, or Marxism--the theoretical base of the revolutionary workingclass movement as a whole--and, of course, of the workers theatre.

Every workers theatre group in the U.S.A. should participate on the program of Marx Memorial Meetings, should seek to prepare plays and recitations dealing with Marx and Marxism and present them all during 1933.

Every workers theatre group should make this Anniversary the starting point of an intensive study of Marxism. Marxist theory will give you a clearer understanding of the function of the workers theatre, and will help make your work more effective.

Future issues of WORKERS THEATRE will contain articles on Marxism and the theatre.

IN FUTURE ISSUES

The International Workers Theatre Olympiad
The Workers Theatre is Rising in China
Fascism and the German Theatre
Problems of the Revolutionary Playwright
Across Half the U.S.A.--The Workers Theatre
in Eight Cities.

The Theatre in the Light of Marxism
Directing in the Workers Theatre
The Work of the Rebel Players--A Critical Review
Elmer Rice, Playwright--A Critical Analysis
----And Others----

Also every month:

News - reviews - plays and recitations - Soviet theatre - international workers theatre - worker-writers - photographs - and other features.

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workers Laboratory Theatre, Agitprop Section, sold more than 200 copies of the Jan.-Feb. issue -- besides selling 135 jointly with their Theatre Collective Section at one big affair. How about challenging some other group to revolutionary competition on a proportional basis, WLT?

Chicago Workers Theatre Council, just formed. orders 200 copies monthly.

Let's hear from Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Detroit, Boston, and other cities.

Broadway and the art theatre

● END OF AN ERA ●

by Jerry K. Graham

With symptoms now visible even to the untrained eye, the bourgeois theatre lies in collapse while its specialists, wisecracking even at its deathbed, bicker over the disease and its treatment. Frank Gillmore of Actors Equity continues to plead for aid from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to "deserving" managers (You'd think he represented the Managers' Equity Association). These same managers are characterized by Philip Dunning, one of their number, as "A Narcissus-like tribe... devoted to self-aggrandizement and personal gain and glory."

Arthur Hopkins, admitting that "The legitimate theatre is making its exit from American life", insists that the perverse genius of Ibsen has ruined the theatre, which was once a beautiful "palace of dreams." He looks with faint hope in the direction of the civic theatres, a last-minute mirage specialized in by Lee Simonson. Declaring scornfully that "...faced with a difficult business proposition, the business men who pretend to manage the theatre are indulging in a public exhibition of panic", Simonson calls for a standardized system of civic theatres available only to "an accredited managers' association" and having a lowered union scale.

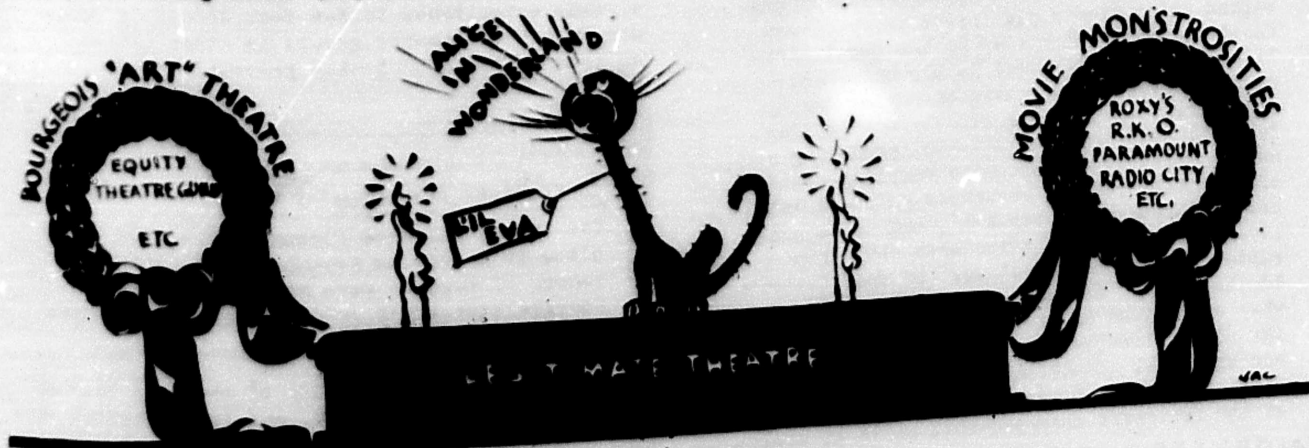
Brock Pemberton declares that a lowered wage scale is one of the real benefits of the crisis; actors, stagehands and musicians have all taken cuts; the transfer men still are arrogant, however, and as for the scene painters, you'd think by the prices they ask that "only descendants of Michael Angelo were employed in scenic studios." Further comments range all the way from the blunt suggestion by William A. Brady that half the New York theatres be turned into garages, to the placid view of Peggy Fears that the union minimums are coming down nicely, everybody is listening to reason, and "Bring on the plays, that's all."

Bad as things are, no one seems convinced that they have touched bottom. The "road" is almost wiped out; most of the Broadway theatres are dark, many of the others operating at an increasing deficit. Many have become burlesque houses; at the present writing the Princess Theatre and the Ziegfeld Theatre are about to be changed into moving picture palaces. With R.K.O. and Paramount going into bankruptcy, movie bids for Broadway plays have become discouragingly small. Broadway with its new crop of burlesque shows, cheap dance halls and general side-show atmosphere, is becoming a "honky-tonk", complains that staid newspaper, *Zit's Weekly*.

Never has the general quality of dramatic productions reached so low a standard in recent years. Even the *Follies*, the *Vanities* and the *Scandals*, of the million dollars' worth of tinsel, are departing into limbo. Roxy's monstrous Radio City attractions opened with deafening publicity and a weekly overhead of a hundred thousand dollars, only to be greeted by Walter Lippman's comment that Roxy and his backers (including presumably John D. Rockefeller, Jr.) "were like men who built the *Leviathan* and were trying to use it as a ferry boat to Staten Island, who had built a great pedestal to sustain a peanut."

Unemployment in the theatre is now past the three-quarter mark, non-union labor is making inroads everywhere, while the officials of the theatre unions, following the expert example of Brother Green, continue to cut the wage scales, or go through the motions of maintaining them, at the same time actually encouraging under-scale competition so that members can remain solvent enough to be bludgeoned into paying the fancy salaries of the union officials.

Among the important casualties must be noted the end of the art theatre era. Founded on the



principles of "Beauty" and "Idealism", these theatres only recently the white hope of the American drama, began shortly after the War, a nation-wide reform crusade against the crassness of the Broadway theatre-machine. The art theatres took many forms from that of the little community and neighborhood theatres, college theatres and actors co-operatives, to the Theatre Guild. Their fight brought results,--initiating a period of shallow sophistication that befitted the new imperialistic world-position of America. In the main the struggle was a sacrificial one. One after another, the experimental theatres, while feeding Broadway, were themselves drained and gave up the ghost. Still, there were places where they showed signs of holding on, even of expanding; Dallas, Cleveland, Chicago, Pasadena, Seattle, New Orleans, New York, brought forward art theatres of unusual vitality; In New York especially, three organizations, the Theatre Guild, the Civic Repertory, and more recently, the Group Theatre, seemed to prove that "Art pays."

Last year began a massacre of the innocents, a quick shutting down of little theatres all over the country. Now it is the turn of the larger art theatres. The Pasadena Community Playhouse has been taken over by a purely commercial organization. The Chicago Goodman Memorial Theatre has given up the ghost. In New York the Civic Repertory Theatre and the Group Theatre both suspended operations abruptly in the same week. The future of the Civic Repertory is said to hang upon the financial fate of "Alice in Wonderland" which Eva Le Gallienne is producing uptown. The Theatre Guild, steadily losing subscribers, is retrenching, cutting expenses, at the same time showing a marked lowering of dramatic standard. Not only that, but it has adopted a policy whereby its actors get a low basic salary plus a percentage of the income from a production. In prosperous times, the actors were not permitted to share the profits. Now they are made-indirectly of course--to share the losses.

These circumstances definitely mark a turning point; The end of the art theatre era, the prelude to the era of the political theatre. This turning-point may even be dated from the opening night of Elmer Rice's production of his own play, "We, the People." Frankly propagandistic, Rice's play reflects, tail-end fashion, the perplexities of the unpoliticized lower middle-class before a dawning consciousness of the class struggle. Hardly more clarified than his own characters, Rice found himself out of his depth, achieving a naive, spiritless play. The cackling criticism of the Broadway reviewers as usual labeled it "propaganda, not art", and these critics who immediately afterwards went into raptures over the "freshness" of Noel Coward's adultery play "Design for Living", declared they were tired of the hackneyed theme of the class struggle. Nevertheless there was not the usual complacency in the general dismissal of the Elmer Rice play; one or two of the reviewers observed that while it would

be extremely easy to treat it as mere Communist propaganda, they were going to judge it seriously; Atkinson of the Times even concluded that a propaganda play is after all a play. It may be noted in passing, that this change in viewpoint subtly foreshadows a coming political line-up of plays into definite fascist and communist--jungoist and revolutionary--categories.

"We, the People," a very expensive production unusually large overhead, may be expected to close almost any moment. Before it does so it will have demonstrated two things of importance to the workers' theatre. First, that without political clarification, a first-rate craftsman from the bourgeois theatre is only a little better than a raw apprentice in the revolutionary theatre. Second, that the framework of the bourgeois theatre will not support a revolutionary production, which requires a working-class audience. Learning nothing from the ventures of the New Playwrights Theatre or of the Group Theatre's experience with "1931", Elmer Rice, although he set out to dramatize the life of a worker's family, made no effort to establish a workers audience until his play had been rejected by theatregoing Broadway and even then, his lowest price of admission was out of reach of the average worker.

These events are pointing out certain tasks of the revolutionary theatre. Our workers theatre groups, emerging from, and closely linked with their mass-background, are already an achievement; they must continue to maintain their gains, advancing slowly at the present time, but steadily, being more careful to clarify themselves in action than to waste their resources in the manner of the art theatres. The development of the New York Theatre Collective (a section of the Workers Laboratory Theatre of the W. I. R.) marks a new step forward. Working out a method of collective activity which tends to enlist, activate and clarify members, the Collective meets its expenses as it proceeds; close to the ground economically, it is constantly receiving recruits from the professional stage. To win to its program the thousands of theatre workers now being forced out of the "amusement industry" and the art theatres, is one of the most important duties facing the revolutionary theatre at this time. Collectives similar to the one already established in New York should be founded by active theatre groups in other cities as soon as the opportunity presents itself.

In the IURT Presidium

The Second Enlarged Plenum of the IURT took place in Moscow on November 9-14, 1932. A number of reports were made and discussed. Comrade Boyarsky's report is given elsewhere in this issue.

"In view of the extension of the mass base of the proletarian theatre, and in connection with the inclusion into our movement of individual representatives, groups and entire organisations

MAXIM GORKY'S *new play*

by
**Nathaniel
Buchwald**
Workers Theatre
correspondent
in the
U.S.S.R.

There are lots of theatres in Moscow, but not enough to satisfy the public demand.

To judge the Soviet theatre by the art standards of the bourgeois world is to miss the main point. It is only in terms of the living contact between stage and audience that one can understand and appreciate any kind of theatre. The Moscow audiences are perhaps not as uniform in their social composition, as in smaller places. Remnants of the old type of theatre-goer, the intellectual, the professional, the former burgher, still clog the aisles and crowd the buffets of the Moscow playhouses. But the factory workers, the Red Army men and the host of clerks predominate. The theatres are invariably crowded, and it is the rule rather than the exception to find the box-office window shut and the sign, "All tickets for today sold" hours before the show begins. The system of subscriptions and "benefit" performances is much in vogue here, so that nine out of ten performances of a given play are not open to the general public. It takes much time and more effort for an outsider to get to see a show, even if he has contacts in the theatre. On more than one occasion I was very cordially received by the "administrator" of the theatre but denied admission for the simple reason that there were no tickets. Standing room is not permitted.

of the revolutionary intelligentsia in the fields of art and theatre, The Second Enlarged Plenum of the I.W.T.U. has decided, in keeping with the new tasks confronting the organization, to change its name: "International Union of the Revolutionary Theatre" (IURT)."

IURT has organized Mid-European, Anglo-American, Latin-European, and East Asiatic Commissions to work out problems confronting the various sections, Meyerhold, Tairov, Kirshon, Romashov, Piscator, Seki-Sano, and other leading Soviet and international artists and theatre-workers.

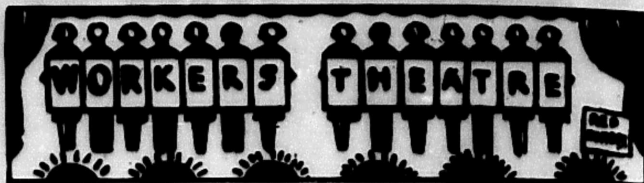
Undoubtedly the most important theatrical event of the new season is the presentation of the new play by Maxim Gorky on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of his literary activity. Some of you may have read in the Daily Worker an account of the celebrations of the Gorky anniversary which showed the love and admiration the toiling masses of the Soviet Union have for their great champion. Gorky's new play, called "Egor Bulichev and Others" is another example of the author's uncanny character portrayal and live dialogue, which rings true of the last syllable. The Gorky play is overawing as a kind of epitaph for the old order. The central figure, the unscrupulous merchant Egor Bulichev, dying of cancer on the eve of the downfall of the Czarist regime, is presented against the background of decay and disintegration of the old order and becomes a symbol of dying Russian capitalism. To accompany Bulichev, Gorky marches out upon the stage a whole gallery of "others", marvellously drawn types of the pre-revolutionary bourgeois society with its priests and opportunists, its shallow poets and crafty merchants, its fakers and bigots, its belly-aching intellectuals and bullying police officers. The intrigues and writhings of this hideous collection are shown against a background of mounting revolutionary upheaval.

The play was given at the Vakhtangov Theatre. It was beautifully mounted and acted with a skill and artistry worthy of the best traditions of the Soviet theatre. The setting combined methods of modern stagecraft with almost "realistic" effects. It consisted of two stories with rooms, stairs and passage-ways affording a variety of levels and filling the stage in all three dimensions. At the same time the scenes were localized (with the aid of marvellously effective lighting) in such a manner that each scene looked "natural". The direction of the play was subtle in its utilization of this superb set. The acting was of the "straight" variety with almost no stylization or formalization of any kind but with sharpened lines of characterization here and there. Again one saw before oneself the tradition of the Stanislavsky school, with its high theatrical culture, with its chiseled individual character-portrayal based on a thorough understanding of the character and on the character's dramatic relationship to the whole play.

"Egor Bulichev and Others" met with an enthusiastic reception both by the super-critical first-night audience and by the press. Gorky himself was present at the opening performance and was given an ovation that was thrilling beyond words.

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WORKERS WHO WRITE



The Workers Theatre opens your eyes by William Helne

After three months of work in Milwaukee, I received notice, that the "Workers Agitprop Troupe" organized by the German Bureau, would be in Milwaukee sometime in October, during the election campaign. I naturally had my misgivings, as I had to my understanding some bad experience, which I account now to my organisational inability.

I went ahead to make my arrangements for a hall and publicity. I must say the publicity was not very effective, as I did not know how to go about it. When the troupe arrived, we immediately went ahead and started making posters, house-to-house propaganda in the German neighborhood. All this meant work day and night. I was still a sceptic about the outcome. When the day arrived, or evening rather, I had a surprise awaiting me. The hall was filled to capacity and I must say, the affair was very much a success, both financially and organisationally. We played "Tempe, Tempe", "Vote Communist." We sang a few songs and I must say the play "Liberty in the U. S. A." went over big. In some instances, it was really amusing to watch the reaction of the people who were present. They had never seen anything like this before and all, with the exception of a few dyed-in-the-wool Socialist Partyites, enjoyed the program hugely. The result; we have a Prolet Bureau in Milwaukee and functioning well, according to reports.

I went on the home trip with the troupe. In all the towns, wherever we went, I had the same surprise. People who could not be won for our movement thru the ordinary way, we won them thru our theatre. I must say, I met people who never saw any of our publications, never heard of our movement. Thru the plays we offered, these people became aware of the fact that there is something to fight for in this life than just sit and take what the oppressing class has to offer. I cannot go into details of this trip as space does not allow it. What I am trying to bring out, is the serious need of Agit-prop groups and Workers Theatres.

I hope that this article will do what it should do, give a little more zest to the work of our comrades and more vigor in spreading our workers theatre among the masses of workers. Our object is to reach workers who have as yet not been approached by any phase of the movement especially not by the workers theatre. The "point": popularise the Workers Theatre and its magazine.

"How I wrote my first Agitprop Play" Marlette Vachon

On Monday last, our group had appointed at our meeting a committee of three to write a play on

the subject of "Evictions." As I was one of them I proceeded to get my version ready for our committee meeting which was to take place on Friday next in order to fuse our versions into one or adapt one of them with modifications or without. At any rate, the synopsis of a play had to come out of our committee meeting.

"Well," said I to myself, "four days are enough to get my material. Let's go first to the nearest branch of the Unemployed Council and interview some of the comrades that had experience in the matter."

There I had my first disappointment. The comrades that had had experiences of this sort were on the job, as I should have expected and this type of worker had other things to do than hang around the whole day in "Workers Centers." I looked all day for an eviction but found none. I returned in the evening. This time I met a comrade who introduced me to a worker who had just organized a house and who knew plenty about evictions.

As I asked details about his experiences, he first took a subjective attitude and then as I insisted, he gave me all sorts of information on what is a dispossessed and the technical difference with an eviction proper, the legal points and rights. For a moment I had the impression that I was in a lawyer's office, but I quickly came back to the field of battle of the class struggle when he entered into the description of the fights between cops and pickets, the demonstrations and all sorts of details that were interesting indeed but that I could not utilize in an agit-prop play.

The day after, I found myself guilty of wishing that someone should be evicted around where I work, for I could not afford to spend a day in another side of the town. I questioned everyone. I questioned a rich landlady I met on the question of evictions and her reactions to them and I got a good picture of the exploiters' point of view. In the evening I had a plan; first to talk to one of the workers who were to act against an eviction the next day and ask them to pay special attention to the language, behavior, psychology, etc., of the evicted and other people he would come in contact with in his assignment, and then to report to me. This time I was lucky. The first branch of the Unemployed Council I visited, I met a worker who would do that very thing for me and could report to me the next evening. He came as promised and gave me a complete and intelligent report.

I had my material, at last. It took little time to put it together and when we met on Friday, I offered my version of the eviction play. They all accepted it after a few objections were cleaned up and at the next general meeting of our group, I filled in the dialogue adapted to the actions already outlined in the synopsis.



BOYARSKY

15 YEARS OF THE SOVIET THEATRE

by
Y. Boyarsky

"Fifteen years of the Proletarian Dictatorship in the Soviet Union, and the situation on the Theatrical Front" was the first point on the agenda of the Plenary Session of the International Union of Revolutionary Theatres (IURT). Comrade Boyarsky, president of the Central Committee of the Union of Art and Theatrical Workers, acquainted the delegates with the history of the Soviet Theatre, from its pre-revolutionary sources up to and including the plans upon which the coming Five-year-plan for the theatre (1933-1937) is based.

Giving the pre-revolutionary history of the Revolutionary Theatre and pointing out the Soviet theatrical tendencies which marked the first years of the Revolution, the speaker noted that the Soviet Theatre has entered upon a new phase of development, accompanied by broad proletarian activities along the whole front, expressing themselves in the theatre also by considerable progress among the artistic intellectuals, by the new themes given birth to by the reconstruction period, and by the reorganization of the theatre as a whole to correspond with the new demands made upon it. Several new plays appeared during this period. Their themes, however, were so constricted, they were so superficial, the idiom in which they were written was so lifeless and there was such a dearth of philosophical generalization, that it had been difficult for actors and producers to do themselves justice. These years showed the importance of the part to be played by the playwright.

At the same time the old plays, with their appeal to the middle classes, disappeared even from the repertoire of provincial theatres, not to mention the big towns. In the 1919-20 season, 50 per cent of repertoires consisted of classical plays, 18 per cent of old-fashioned Russian dramas and 18 per cent of plays translated from foreign languages. In the 1926-27 season, the classics made up 30% of repertoires, old-fashioned Russian drama only .5%, the rest of the repertoire being composed of Soviet plays on bolshevik themes; treating of the life of the intellectuals, col-hos (collective farm) life, and defense of the Soviet fatherland.



The majority of these plays are, however, still marred by a primitive sketchiness, banal plots and out-and-dried characterization - the wrecker, the breach in the fulfilment of the plan, the "kulak", the tractor.... Many of them owe any popularity they enjoy merely to their emotional associations with the political sympathies of the audience, ready on this account to forgive much, both to playwright and theatre.

We still lack a sufficiency of plays exposing with any real profundity the processes going on in the country, and in this connection Gorky's "Yegor Bulichev" is of great significance for the present epoch in the Soviet Theatre, since its high literary quality and the wide range of its theme and types provide a vivid idea of an important historical epoch. Among recent examples of the critical assimilation of the classics are Saltikov-Shchedrin's "Shadow of the Liberator" and Uspensky's "Kastoryaev Street".

Comrade Boyarsky went on to point out that the next problem before the Soviet Theatre is to show the new human being, the hero of the five-year plan, both at work and in his daily life, to show the method of socialist realism with the aid of the faithful description of actuality, to which qualified it is that Gorky's play was its success.

Another problem is to introduce variety of style into the Soviet Theatre. We still have very few comedies and hardly any musical or light shows, and our satire is in a bad way. Summing up the achievements of the Soviet Theatre during the

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last fifteen years of revolution, Comrade Boyarsky emphasized the devotion to ideas and the rich content of the Soviet Theatre. The Soviet theatre, unlike the reactionary theatres of the West of Europe and America, is a theatre of ideas, problem and thought. The vulgar middle-class drama has been swept completely off the boards of our theatre, which has become a mighty factor in the life and construction of our country, a political platform, an ideological light-house, with definite social functions to fulfil in spreading the ideas of Socialism.

The preservation and critical acceptance of its cultural inheritance is no small achievement on the part of our theatre. The Alexandrian theatre (Leningrad) which has just celebrated the hundredth anniversary of its foundation, affords brilliant proof of the way in which the proletariat has managed to shape in its own way the oldest and formerly most reactionary theatre in Russia.

Other achievements include appreciable enrichment of technique, free emulation between creative tendencies, the improvement of production, the springing up of much brilliant youthful talent among actors (Babanova, Simonov, Glizer, Oroshko, Marinson, Stchukin) and whole new organizations

the Zavadsky Theatre, the Simonov Theatre, the "New Theatre", a development of the Little Theatre Studio), created by post-revolution Soviet Art.

Another extremely significant phenomenon is the growth of Soviet National Theatres, covering forty languages, (including Udmurt and Mordov) among which are to be found first-class companies such as the "Beresil" and Frank theatres in the Ukraine, the Rustavelli and Mardjanov theatres in Georgia, the Moscow and White Russian "Goss-set", the Armenian theatre in Erivan, the Turcoman Theatre in Baku, and so on.

The following figures will show the increase in amateur theatricals in the Soviet Union; 35,000 circles with 500,000 members in 1929; 50,000 circles with 800,000 members in 1931; 65 Young Workers' Theatres with 1000 members in 1930; 32 Young Workers' Theatres with 5,000 members in 1931.

The speaker proceeded to draw attention to the fact that the theatre was now the entire charge of the State, giving as examples various types of theatres - cooperative, touring companies, historico-revolutionary theatres, theatres for hygiene propaganda, Red Army and Trade Union theatres and 62 children's theatres.

There were 154 permanent theatres, 148 temporary theatres, 157 Peoples' Palaces and 344 clubs (for merchants, the gentry and cabaret performances) in Russia (not counting its Baltic and other neighbors) in 1914.

In 1931-32 there were 391 permanent winter theatres, 4,160 workers' clubs in towns, 1,020 socialist-culture headquarters, 7,922 temporary stages (including those in the country-side) and 6,167 reading huts, in which performances are given from time to time, in Soviet Russia.

In 1932, 424 professional companies, serving 391 theatres and 304 clubs, functioned on Soviet territory. According to the Second five-year plan, this army of actors is to be brought up to 48,640 organized in 1,216 professional companies, by 1938.

Turning to the question of new bodies of theatrical workers, the speaker reminded his audience that while there had been, as recently as 1928, 20,000 unemployed in the Union of Art Workers, there is now not a single unemployed in its ranks and the new theatres can not get enough actors, who are being zealously trained in scholastic institutions, technicums and theatrical studios, as well as coming from the amateur movement and the Young Workers Theatres. While summing up the enormous achievements of the Soviet Theatre in fifteen years, Comrade Boyarsky nevertheless warned the Soviet art-worker of the danger of posing as a teacher to our foreign comrades in the revolutionary theatrical movement, while these latter have much to learn from the rich experience of Soviet Art, we for our part might learn a great deal from the advanced sections of the revolutionary theatrical movement in the East and West.

● International News ●

Czecho-Slovakia: All the 419 Groups of the Czecho-Slovakian Workers Theatrical Union (DDOC), with 10,000 members, are taking part in revolutionary competition in the preparations for the Olympiad. A widespread mass campaign is being developed under the slogans "Defend the Soviet Union," "For the Struggle against Imperialist War," and "For a United Red Front." DDOC has challenged the German section of IURT.

ENGLAND: The First National Conference of the Workers Theatre Movement was held in London, with thirty-eight persons in attendance. Groups from many parts of England were represented. A plan of work was discussed and adopted.

HOLLAND: The Workers Theatre Union of Holland is taking an active part, thru performances, in all the anti-war demonstrations and measures for defense of the Soviet Union.

JAPAN: PROT, the Japanese section of IURT, organized an anti-war week last summer. The censorship mutilated almost all the plays because of their anti-war propaganda. Government persecution of PROT has increased still further. Preparations for participation in the Olympiad are being carried out thru the method of revolutionary competition by every one of the theatre groups and dramatic circles of PROT. PROT has challenged both the German and Czecho-Slovakians in revolutionary competition.

GERMANY: The German Workers Theatre Union is working under extremely difficult conditions-- police control, severe censorship, decrees, repressions, and bans. But notwithstanding the persecution, the workers theatre movement continues to grow. 232 Groups are taking part in revolutionary competition for the Olympiad.

PLAYS AND RECITATIONS

the Paris Commune

MASS RECITATION

by the JACK LONDON
Dram group, Newark, N.J.

It is the eighteenth of March, 1871
Paris
Boulevards
Horses and carriages
The parade of high silk hats
and gayly colored parasols
A Paris of Joy
Joy for the Capitalists.

But
What of the workers?
The workers who made all this
Misery
Hunger
Women and children
Clothes in rags
A Paris of Hell!
Hell for the workers...

Why is this?

Desperation drives them
to seize arms
erect barricades
fight the soldiers
storm the palaces
with cries
Death!
Death to poverty and idleness!

The workers are victorious:
The Red Flag Flies!
the workers hold Paris
for 73 days
a workers government:
for 73 days
the Paris Commune Lives!
Lives !!

Suddenly
the pounding of hoofs
the tramping of feet
rumble of cannon
the soldiers return
fire
shots
blows
shrieks
groans
pouring of blood
workers are slaughtered
the workers government is
destroyed

Why is this?

Because
in 1871
the so-called lovers of democracy
abandoned the workers of Paris

Because
in 1871
the working class of France
was still unorganized

Because
in 1871
the workers of Paris
had not yet learned
that the enemy must be crushed
completely.



Because
in 1871
the workers of the world
DID NOT FIGHT
for the workers of Paris!

Comrades!
Did the workers of Paris
die for nothing?
NO!
As Karl Marx said:
"Forever enshrined in the great heart
of the proletariat"--
The Paris Commune Lives!

The heroic Paris Commune
has its successor
The Paris Commune of to-day---
Only larger, surer, mightier--
IS
THE SOVIET UNION!

You--You--You--
Will we let
the ENEMY
Destroy us?
NO! NO! NO!
We must unite
We must fight
For the Soviet Union
Unite and Fight
For a Workers' Government
In a Workers' World!!!

WORKERS THEATRE

Sketch for a
living Newspaper
by
Isay Murinson



LEARNED JUDGE

Lucy Cotton Thomas will have to get along henceforth on \$3,000 a month instead of \$3,800 her mother deems necessary. Mrs. Lucy C. Thomas argued that since her own expenses would amount to \$20,000 this year, she would be unable to help out her youthful heiress-daughter except in a very small way.

In an affidavit, Mrs. Thomas itemized her daughter's absolutely necessary expenditures for 1933 as follows: Rent, \$800 a month; Servants, \$350; Governess \$125; Food, \$600; School, \$50; Storage, \$150; Laundry, \$50; Gifts, 25; Travel, \$700; Flowers, \$700;

Little Lucy receives an income of more than \$80,000 yearly from a 1,960,000 trust fund originally created for her by her father.

The location is the First County Court of New York.

Characters: Judge H. Graftaker
Henry Weisenberg, Doctor of Law
Jake Weiss, -Court Lawyer
Mrs. Lotta Cash, -First Defendant
Mrs. Unemployed
Miss Lotta Cash
Miss Unemployed
Court Clerk

Court Clerk: Hear ye - His Honor Judge Graftaker, presiding case #7766 State of New York, 7th County Court.

Judge: Court to order. Proceed.

H. W.: Your honor, my client, Mrs. Lotta Cash finds it impossible to support her little daughter Lotta on the miserly sum of \$3,000 a month and asks your honor to change the previously made agreement to \$3,800.

Judge G.: I see. How what are the girl's present expenses?

H. W.: It grieves my heart, your honor to tell you how she has to struggle along on only (the following said in tearful voice):
\$800.00 for rent on Fifth Avenue
Only \$350 for Governess
Just 125 for Food,

\$600 for school and books
\$50.00 for auto storage
\$150.00 for laundry
\$15.00 for gifts
\$700.00 for incidental expenses
\$100.00 for storage
\$100.00 for flowers and dancing
Now your honor, I ask you, could any girl of seven get along on such a miserly allowance? We have to give Lotta a chance in life, and therefore raise her allowance by the meager amount of \$800.00 a month.

Judge G.: Poor girl

Clerk: Oh, the little darling.

Mrs. L.C.: How can she live on ly \$700 a month for flowers?

Miss L.C.: Boo, hoo, hoo, I wanta go home.

Judge G.: (tearfully) such a sweet girl, I willingly allow the court to change her allowance to \$3,800 a month.

Clerk: O, Learned judge!

H. W.: My client thanks you will all her heart.

Mrs. L.C.: (to judge) All right, Graftie, old dear, I'll do the same for you some day. (exit Mrs. L. C., Miss L. C., Henry W.)

Clerk: Here ye, hear ye, case #7766, State of New York, First County Court. His Honor, Judge Graftaker on the bench.

(enter Mrs. Unemployed, thin and raggedly dressed, with emaciated child, then a fat lawyer with a cigar in his mouth.)

Jake: Your honor, this case is simple. The girl stole a bottle of milk from the company wagon.

Judge: How horrible. Bring the girls mother here.

Mrs. U.: Your honor.

Clerk: Swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you god.

Mrs. U.: I do

Judge: How could you let that brat of yours steal that milk?

Mrs. U.: She was starving, your honor.

Jake: (lolling in chair) Yes, starving.

Judge: Haven't you got any money.

Mrs. U.: No

On every important Sector of the theatre ● Front ●

Workers Theatre takes on New Tasks

WORKERS THEATRE, now with the increasing crisis of capitalism and the rising movement of the revolutionary working class, sets itself the task of meeting the increased demands of the situation today. We have reorganized our editorial forces. We shall center our publishing activities around the building up of the workers theatre groups. We shall do this directly, with material of, by, and for the immediate use of the groups. But we shall also do it indirectly--by broadening the scope of the magazine to cover every important sector of the theatre front, in line with the program of the International Union of Revolutionary Theatre (IURT). Thus we shall be able to win over the best workers, artists, and intellectuals now in the various sectors of the bourgeois theatre or under its influence. We shall at the same time pay special attention to drawing workers into writing--the writing of plays, articles, and criticism.

This is our program:

1. To supply theoretical guidance and practical material for workers theatre groups. Plays, articles on directing, playwriting, designing, etc., and on dramatic theory. Reviews of workers theatre performances.
2. To make a critical analysis of bourgeois dramatic theory and practice.
3. To present in every issue material on the developments and achievements of the Soviet Theatre.
4. To develop a program of economic demands for the theatre-workers of the bourgeois stage, who are suffering from wage-cuts, more work for less pay, and mass unemployment.
5. To pay special attention to certain theatre sectors: Negro, Socialist, "non-partisan" labor, civic, latin American, and student theatres.
6. To give significant news of theatre events of the workers theatre here and internationally and of the bourgeois theatre. Also artwork and photographs.
7. To develop worker-writers. This is one of our most important tasks--to rouse the latent creative powers of the militant workers and farmers. We aim to stimulate the rise of workers dramatic criticism. We want to encourage workers to send in their opinions of all performances they see--in the workers theatre and in the bourgeois theatre. In this way we shall benefit from workers criticism of our own performances, and we shall also make workers keenly aware of the commonly anti-workingclass substance of bourgeois productions.

But to carry out this program, we must have the full cooperation of the workers theatre groups along two lines,--editorial and distribution.

B.B.

WORKERS THEATRE

Judge: (roaring) Then why in the hell didn't you go to the relief bureau instead of stealing.

Mrs. U: But they only gave me two dollars a week for a family of six.

Jake: Yes, six your honor.

Judge: Aw, these damn poor, they can't take care of themselves. Isn't 33¢ a week enough for that brat.

Mrs. U: But the baby needs milk

Jake: Yes, milk

Judge: Why in the hell did you have a baby?

Jake: (defending his client) yes, why a baby?

Mrs. U: (bows head in shame)

Judge: O.K. Three months in the workhouse for the mother and all the kids to the orphanage.

Mrs. U: My children, don't take away my children from me (screaming)

Judge and Lawyer: (exchange cigars and curtain falls)

~ CHICAGO ~

The play, "Precedent" by I. J. Golden, the building of a stationary revolutionary theatre in Chicago, and the use of a new dramatic technique in the Camera Voice, mark the first production of the Workers Theater of Chicago, to take place April 8th and 9th at the Goodman Theater. This play presents the Mooney frame-up in realistic and convincing detail, building a powerful trial drama about the crime committed by the capitalist state against one man. The Camera Voice, which has been written by young playwrights of the Workers Theater and added to the play proper, brings out the class significance of this crime and its relation to the entire workers movement. The Camera Voice embodies in dramatic form a combination of news reel, living pictures and sound effects.

Working in close cooperation with the agit-prop groups in the city, and affiliated with the Workers Cultural Federation, the Workers Theater of Chicago aims to establish a technically expert stationary theater presenting plays that deal with specific problems of the class struggle. Believing that all vigorous art today must be revolutionary, and that the theater can be made a powerful propaganda force for the workers movement, almost a hundred young workers, actors, playwrights, designers and technicians have gotten together to form this organization in Chicago. Tickets for the play, "Precedent" are now on sale at the headquarters of the Workers Theater of Chicago, 1475 South Michigan Avenue, and at the Goodman Theater, East Monroe and South Parkway. Tickets sell for 35¢, 50¢, and \$1.00.

Editorially: We must be assured a steady supply of material from the groups,--news, experiences, articles, copies of plays produced, reviews, photographs. For this, each group should elect one of its most responsible members to be its **WORKERS THEATRE Correspondent**. His job is to get as many members of the group as possible to write material, which he should send in regularly at least once a month.

Distribution: Only a great improvement in the paid distribution of **WORKERS THEATRE** can enable the magazine to go on. Therefore, we call upon every workers theatre group to adopt the following measures of cooperation:

1. Elect one of your most responsible members to be your group's **WORKERS THEATRE Agent**. He should consult with your executive committee and be responsible to it for seeing that the distribution and finances of the magazine are properly handled along the lines here suggested.

2. Announce and sell the magazine at all affairs where you perform. Insist that organiza-

tions give you the two or three minutes necessary for this.

3. Sell or see to it that the literature table has **WORKERS THEATRE** for sale at all mass affairs--especially cultural affairs--in your neighborhood. Also sell outside bourgeois and other theatre performances in your neighborhood.

4. Send in the money for magazines sold, every month before the next issue is out. The price on bundle orders is now eight cents a copy. We shall be able to reduce this soon--if you cooperate. Send in money--if you owe any--for previous issues.

One last word; For better workers theatre groups, for more workers theatre groups, for a really powerful theatrical weapon of the workingclass in this most critical period of history, a period of impending new wars and revolutions, we need in our special field a better, bigger, more powerful **WORKERS THEATRE Magazine**. Only your fullest cooperation can insure it.

with the National Executive Committee

The National Executive Committee of the League of Workers Theatres decided that this year we will not hold a national conference and Spartakiade and that instead, we will exercise every effort to stimulate the organization of local conferences and Spartakiades in every city of the U. S., on a local scale. The reason for this is that we want to make these conferences as broad as possible and to get as much organization out of them as possible. We, therefore, call upon all Workers Theatres to carry out the following proposals:

1) To call preliminary conferences in every city where there is more than one Workers Theatre group, to prepare for the Spartakiade and conference.

2) To make every effort to draw in language groups, semi-radicalized groups, and particularly Negro groups to participate in the competition.

3) To prepare for the formation of sections of L. O. W. T.

4) To hold playwrights competitions in every city and to send in the best plays to the L. O. W. T. for national competition. (New playwrights to be drawn in.

5) To establish training centres for Workers Theatres in the major cities in the U. S. A. with special emphasis on drawing in professional elements to train Workers Theatre groups.

6) To establish repertory production and distribution on a local scale in addition to the national.

7) To popularize the International Workers

WORKERS THEATRE

Theatre Olympiade and the achievements of the World Proletarian Theatre. (Olympiade to be held in Moscow, May 24-30, 1933).

8) To utilize these Spartakiades and conferences to establish other forms of Workers Theatre in addition to agitprop--to stimulate the general growth of **WORKERS THEATRE** in every possible form.

The preliminary conference of the New York section of the L. O. W. T. has some important lessons to record in the field of organization, repertory and artistic development, not only for the benefit of New York section alone but for the entire Workers Theatre movement in the U.S.

In order to get away as much as possible from the idea of narrow development of Workers Theatre we differentiated organizationally for the first time, between the various types of Workers Theatres in existence in New York City. We came to the conclusion that we have 3 types of organizational and artistic developments:

1. dram-section of Workers Clubs, comprising about 35 out of about 40 theatre groups

2. agitprop theatres of the type of Prolet-Buehne, Workers Laboratory Theatre, Agitprop section, Red Players and others

3. stationary theatres of the type of the Artef, Theatre Collective, section of the Workers Laboratory Theatre.

Up to the present, we formulated our programs on the basis of the agitprop theatre mainly, and while we did not entirely neglect the dram sections and the stationary theatres, we did not pay sufficient attention to them.

From now on the N. Y. C. Council will not consist of delegates from groups directly but of

the Steppe is in flames

ARTEF'S
NEW
PRODUCTION

by Alfred Saxe

Steppe in Flames deals with the position of the Jew in Soviet Russia. It centers about the life of a group of Jews in the U. S. S. R. who have migrated from their village to settle in the steppe. The play dramatizes the struggles facing these pioneers;--through drought, sabotage, lack of food, influence of the kulak, etc. and their eventual triumph over all these problems and the successful building of one of the first Jewish collective farms. It is a play which as plays go is not particularly strong in plot, dialogue--or characterisation. The play carries along an even road with an occasional rise and fall to break the monotony of life. Whether the

fault lies particularly with the play is in the last analysis immaterial. Our analysis here will deal primarily with the outstanding factor in the present play--theatrical treatment. And here, instead of strengthening a weak play through production, the weak play gains weakness. This has happened in several Artef productions, notably "Trikenish", "Four Days", etc. Why? The answer to this question is extremely important for the development of the Artef. What happens to an Artef production generally is an overabundance of all the technique of the theatre and an undernourishment of the idea; an understanding of the problem of stylization but a thorough lack of understanding of the emotional relationship and growth of characters in presenting realism, naturalism, etc; a knowledge of the use of lights, makeup, scenery, acting, etc. but a loss of the sense of proportion in adjusting these instruments to the central point, the ideas which the author is trying to bring forth.

The play begins with what was to me (and judging from the reactions of the audience, to them also) the most effective bit in the entire production--a prologue --consisting of a stylized dance of the Jews. This prologue had nothing whatever to do with the play that followed. When I saw that prologue, I sat up and began to take notice. What, said I, this looks like its going to be an interesting production---and then the play began and the interesting production walked out. The curtain parted and the scenery jumped at me from every corner of the stage. It kept shouting, "Look at me, look at me. I am Huge. I have a thousand colors on me. I am all over the stage. You cant miss me. How can these lilliputian actors compare with me. I tower above them. I am the most colorful actor of them al. In fact, I am the play". And then the acting began. And the actors sopke their lines. Ah,--they said reading between the lines, I am acting. Look at me. I am Hershl.



who walks and talks with heavy step. Now I am making a gesture of annoyance. How well I know it. And here comes Boruch. "Everybody in the audience knows that I am Boruch, the Kulak. You can tell it by my eyes. I have them sometimes in my beard and sometimes in my forehead. I am sly." And then Vanka comes on--and I hear him say, "Now it is my turn to become angry. I will show this audience how an actor becomes angry."

WORKERS THEATRE

of the L.O.W.T.

two representatives of League Art (Federation of Jewish Workers Clubs Dram Section), two from the Council of Workers Clubs (English language) and one from each independent theatre, and one from each foreign-language section; German, Ukrainian, Russian, Finnish, Hungarian, Lithuanian, and others. Thus members of the Council will report back to their federated bodies, where these exist, who will then carry out the work in their federations. Various language federations will thus be stimulated. Members of the L. O. W. T. Executive Committee have been assigned to assist League Art and the English workers clubs to carry out this program.

Great attention was paid by the delegates to the question of Repertory. Most of them were dissatisfied with the present narrow repertory. They insisted that it is necessary to develop plays that deal with every phase of workers lives and struggles, not only the economic. They also emphasized the fact that artistic development is necessary on the part of the playwrights.

It was proposed that a conference of playwrights and revolutionary writers be called to stimulate the writing of repertory. Such a conference will be held in New York on March 19th.

The raising of the artistic level of the Workers Theatres, necessitates in general a correct approach to the professional theatre workers who are being rapidly radicalized. It is necessary to create for them the possibilities for work. They can be of great assistance in training and in the development of the stationary theatre. In New York some progress has been recorded in drawing in such elements. Classes were established by the Workers Laboratory Theatre of the W. I. B. in acting, social basis of theatre, voice, and movement. More classes are needed and will be formed in the nearest future.



JAC

But these people are not reliving an experience. There is no recreation of a picture which the author has attempted to set down. Their emotions are false--madeup of makeup--and the stencils of the actor, the voice placed at a certain pitch, the gestures made just so, the creation of a character through the surface elements, entirely neglecting the basis from which these surface elements grow; THE EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL RECREATION OF THE CHARACTER with the ASSISTANCE of makeup, scenery, lighting, etc. You have convinced me that you are an actor in the Artef but you still must convince me that you are a Jewish colonist in Soviet Russia faced with the problem of life. The audience is not made a part of the vital happenings on the stage. How can they be when the actors themselves fail to recreate these experiences? Here then lies the main weakness. The fault lies primarily in the direction. The director knows the problems of exaggeration and stylization, but attacks realism, which requires an entirely different approach, with the same stencil as stylization.

That this is true becomes evident if we glance back over all former Artef productions. In every production the best characterizations have always been the stylized enemies of the worker. The weakest--those who attempted to be ordinary human beings--the workers. If the workers theatre cannot portray workers with strength, who then? Scenery, if we are to learn from the best bourgeois technicians, is never meant to call attention to itself but to assist as a background for the actor in heightening and bringing forth the ideas of the author.

That the Artef is the leading Jewish Revolutionary theatre in the United States cannot be doubted. It has built itself up to a stability of production which at times assumes professional tone. It has gathered an audience which assures use of a large theatre at the rate of twice a week and sometimes more. If it is to advance and make inroads among the thousands of Jewish workers who have not been touched it must become extremely critical of its work. The comrades must be able to analyse and see wherein there has been failure and where success. For the very reason that it is the leading Jewish revolutionary theatre, it must face its problems prepared to dig down deep into the spheres of analysis--self criticism, to let nothing stand in the way of theatrical and political development.

Beginning next issue, we are publishing a calendar of important workers theatre events. Full-evening affairs by groups or federations, benefit affairs, etc, should be listed here. A service charge of 25 cents must accompany each notice. Send in the name of organizations, type of affair, date, time, and address.

WORKERS THEATRE



JAC

Cincinnati, Ohio

Dear Comrades:

A dramatic group has been formed in this city for the purpose of presenting plays of a revolutionary character. We have at hand several of the plays listed in the WORKERS THEATRE magazine. However, we do not find these exactly suitable for our needs. They all seem to be out and out propaganda without much artistic value either for the actor or for the audience. Ours is an advanced group which desires to give productions of a genuinely cultural value. We hope to attract some of the finest talent in this city, and, I feel sure you will agree, we cannot do so by presenting such plays as "Mr. Fox, Mr. Box, and Mr. Nox", etc.

Yours truly

While we agree that our plays deserve criticism in different directions, and while we agree that full length revolutionary plays have their place in the Workers Theatre, we cannot agree with your last sentence, comrade. Practice--three years of experience with Agit-prop plays staged with imagination and simplicity--teaches us differently. The next letter, one of several sent in after an evening of performances of agitprop plays, dances and puppets with an audience composed largely of professional actors, stage designers, intellectuals, etc. was received by the Workers Laboratory Theatre of the W. I. R., N. Y.

Hotel Judson
63 Washington Square N.Y.
Jan. 20th, 1935

Dear Mr. Shapiro:

It has been some ages since I have spent so thrilling an evening in the theatre, an opinion shared by Mrs. Kreyenberg. The forthright gusto, enthusiasm, passion, comedy, and faith in a free world, bowled us over. Only a few nights before, we had seen Elmer Rice's, "We, the People" and had come away bored and pained. You people are producing the real thing because it comes straight out of your lives, as all art should. There was not a soul in the audience I had ever seen before-- was this a new world? And where and when can we see and hear and feel more of the same? If there



**IN
OUR
MAIL BOX**

is any little way I can be of service, kindly let me know. I am talking on the theatre tonight, and will discuss your movement at considerable length.

With every good wish to everyone concerned in your venture,

Gratefully yours,

Alfred Kroyberg

P. S. And now I must read your magazine.

Dear Comrades:

"If you fail once, don't give up. Try, try again". The proverb applied to Bruce, and it applies to Branch 433 of the Youth Section of the I. W. O. The branch was as dead as a doorknob. A couple of weeks ago, we decided that we would start a dramatic group. We did, and now our branch is one of the best in the City. In one week, we sent in to the office of the City Committee, 10 applications for membership. Our Branch was built up thru a dramatic group. We urge all organizations to form a dram group. We predict the same success to all.

Yours, for better dramatics thruout the city,

Membership of Br. 433 of I. W. O.
Youth Section.

NEWS and NOTES of the groups

Chicago, Ill.

The WORKERS THEATRE COUNCIL OF CHICAGO was formed at a Workers Theatre Conference held on January 22, 1933. The meeting was called by the Midwest Workers' Cultural Federation. It was decided, after a thorough discussion based on the experiences of the groups represented, to form a Workers Theatre Council as a section of the Workers Cultural Federation, and to prepare plans immediately for a training school to develop new leaders. The following organizations sent delegates: Blue Blouses, Dram Section of Morris Winchevsky Club, Ukrainian Dramatic Society, Artes, Armenian Dramatic Club, Jewish Workers Club, Chicago Workers Theatre and Chicago Laboratory Theatre. At a second meeting held on February 12, plans for the Training School were presented and discussed, and it was decided to start the School immediately. Rehearsals are already scheduled for a huge Mass Pageant to be presented at the Earl Marx Fiftieth Anniversary, March 13, with the cooperation of the choruses, dance groups, orchestras, etc., affiliated with the W. C. F. composed of workers from the factory and shops and is trying to develop its own directors, playwrights and technicians.

Milwaukee, Wis.

The GERMAN PROLET-BUEHNE OF MILWAUKEE was organized, as one of the results of the work of the touring "Arbeiter" Agitprop Troupe. The group started with a membership of six and is, for the beginning, working in close contact with the local John Reed Dramatic Group. German workers who are interested in Dramatic work, should get in touch with W. Mueller, 2829 A.N. Richards Street, Milwaukee.

Syracuse, N. Y.

The NATURE FRIENDS DRAM GROUP OF SYRACUSE, newly organized, gave their first performance at the anniversary affair of the Russian Revolution, where they prepared the entire cultural program. Their second appearance was at the "International Night" of the Nature Friends, when a striking performance of the play "Workers Listen" was given. The play, composed of different parts of plays published in former issues of WORKERS THEATRE and partly written by members of the group themselves, was a fine example of what new groups can accomplish.

St. Louis, Mo.

The RE-ORGANIZED AGITPROP GROUP OF THE WORKERS EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE gave a very successful performance of the "Scottsboro" mass recitation, which added considerably to the spirit of the group and received encouragement from the audience. The group also prepared the program for the Lenin Memorial Celebration and a Youth Conference held in St. Louis, on January 24th.

Philadelphia, Pa.

JOHN REED DRAM GROUP is starting a training class with lessons in voice, diction, pantomime, staging, etc.. The group gave a very successful performance of "Old and New", a play written by a member of the group.

Detroit

The DRAMATIC COUNCIL OF DETROIT was organized on November 25th. Representatives of the John Reed Dram Group, the Jewish Workers Dram Studio, the Nature Friends Dram Group, and the Bulgarian Workers Dram Group, were present. Also some members of the "Arbeiter" Agitprop Troupe attended. After reports of all the delegates, Comrade Howe, of the Executive Committee of the L. O. N.T. and with the touring group, gave a report on the functioning of the League of Workers Theatres, and the tasks of the local organizations. The importance of the WORKERS THEATRE Magazine was especially emphasized, and the need for cooperation of all the groups in the country to keep it up, was pointed out. A thorough discussion followed, the Dram Council was formed, and Rose Tressin elected temporary secretary.

The NATURE FRIENDS, DETROIT, gave their first performance, a propaganda play "Join the Nature Friends" on November 30, at the Workers Theatre Night of the "Arbeiter" Agitprop Troupe. As a result of the performance, a new member was won. On with the good work, comrades of the Nature Friends!

WORKERS THEATRE

The BRIDGE PLAZA ENGLISH DRAM GROUP, only six months in existence, was able to draw in to their club 20 new members through their performances. THIS TO ALL THE WORKERS CLUBS: Build up your Dram Section and you build up your Club.

New Dance Group

The New Dance Group, organized a year ago on February 26, has grown almost phenomenally. They have large sections of workers who meet to dance and talk every evening. The entire membership includes about 300 comrades.

They have worked hard at a repertoire of revolutionary dances and are now planning to present a whole program of them on their first anniversary at the Hecksher Theatre, N. Y. C., Sunday, March 12th. The first full evening of workers dance in the U. S. A. is an important event in the development of workingclass culture.

Theatre Collective

The Theatre Collective (section of the W. L. T.) is working on HELP YOURSELF, FARMER, A one-act play by Peter Morrell. The Collective will do full length plays as soon as suitable ones are available. They have decided on a policy of working rather than waiting. Those of the actors group not in the one-act play are attending training classes, where the basis of work is improvisation. A class in movement is already established and meets once a week. The Playwrights Department is hard at work, considering plays submitted and discussing several full-length plays now being written.

Theatre Union

The Theatre Union, organized to produce in a competent professional manner plays dealing with the struggle of the working class and collapsing of capitalism, has held four meetings at which it enlisted a membership of nearly 100 experienced theatre workers. The Theatre is now planning to take a group of 35 or 40 theatre workers to the suburbs during the Summer, there to rehearse three full length revolutionary plays. In the Fall, the Theatre will open its season. The plays include an anti-imperialist war play, a play on the mutiny in the fleet, and a bonus march play. Prices will be within the range of workers.

A Workers Dance Council, representing a number of dance groups, has been formed in N. Y. C. Details will be published in the next issue. All dance groups in the U.S.A. should write at once to the Council, Address, M. Gordon, 63 East 11th Street, N. Y. C.

WORKERS THEATRE

The FIRST DRAM SECTION OF A Y. C. L. UNIT IN N.Y. Has been organized by the Yorkville Unit of the Young Communist League. After producing the play "Labors Love Lost" at one of their own affairs, the unit realizing the importance of the Worker

Theatre as a means to draw young workers into the revolutionary movement, decided to keep up this work as one of the activities of the unit. Six members volunteered for the group. Plans are being made for another affair to be held in March. Young workers, boys and girls, who live in Yorkville, and who are interested in theatre work, are asked to come to the meetings on Thursdays, 8: P.M. at the Hungarian Workers Home, 350 East 61st Street, N. Y.

Workers School

The THEATRE OF THE WORKERS SCHOOL, one of the youngest N. Y. agitprop groups, has been organized by students of the class on "Revolutionary Theatre." Besides the Executive Committee of seven members, permanent committees for repertory, stage technique, and music as well as special playwriting and directing committees for the various productions are busy to get the group started. A repertory of 5 agitprop plays is being prepared and will be ready for production by the end of April.

The rehearsals and meetings of the Theatre of the Workers School take place on Mondays, 8:45 P.M. in the Workers School, 35 East 12th Street, N. Y. C.

TRAINING CLASS FOR DIRECTORS is being held regularly every Wednesday Night, at 8:30 in the Workers Center, 35 E. 12th Street, N. Y. The class is up-to-now attended by delegates of 12 Dram Groups. Comrade H. Shapiro is leading the class. All those groups who are crying for directors day in and day out, have a good chance to develop their own directors. So, Comrades, send the most interested and most reliable comrades of your group to the training class.

Workers Laboratory Theatre of the W.L.R. Agitprop Section

The outstanding achievement of the Agit-Prop section since the publication of the last issue of WORKERS THEATRE is the formation of the Workers Theatre School. This school, the first of its kind in the United States, is an attempt to raise the artistic and cultural level of performances thru classes in Fundamentals of Acting, Stage Movement, Voice Training, and Social Basis of the Theatre. The classes have been functioning enthusiastically now for two months under competent instructors.

Now we are preparing the organization of a third section of the W. L. T. of the Workers-Internation Relief; the Puppet Group. Under the leadership of the well-known Modest puppeteers, Zonie Maud and Yssel Cutler. Plans are also being made for a Childrens Agit-Prop Troup.

Jugoslav news

The first national conference of Jugoslav Workers Clubs met in order to organize the work of the clubs nationally as well as to elect a National Committee. The cultural work of the clubs was also taken up. There was a special report and a resolution adopted on the drama. Affiliation with the L.O.W.F. was unanimously voted. The National Committee in Chicago will have a sub-committee for drama work. It will work on agit-prop dramas, organize agitprop groups in every dramatic circle and club and also serve as a center for longer revolutionary dramas, revising of the older dramas, etc.

Prolet Buehne

At the last general annual meeting of the Prolet Buehne, N. Y., on February 5th, constructive criticism was applied to the work of the past year. Although the number of the performances increased to 84 compared with 66 in 1931, there have been many shortcomings. Of these 86 performances, only 14 have been before German speaking organizations. To remedy this shortcoming a pledge was made to work in close connection with the German Buro.

Since the meeting of February 5th, there has been a growing activity of the group. The work has been collectivized, committees have been formed. Each member has his function and feels responsible for the whole work. Another important activity resulting from the February meeting, is the "Arbeitsgemeinschaft" (working union) with the dram group of the Nature-Friends.

Harlem

THE HARLEM PROGRESSIVE YOUTH CLUB, DRAM SECTION gave a splendid example of what the Workers Theatre can perform. Having their headquarters just across the street from a Young People's Socialist League Branch, they invited the members of this Branch to their performances. The result: 5 YPSL'S, including the organizer joined up with the Club and left the YPSL'S. Three of these five are working with the Dram Section, while two already joined the Y.C.L. Fine work, Comrades!

Office hours of the N.E.C.

Mondays	7 - 9	Repertory Committee
Tuesdays	8 - 10	Organisational Committee
Wednesdays	7 - 9	Production and Training Com.
Thursdays	7:30 - 9	Editorial Com. of WORKERS THEATRE.
Fridays	8 - 10	Organisational Committee
Saturdays	3 - 5:30	Business Committee of WORKERS THEATRE.

SHIFTING SCENES

by AGITPROP

A Nick that Counted

Part 1: The Radio City Music Hall (Rockefeller's) cut the salary of thirty ballet girls \$5.00 each in mid-February. The girls refused to on with the performance and rehearsals. The management then withdrew the wage-cut.

Part 2: In the same theatre forty Roxettes--dancers--received a \$10.00 wage-cut and made no united protest. The wage-cut stood.

Draw your own conclusions.

Capitalist Patrons of the Arts

Mary Garden, opera star, gives you an idea of the freedom of art under the "great patrons": "Samuel Insull killed opera in Chicago. When Insull became president of the Grand Opera Company four years ago, he set himself up as a czar, he dictated everything. He fired stars because of personal prejudices. He told us what to sing and how to sing it."

Of course, the present crisis of opera is more than a one-man affair--but I can't go into the whole system right now.

"It's a free country": Right in Washington, D.C., the capital of the U.S.A., Negroes are excluded from many hotels, restaurants, and theatres. Discrimination even goes so far as to exclude them from performances of The Green Pastures, a Negro folk-play in which all the actors are Negroes--At the National Theatre: Militant protests against this Jim - Crow practice are pouring in on the management...John Rainey, 56, a jobless actor, was found dead from gas in his furnished room on W. 41st St., N. Y. It's time stage folk got together and put up a fight for the right to live like human beings, instead of going thru the grind of the charities....Out in Chicago, when the musicians at the Garrick Theatre were laid off during the presentation of The Family Upstairs, six stage hands went out on strike in sympathy with the musicians. That's an example of solidarity and fighting spirit sorely needed among show folk these days.....The patient is sinking fast: Boston reports hardly anything doing in its bourgeois theatre. The N. Y. Times correspondent concludes a doleful article with: "So much for Boston, once a 'major city' of the American Theatre".....Chicago reduced prices to a \$2 top-but still only five theatres were going early in February. Times correspondent reports: "And so Chicago's ghastly stage season drags itself along in the dust like a wounded snake"... That's pretty low, eh?

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