

# LEFT THEATRE LIMITED

6, Meard Street, W. 1

Is it worth while for the working class movement to trouble with the professional theatre ?

Yes. The movement needs a theatre as well as its press and its platforms.

The "other side" understands the uses of the theatre. When they wanted millions of men to fight their war in 1914, they were not content with recruiting posters. "Tipperary" and Ivor Novello's "Keep the Home Fires Burning" were useful to the war-makers too. Both these songs came out of the theatre. The theatre has many forms - from the Old Vic to the Holborn Empire. Why should we leave it to the capitalists?

This is why Left Theatre Ltd. - now an Industrial and Provident Society - is starting a campaign to establish a permanent theatre in London, a theatre supported by, and belonging to, the working class movement, particularly the Trade Unions and Co-operatives.

A Conference called at the Westminster Theatre on May 10th received so much support from the Trade Union and Co-operative movements that it is clear that it is an immediate practical possibility to start such a theatre.

401 delegates, from 175 organisations, attended. Mr. A.M. Wall, Chairman of the London Trades Council and Hon. Sec. of the British Actors Equity (the Actors' T.U.), was chairman. Mr. Joseph Reeves spoke for the Co-operative Movement and Miss Margaret Webster for Actors' Equity; delegates from every kind of trade union and co-operative organisation and from working class political parties contributed valuable suggestions.

After the Conference delegates attended the Left Theatre production of Montagu Slater's new play "Stay Down Miner".

## THE REPERTORY THEATRE.

Left Theatre's main proposal is a repertory theatre in London, situated in a working class district not too far from the centre, e.g. Islington, Camden Town, Shoreditch. The theatre will employ a permanent company of actors and actresses at Trade Union rates. It will open every night, producing contemporary plays about problems that really matter, plays, whether comedies, dramas or revues, that will build up the working class movement and the peace movement.

We believe that if the theatre as a whole is to be made alive, it can only be through this kind of co-operation of the working class movement with the most progressive elements in the theatre.

The Committee of the Left Theatre consists of representatives of the professional theatre and representatives from Trades Councils, Trade Unions and Co-operative Guilds and Political Councils.

To start with, a minimum of £2,500 is required, and this is being raised in the form of 1/- shares in the Industrial and Provident Society. The shares are being widely taken up in the working class movement.

P.T.O.

TO WIDEN THE SUPPORT Left Theatre has already received, and to put it in a position to start the Repertory Theatre successfully, LEFT THEATRE IS PLANNING A TOUR IN OCTOBER NEXT of Montagu Slater's "STAY DOWN MINER", in the Greater London area. Local organisations, Trade Unions, Trades Councils, Co-operatives and political parties are arranging dates in their own areas, themselves booking the hall and making all the local arrangements for a one night show. These organisations are paying the touring company's expenses for the one night. This is a sum of about £12 which covers actors' wages, cartage of scenery etc.. The proceeds of the show are due to the local organisations.

In doing this they are assisting to bring together a permanent Left Theatre company of actors and actresses; they are helping to put Socialist Drama in Britain on its feet; they are helping to make possible the most vivid and powerful presentation of the working class case that exists - for that is what the theatre is.

Conversations are now taking place on the possibility of using Left Theatre in a big trade union recruiting campaign all over the country. Of this there may be further news shortly.

#### W H A T   Y O U   C A N   D O   T O   H E L P .

Take up as many 1/- shares as you can afford; then become an individual member of the Left Theatre by paying an annual subscription of 5/-, or 1/- if you are a member of a trade union or the Co-operative movement.

Get your organisation to take up blocks of shares.

Persuade your organisation to affiliate to Left Theatre. This will keep you in touch with all activities. The rates of affiliation are 2/6 for an organisation of 500 members; 3/6 from 500 to 800; 5/- from 800 to 1,000, etc.

Get this new form of Socialist propaganda, which the Left Theatre represents, discussed at your branch, guild, council, area or executive committee. Left Theatre will be glad to send speakers to meetings.

BOOK A NIGHT FOR A SHOWING OF "STAY DOWN MINER" IN YOUR AREA in October next. Write or ring Left Theatre, 6, Meard Street, Dean Street, W.1 GERRARD 1454.

Left Theatre has scored a great many successes in producing plays of working class interest, in Town Halls in various districts as well as in the West End theatres. The present plan to consolidate this work by forming a Repertory Theatre has the wholehearted support of the T.U., Co-op., and Labour Movements. The Conference which launched this campaign was called by Left Theatre in conjunction with:-

A.V.ALEXANDER, M.P.  
JOHN JAGGER, M.P.  
JOHN PARKER, M.P.

TOM SMITH, M.P.  
A.M.WALL.  
ELLEN WILKINSON, M.P.

On the Left Theatre Council are:- Professor Lascelles Abercrombie, Vera Brittain, Henry Cass, Tyrone Guthrie, John Jagger, Professor Laski, Kingsley Martin, Joseph Reeves, Paul Robeson, John Strachey, W. H. Thompson, Ernst Toller, Ellen Wilkinson, A. M. Wall and E. E. Wishart.