

# THE YOUNG COMRADE

OFFICIAL ORGAN • JUNIOR SECTION • YOUNG WORKERS LEAGUE OF AMERICA

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NOVEMBER, 1923

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## A Letter to Our Young Reader

DEAR LITTLE COMRADE:

This is the first number of your magazine, THE YOUNG COMRADE. It is going to be *your* magazine completely. We want you to write stories and poems for it, and draw pictures and cartoons to illustrate its pages. We want you to know that the paper is yours because it will be written and pictured by you only.

What kind of a magazine is it going to be, you will want to know. Well, it will be given out by the *Junior Section* of the *Young Workers League of America*. The *Junior Section* is made up of young boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 14. The *Junior Section* already has branches in many cities, such as Boston, Chicago, and Los Angeles. What makes it different from any other junior organization is that it is made up of the children of the WORKERS. It will show the children of these workers that while the children of the rich are living in the most beautiful homes, the children of the workers are forced to live in some tenement house, where the air stinks and is unhealthy, and where the rooms are so small that the whole family is very often crowded into tiny uncomfortable rooms. The *Junior Section* will show that while rich men's children have all the most luxurious foods and shelter and clothing, working-class children must go hungry many times and never have the clothes that they should have if they are to be comfortable during the year.

When it is summer time, the rich children go to the seashore for the season so as to keep cool. But you, working children, must stay in the city, where it is hot and sticky. When winter comes around, the rich children wear their furs and other warm clothes if they stay up North, or they go to some sunny spot in the South. But you have to shiver with cold because your father does

not get enough money from his boss to buy you furs and send you to a winter resting place.

THE YOUNG COMRADE wants to show you these things, and to explain to you how these bad and unequal things came about, why they are, and how to do away with them. We do not want you to have your head filled with fairy tales about how good this country is, because it is not a good country for the workers and their families, but only for the bosses. Your teacher and the newspapers always tell you that this is the best and most wonderful country in the world. But they do not tell you that in this country thousands of little children are made to work ten and eleven and twelve hours a day in beet fields, where the sun is so hot that pretty soon the children's faces become almost black, and the work does not permit them to grow up like real children should. Neither do they tell you how children are forced to work in dark coal mines digging coal.



Now, this only happens to the children of the workers, but not to the children of the rich. You could never find *them* on the streets selling papers or shining shoes; you could never find *them* in the burning beet and cotton fields or in the dark, wet, coal mines; nor could they be found in any of the other places where workers' children are forced to slave because their parents' boss does not pay enough wages to make them able to buy all the food and clothing and pay all the rent they must pay.

And when your teacher and the boss's newspapers tell you about the good and wonderful men that are at the head of the government, do they ever tell you that it took many, many years before the Congress would pass a law to stop the little children from selling their bodies to bos-

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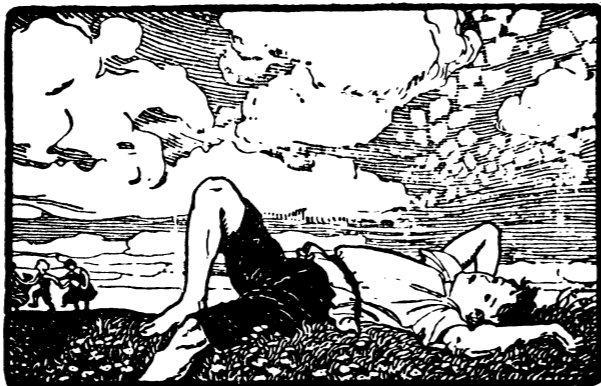
ses? No, they do not. And they say nothing about the fact that after people having worked for years to get this fair law passed, it was declared unconstitutional by the judges who make up the American Supreme Court (the highest and most important court in the country). That is, they said that the law to stop children from working was against the constitution. Now, what kind of a great and glorious constitution have we that does not allow a law to pass that will save the lives and health of hundreds of thousands of children?

You see, the law is made for the rich people only. The poor people, the working men and the women always get the worst of it. Little comrades, little children of the workers, do you think that it is right to have a law that says money is more important than the lives and health of little children? Don't you think that little children should grow up strong and healthy and rosy-cheeked? Is it right to have a law and a constitution that will not let them grow up like human beings?

We do not think it is right, and we feel sure that you do not think so either. That is why we are going to print THE YOUNG COMRADE. It is going to stand for a government where there are no rich and no poor, but only human beings. Where children shall enjoy life and not have to be like slaves. We want to explain to you how we intend to do this. To learn these things you must become a member of the *Junior Section* of the *Young Workers League*. They have hikes and socials and games

and talks. There is no teacher to stand over you with a hard ruler to hit you with, but they are all "regular fellows" who consider you as their friends, their brothers and sisters, THEIR COMRADES, and they want you to feel the same way. This magazine is going to be your paper, as we said before. Write for it and draw for it. Everything will be printed. Spread this magazine among your friends and tell them to come with you and join the *Junior Section*. Let us hear from you immediately so that you may know where a branch meets in your city or town.

You should write to  
Nat Kaplan, National Director, Junior Groups,  
1009 N. State St., Room 214, Chicago, Ill.



## Ruth's Rebellion

By Lillian Wilson

RUTH looked up from her work and nudged her mother. "Ma, ain't it time for me to stop yet? I was awfully late yesterday."

Mrs. Baker went on with her stringing of the price tags piled in front of her on the bare kitchen table.

"All right, Ruth. This time you can stop now. It isn't that your mamma wants you to be late—but—oh, well, shove over the one you've done." Ruth rose quickly, kissed her mother as she passed her and ran with lightning speed down the seven flights of stairs that separated the Baker rooms from the alley. She was a thin, whitely pale, dark-eyed little girl of twelve, but her face flushed with happiness as she caught up with her two chums, Mamie and Ella, who lived on the third floor in the next block.

"Ain't it wonderful?" Mamie was saying as Ruth caught up with them. "Just think! Monday we get promoted and maybe pretty soon we'll all graduate and everything!"

"And what do you think?" Ella squeezed Ruth's hand tight. "Last night after school I heard the teacher from across the hall say we're going to have visitors today. That means you'll have to stand up in front and recite, Ruth, like always."

Ruth laughed. "Oh, maybe they won't call on me. How can we tell?"

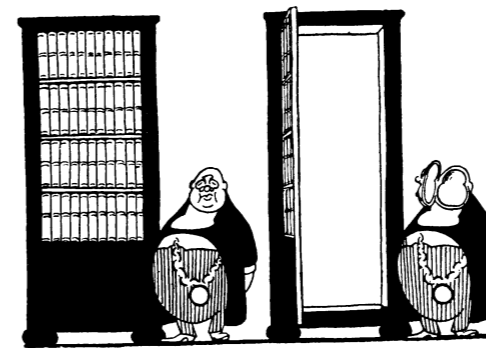
Then, as they climbed the stone steps that led to Public School No. 149: "Gee, Mamie, I'm tired. From six o'clock in the morning we've been stringing at my house."

There was an unusual quiet in the schoolroom as the three little girls entered. As Ruth took her seat, she could see sitting up in the front of her room with the teacher, a large well-dressed man and beside him a little girl. It was at the little girl that Ruth looked. For she was about Ruth's own age and looked curiously like her—with fat black curls and dark brown eyes. But she was plumper than Ruth and had nice red cheeks. She was wearing a pretty plaid wool dress and as she looked at her, Ruth shivered and moved her elbows closer to her sides so that the patches on her sleeves wouldn't show so much. Somehow as she looked at the little girl sitting there and looking at them all, Ruth felt very small and shabby and ashamed.

It wasn't until after the morning "Salute to the Flag" that Miss Fowler, the teacher, stepped in front of her desk to introduce the visitors.

"Children," she said, "we all ought to be very proud of having with us today Mr. Frenman and his little daughter. Mr. Frenman has something to say to us, and I want you all to listen closely to what he says, for he is a very great man, indeed."

Ruth gasped. Mr. Frenman! The man who owned the factory in which her father and her older brother worked!



The head of the fat capitalist is really like his book shelves: it is empty!

She leaned forward in her seat as Mr. Frenman stood up and began to talk. What was it he was saying? At first he started to talk as all the visitors who came to them did—of how nice it was to talk to them, of how his heart had skipped a beat as he saw all these children saluting the flag; of what a privilege it was for all of them to be in school where they got everything free; and of how proud they ought to be to be little citizens. But then he began to talk a little differently, a little more excitedly. It was more about being little citizens, about the opportunities the great United States offered to all people.

"Why," she heard him say, "in this country there is no excuse for being poor. All those who are industrious, who only are willing to work hard and to stick to it, get rich. Only those who are lazy, who want something for nothing, like the Bolsheviks, can't get enough to get along—"

Ruth trembled. She thought of her father. Old before his time, his body bent and twisted, who, since she could remember, got up at six and went off to the mill, his cold lunch in a little pail swinging at his side; and of how he came home in the evenings, too tired to do anything but have his supper and tumble into bed again. She thought of her brother George who worked at a bench besides her father now, of how tired he was and how sad all the time. And she thought of her mother who sat all day over the tags that she put little pink strings through; and how hard they had to work to get enough to eat. She looked down at her own hands and tears suddenly came to her eyes. Work? Industrious? Why, her family ought to be millionaires, and she—why, she ought to be plump and full of pep and well-dressed and everything—like the girl up in front, for instance!

She looked around her at the other little girls. Did they feel as she did? Or did they believe what this man said? But they all seemed pleased with what the man was saying. Was it that they didn't realize what she did, that he was calling their own fathers, their own brothers, lazy, heartless, cruel? Somehow they must be shown. They *mustn't* go on thinking that that was so. She half raised her hand—she wanted to speak—and then she heard her name called. Miss Fowler was asking her to come up and recite to them what she had always done on Tuesday mornings, "O Captain, My Captain!" Ruth made her way to the front of the room and faced her playmates.

In one glance she saw them all—pale, thin faces like her own; patched, worn dresses, and battered worn-out shoes. And something happened! Ruth stretched out her hands to them.

"Kids," she cried, "don't take what this man is giving us! We are poor! We are underfed! But our fathers and mothers *aren't* lazy. They work all the time, as we'll have to work, too, and—"

She could not get any further. Roughly she was seized by the angry teacher and thrust into her seat, the while the teacher made profuse apologies to Mr. Frenman.

Ruth was crying, but in a way she was happy. She had at last started to show the other children that this man was wrong. And when they all talked it over at recess—just the little girls themselves—they decided that Ruth was right. And Ruth went to her work happier than she had ever been for she had caught sight of the beginning of a great vision, a great ideal! She had already taken the first step forward on the road to a working class spirit!

## Why We Organize Junior Groups

By Peter W., Age 11½

MY father works in a steel mill in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. He works all day and he goes away early in the morning before I even see him get up. Some nights he has to work overtime and I don't see him for three days sometimes. My father cannot belong to the union because he will be kicked out of his job if the company finds out. The steel mill is owned by rich people and they make lots of money profit. But the workers do not make much money, because the company is a pig and wants to make it all.

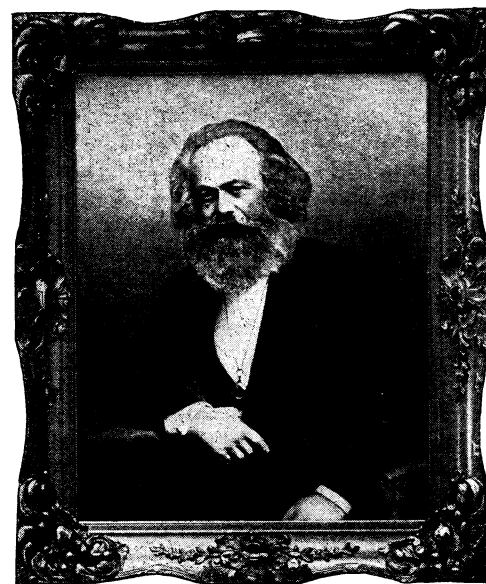
Sometimes my father talks about the union, but he always tells me not to tell any of the other children, because if it was found out, my father would lose his job, like I wrote before.

My father went out on strike four years ago when the big strike was going on, and he stuck to the end with all the good union men. But the strike was lost because the men did not stick it out. My father always tells me that the strike was lost because there was no strength in the union, because it was weak. It was separated into many unions and they each had a separate strike. My father knows because he was on the strike committee.

My father is belonging to the Workers Party, but no ones knows it except the good men who don't squeal to the superintendent.

Some day we will wipe the capitalists off the earth and we will have Communism. My father says that we must organize organizations if we want to do this. So I am going to join a **Junior Group** when I could organize one. I can't join the Young Workers League branch in Bethlehem because I am only a little child. When I am older I will join it if they still got it. But anyhow I think my father is right. Nothing could be done if we are not organized, so we must organize to do something. If we get together we could give Capitalists the gate and tell them not to come back.

Hooray for the Junior Groups and let's be free children like they are in Russia!



Karl Marx

The great thinker and fighter for the workers. He is the "father of modern socialism."

### A Story of the Sixth Grade

By Rose Cohen, Age 12.

THIS incident shall never be blotted from my memory. It was a very cold day in January. On coming to school, the lessons progressed as always. When the arithmetic lesson began, everyone noticed that one of the pupils, a very bright lad, was uninterested in his work. This was quite unusual for him, as he had always shown great interest in his work. But the teacher said nothing. On nearing the end of the geography lesson, to the surprise of all the children, he flung the book on the floor and burst out crying bitterly.

The bell soon rang for the children to go home for dinner, but he did not go. The teacher questioned him kindly about his queer behavior and between sobs he told her his story.

His father was dead, and his mother, who was very ill, could not go to work. This meant that she could not earn any money to support herself and her boy. All the money she had saved, he had spent for doctors and medicine for his sick mother, and so had gone without food for two days. After the teacher had heard him out, she gave him half of her own lunch and some money to buy himself something.

But he could not be fed like this forever. So he had to stop school, a mere boy of eleven years, and go to work to support his mother and himself.

He is not the only one. There are millions of children like him. Young boys and girls dragged away from home and school and play, to slave many hours a day in a hot, stuffy factory. And why? Because a few capitalists wish to hoard up money. Yet these children will have to slave until, in the years to come, the present system of society shall be forever abolished.

### My Friend Walter

By Ruth Miller, Age 11.

I HAVE a boy friend whose name is Walter. His father and mother are very poor, because his father went to strike last summer on the railroads, and the railroad company does not want to give in to the workers. But the workers are very brave and they do not want to go back to work like they used to, so they stay out and they are very poor. Sometimes there is a committee going around to collect money for the ones who need it the worst. Walter's father and mother always need the money, because Walter's father was only getting a small amount of wages, and he did not save up for sometime when he wouldn't work.

Walter has to wear bad clothes that are always torn, and I know that he does not eat the good food that the teacher and the doctor say all children ought to have. My brother belongs to the Young Workers League, and he was telling me about Junior Groups that the League is organizing. So I told Walter about it, too. I told him that all the children of the workers ought to belong to one organization, because they are not the same as the children of the rich. The fathers of the rich children own the railroads and they never have to strike for better wages and smaller hours. They all wear nice clothes and eat good food, not like Walter and many other children. They even live in another section of this city, and they live in lovely houses, with gardens and trees and a dog.


When I told Walter about these things, he said that we ought to start one right away, only he would not be able to pay anything for his share because he has no money. But I told him that we ought to get some more children before we could start a Junior Section in our city. He said, all right. And now we are speaking to other children, and pretty soon we will have a branch of the fighting boys and girls of the Junior Groups in .....

**A stick can be broken; a bundle cannot. Join the Junior Groups!**  
**Organize to fight rotten schools, child labor and Capitalism!**

**The Young Comrade**

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## A Child of a Worker

By Max Perlow

RIDING at night on the car to Brooklyn, my gaze fell upon a small, thin boy, practically a child, whose eyes simply refused to remain under his control. The boy sought to prevail upon himself not to doze off: But it was of no use: against his will his eyes would close, his head would nod and strike against his neighbor. His face was smeared, his hands swollen and red, from under his tattered "suit" could be seen his underwear, and through the holes in his cap his hair stood out.



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Although I immediately understood that the child was a victim of our "democratic society," I wanted to hear a few words from the young proletarian himself.

Luckily, a seat became vacant near him, and I immediately sat down in it. But how shall I get an opportunity to talk to him? At first I doubted if he would answer me, for when his eyes opened he could be seen to look with bitterness at those around him.

Quite the opposite happened, however: No sooner had I asked my neighbor a few questions, than he turned about to face me, looked at me in a friendly manner, and said the following:

"I work in a wurst factory from 7:30 in the morning until now (it was then about 10 o'clock at night); I eat "inside" and as soon as my meal is done, I go back to work. I am 14 and a half years old."

His words were interrupted by a deep, painful sigh. His face became so earnest, that I cou'd hardly believe that next to me sat a fourteen-year-old child.

"And do you know how much my wages are?" he suddenly cried. "Five dollars a week . . ."

Ah, how much anger and pain was hidden in the depths of this young tortured heart, when he spoke these words!

And here I felt that America is a free country. . . . Here you are free to take the lives away from them in the factories—fourteen hours in the day.

## Games For Junior Comrades

In order to find out who shall be "it" in these games, the following method can be used: The Junior Comrades in the game are standing in a circle and the play leader uses the following counting out rhyme:

Eenie, Meenie, Meine, Mo.  
 Workers robbed where'er they go.  
 They can stop it if they're not too slow.  
 We young comrades tell them so.

This can be used in the good old way. The play leader counts around the circle in rotation, one syllable for each young comrade. The one on whom the last word falls is out and the counting is resumed with those remaining until only one is left and he (or she) is "it".

### Looking for the Communist Truth.

Game No. 1.

The Communist Truth should be known to every boy and girl in this country, because it is always among us. Many of us don't see her because we have the bandages of capitalist propaganda around our eyes.

The Game (Blind Nell). All the players but one are blindfolded, this one carries loosely in his hand a small bell so that it will ring with every step he takes. The blindfolded players try to catch the "Communist Truth" and he must always be in their midst. He will therefor have to be very quick and know how to dodge those players who are trying to tag him. The young comrade who catches the one with the bell becomes "Communist Truth"

and the one who held the bell last becomes blindfolded.

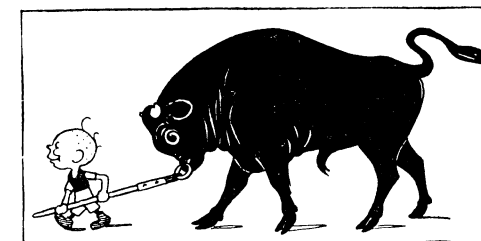
### Giving Orders.

Game No. 2.

When you get to be a member of a Communist Party you always obey all the orders of the Party.

The Game. All the young comrades who want to play are drawn up in a line and one young comrade is the play leader and he stands in front. The play leader imitates some sort of work, such as hammering, sawing, washing, etc. He calls out, "Do this." The other players must all follow his lead, stopping as soon as he stops. But sometimes the play leader calls out, "Do that" instead of "Do this," and any of the players who start doing "that" must drop out of the game. The last player to remain in the game wins.

In the future issues of the "Young Comrade" you will find more and more of these games. You will also find puzzles of all kinds and many other surprises.



## Why Workers Go to War

By Max Shachtman.

**D**EAR little comrade! Did you ever notice that when your father or brother comes home from his work in the shop of the field or the mine, he looks tired? Did you notice that he goes to bed as soon as he can because after his day's work he can hardly stand on his feet and he is weary and sleepy?

Now, why is this? We will try to tell you. You see, the workers work so hard that they make so many of the good things of life that they cannot even buy them with the wages they get. If your father works in a factory where silk dresses are made, you never wear any of them. You wear cotton dresses. And so it is with every other thing. The boss does not want to give the workers too much pay because then he would not make enough of profit to satisfy him. And he says, "What is the use of running a business if I cannot make a lot of profit out of it?"

But as we said, so many of the good things are made that after a little while the boss cannot find anyone in his country who has the money to buy his goods. What does he do then? He packs up his goods, puts it on a big steamship, and sends it away to some small island or a big city that has not yet any factories of its own where it can make its own clothes, and houses, and many other things that we have.

When the boss reaches these foreign countries, he unpacks his stock of goods and shows it to the natives. He says to them, "Put on trousers" and "Put on hats, coats, and shirts and shoes." But the natives are very simple people. They do not wear much clothes, because in their part of the world the sun is very hot and it is very comfortable to go without clothes. And they do not wear heavy leather shoes, so that their feet are strong and shapely, while we often have corns and bunions and flat feet. They do not want to live in stuffy brick tenements, either, for they like the pure air, and they love to bathe in their sweet pools.

But does the boss care about what these simple people like or do not like? Oh, no! All he cares about is to make money by selling his goods to anyone he can find. But the native refuses to buy the things which he thinks are of no use to him, and when the boss tries to force him to buy it, the natives become angry, and they kick the boss off their land. Wouldn't you do the same if, for example, you lived in a desert and a man tried to sell you a perfectly useless steamship?

But the boss doesn't give a snap about what is right or wrong. He is only anxious to sell the goods which he cannot sell to his own countrymen. So he begins to yell and to howl, and to shout and to squawk about the terrible people who kicked him off their land when he hadn't done a single thing to them. And he calls them "barbarous" and "heathen." In fact, he makes such a fuss about the whole thing, that the government sends a battleship and lots of soldiers down to the land of the natives, and forces them to be good to the boss. Pretty soon a missionary

comes down there and begins to talk to the poor natives about God. He tells them to be calm and peaceful, and that when they are struck on the one cheek to turn the other. You see, he knows that they are going to be hit on the cheek all the time, but he does not want them to do anything about it except to turn the other cheek and get hit there also. And the cheek is not the only place where he is hit, either. He gets it good and plenty.

So they put the poor native into clothes and make him drink whiskey so that he may not feel how he is being made a slave to the boss, and then they send him out into the fields to pick beets, or something like that.

But our country is not the only one that has too much goods made and no place to sell them. There are other countries, and the bosses of all these countries go down



A picture of ex-President Harding in Heaven. The reason he is smiling is that he must have been glad to have been rid of such a rotten country.

to these strange lands and try to get possession of them. The bosses of one country try their best to beat the bosses of the other countries. And when one of them succeeds, the other ones get angry, and they go home and tell the newspapers (which they own), to write about how bad the other countries are. The workers are sometimes very silly, and they believe all that the boss's papers tell them. Pretty soon they also become angry about the other country and they begin to agree with the boss's papers. But the paper does not tell them about the real thing—that fight over the strange land.

When the boss thinks that the workers are fooled enough, he begins to talk about a war. And before the workers know what has happened, they are thrown into a uniform, and they go to the front to shoot down other workers, who really don't know what they are all fighting about. Of course, the boss does not go to the front to fight his own battles. He laughs, and says to himself, "The workers are all fools, and they will fight for me forever."

And when the war is over, and the bosses of each country sign a peace treaty which gives the winner the share of land and money he was looking for, the papers tell the workers what a good bunch of fellows they are. But many of the workers are dead on the battlefield, and their widows and children cry for them in vain, for they can never come back. And many of those who do come back are crippled for life, or else they are wounded and unable to work for a living for themselves and their families. The government does not care about them. They take good care of the bosses and they give them large amounts of money to make them ships and bullets to kill the fathers of little children like you. But when the workers come back from the front, the boss will not even give them back their old jobs, because he has got a cheaper man. And the government does not give them a small bonus for all the things they sacrificed.

Little comrade, do you think that all these things are right? Do you think that your fathers and brothers should give up their lives in order that the boss should make profits? What is more important: The life of a single man, or the dirty dollars of a millionaire?

We, of the Junior Section of the Young Workers League of America, are fighting against this sort of thing. We

want the workers to own what they make, so that there won't be any need of fighting with other workers to own a land thousands of miles from home. We want the worker to be a free human being, who will receive the full fruits of his work, and will be able to keep his wife and children in good clothes, in a nice house, and feed them good healthy, nourishing food—and plenty of it.

Do you think we are right? Then do not waste a moment's time. Join the **Junior Section** of the Young Workers League of America. There must be a branch in your town or city. If there is not one there already, why it's up to you to organize one. We will send you all the information if you will write to Nat Kaplan. He is the National Junior Director, and his address is at Room 214, 1009 N. State St., Chicago, Ill.

Are you ready? Then let's go!

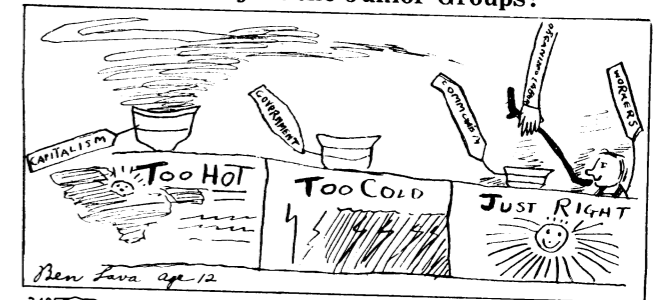
### A Short Story

By Ben Lava, Age 12

Every time I walk the streets of Chicago, (which I don't do often as I prefer riding) I think of this.

A small boy without any parents had been selling newspapers and sleeping in a barn and eating only enough to keep him alive. He had been walking in a subway selling papers when a capitalist came up to him and bought a paper. The boy received a cent while two cents was the price. He ran after the man, but did not get more. If they're so rich, why don't they give more, not less?

Be a rebel and join the Junior Groups!



Drawn by Ben Lava

Do you want to receive **THE YOUNG COMRADE** every month by mail to your house? **THE YOUNG COMRADE** is the magazine of the children of the working class. It is your paper, and you should support it. Speak to your friends about it. Speak to your parents about it. Get your school mates and playmates to become subscribers to it. But first of all, become a subscriber to it yourself! Send us fifty cents and you will get this magazine for a year. Tear off the blank in the next column and send it to **THE YOUNG COMRADE**, 1009 No. State St., Room 214, Chicago, Ill. **DO IT NOW!**

The Young Comrade,  
1009 No. State St., Rm. 214,  
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Comrades:—

Enclosed find fifty cents for a year's subscription to **THE YOUNG COMRADE**. Please send it to

NAME .....

STREET NO. or BOX .....

CITY..... STATE.....

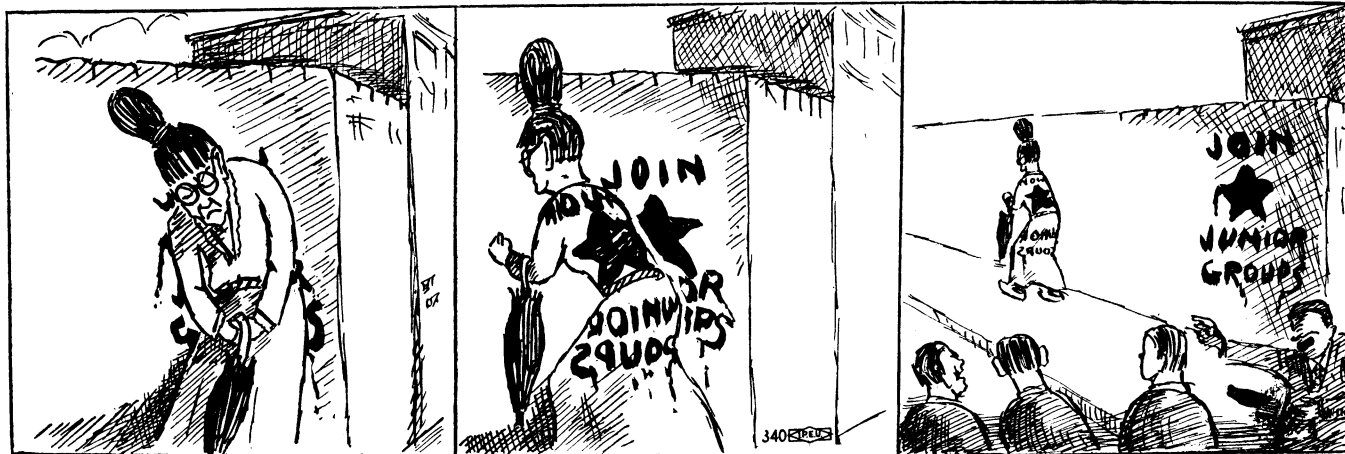
## How Teacher Advertised the Junior Groups



Willie went to school each day  
 And heard the teacher squeak,  
 How cat was spelled c-a-t,  
 And how to hate the Bolsheevk.

But every day with paint and brush  
 He'd write on walls and stoops,  
 And call upon the little kids  
 To join the Junior Groups.

Miss Teacher caught him one fine  
 day  
 Painting "Join the Group";  
 Her hair stood up, and with um-  
 brella raised  
 She was after him with a whoop.



But he wasn't caught tho she ran  
 and ran  
 'Til she almost got the croup.  
 And the funniest thing: she leaned  
 on the wall  
 Where he'd painted "Join the  
 group."

She walked away and on her back  
 Could be seen from near and far,  
 The words, "Join with the Junior  
 Groups"  
 And the terrible Bolsheevk star!

And Willie called the comrades there  
 This wonderful sight to see.  
 For never before had Miss Teacher  
 Advertised the Junior Groups free!