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Essay: Brecht Epic Theatre

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**Political Prisoners: Brecht scene example**

**Scene: The Unlikely Objector-**

*It is the year 1936 in a small town outside of Berlin, and the anti-Jewish legislation is in full effect in Germany. The town square is filled with people buying fruits, vegetables, and other groceries while having casual conversation. In the background one can here the nationalistic preaching of members in the Hitler Youth in the center of the town square. Suddenly the busy marketplace and all the characters freeze, the light dims and a woman begins to sing: The objector, market merchant, Hitler Youth Member one, Hitler Youth member two, singing woman:*

**Singing Woman:** (singing to the audience) When is it time to stand up for beliefs? When you speak your mind in a crowd does it bring true relief? What is more important for you people conviction, piece of mind, or security? To speak up and stop injustice does it come only through emergency? When is it too late to act… I urge you to ponder that.

(*lights come back on and bustle of marketplace slowly starts back up* *again. The objector enters the stage walking slowly and looking around the marketplace. Although his eyes are wandering and the marketplace is full of life and energy, the stage set is quiet except for the loud preaching of two young members of the Hitler Youth. The objector watches the two as he moves through the market place.)*

**Hitler Youth Member one:** Devotion begins early! If your children are ten and over enroll them in the Hitler Youth to serve our glorious leader!

**Hitler Youth Member two:** Help to keep the proud German tradition alive! The Aryan race and its blood need to stay pure as we begin our transition to a new and better Germany!

**Hitler youth Member one:** Parents don’t be shy about letting your children join! Hitler, our leader is kind to all children and gets no greater pleasure than watching German youth prosper and grow!

**Hitler youth Member two:** (Holds up poster depicting two Jewish males with oversized noses, long finger nails, yellow teeth and red eyes grabbing for gold with a caption that says “Germany will soon belong to the Jews!” and in the background destroyed buildings and pictures of German citizens crying). Do you want this to become the reality of our beautiful German nation?!? Join our wonderful leader Hitler to help create the Germany that we all envision!

*(Audience can still only hear the two Hitler youth members, then two men walk by, one wearing a shirt with Che Guevera and the other with Obama that says hope and change.)*

**Hitler youth Member one:** (Points at two who are wearing the Che and Obama shirts) Hey you! Stop! Those shirts promote treason!

**Hitler Youth Member two:** Communists! Halt!

(Two Hitler Youth members chase the two men down the street and slowly the audience can now only hear the hustle and bustle of market place. Objector walks up to a market merchant selling various fruits and vegetables.)

**Market Merchant:** (to the objector) Those Hitler Youth, they are like Hitler’s little army of drones circling about waiting to pounce on anyone who’s out of line… I cant imagine what will happen to those two. Probably will be sent away in the morning (referring to the early concentration camps filled with political prisoners) Amazing isn’t it my friend?

**The Objector:** Oh I don’t know, they are just doing what’s necessary… Can I get six apples, three oranges, two onions, and two tomatoes today?

**Market Merchant:** (As he bags up the order) I know, I know, it just seems like everyday they get more strict and less understanding. These new laws against Jews I don’t know if I can agree with them… What do you think? (points out to and looks at the audience and the objector looks over his shoulder back at the audience as well)

(pause…)

**The Objector:** I try not to think about those things anymore… I just try to live…

(stage goes dark and woman comes out again singing)

**Singing Woman:** (singing to the audience)Is it so easy to just live and go through the motions? Go through everyday life without even a notion, or the slightest amount of emotion? Who will speak up to end this cycle? The persecution is prevalent and we are slowly dying. We must not quit trying.

(next day at the marketplace we see the objector enter the stage again but this time his attention is centered around a crowd that is gathering around the stand of the market merchant. As he approaches he sees the market merchant weeping and being taken away by the police. The two Hitler youth are in the background yelling.)

**Both Hitler Youth Members together:** Take the traitor away! A simple merchant has no right to question our Leader!

(The crowd is murmuring and talking amongst each other. The objector looks confused and unsure as to what he should do, but then impulse takes over. The objector suddenly shouts over at the crowd, police and Hitler Youth Members.)

**The Objector:** (turns to the audience and shouts)Enough!! I’m tired of it all, the preaching, the lies, the deception, and the ignorance. Listen everyone! How long can we let this go on without saying anything, without speaking up against this oppressive regime?? This merchant is a good man who has done no harm to anyone, but because he speaks his mind we throw him into a dark corner to never be heard from again? This is not the Germany I know. This is not the Germany I love. This hate needs to end! This regime needs to be dismantled! I have had enough of standing by and doing nothing. Watching the innocent being taken away while I stay in silence and live in constant fear of being the next one who is taken away without warning or trial. Come on people of Germany lets all let our voices be heard and end this era of fear and misery!

(pause…)

(The crowd gasps and remains in silence. No one moves for a long time, still in shock that anyone would have ever had the courage or the audacity to say something so blatantly against the leader and the regime. Then finally the police officers step through the crowd towards the objector and the objector closes his eyes. The stage then goes dark and the curtains close.)

**-End of scene**