

Views & Comments Number 13, May 1956

Libertarian League

May 1956

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Views & Comments Number Thirteen, May 1956
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Announcement

New York
May Day Meeting
Tuesday, May First
8:00 p.m. at the Libertarian Center
813 Broadway

Speakers from the following organizations:

- Independent Socialist League
- Industrial Workers Of The World
- Libertarian League
- Solidaridad Internacional Antifascista
- Young Socialist League
- War Resisters League

Plan Now To Attend

LIBERTARIAN FORUM

ROUND TABLE YOUTH DISCUSSIONS Every Friday at 8
LIBERTARIAN CENTER
813 Broadway (between 11th & 12th Sts.) New York City

What We Stand For

Two great power blocs struggle for world domination. Neither of these represents the true interests and welfare of Humanity. Their conflict threatens mankind with atomic destruction. Underlying both of these blocs are institutions that breed exploitation, inequality and oppression.

Without trying to legislate for the future we feel that we can indicate the general lines along which a solution to these problems can be found.

The exploitative societies of today must be replaced by a new libertarian world which will proclaim—Equal freedom for all in a free socialist society. “Freedom” without socialism leads to privilege and injustice; “Socialism” without freedom is totalitarian.

The monopoly of power which is the state must be replaced by a world-wide federation of free communities, labor councils and/or co-operatives operating according to the principles of

free agreement. The government of men must be replaced by a functional society based on the administration of things.

Centralism which means regimentation from the top down must be replaced by federalism which means co-operation from the bottom up.

THE LIBERTARIAN LEAGUE Will not accept the old socio-political cliches, but will boldly explore new roads while examining anew the old movements, drawing from them all that which time and experience has proven to be valid.

Spain Again

Several cities of Northern Spain are in the grip of major strikes and in some cases these are general and city-wide. Their pattern would appear to indicate that they are spontaneous and not the result of planned organization by the underground. The strikes broke out in places that have long been strongholds of reaction and Where the underground is relatively weak. The underground movements, strongest in Catalonia, were apparently caught by surprise since the reaction there has been less than would have been the case otherwise.

Coincidental with the strikes in the north there are reports of new student disorders in Madrid. Taken together, these events point up once again the fact that even twenty years after wading to power through the workers' blood with the aid of Hitler and Mussolini, Franco has not succeeded in conquering the indomitable spirit of the people of Spain. At every turn resistance in one form or another shows its head.

Running true to form, the Communists—via the Prague radio, beamed at Spain—are trying to take credit for the latest outburst of anti-fascist resistance. Also running true to form, reactionaries everywhere rush to support the commies in their contentions, although those best informed of the Spanish political scene know that these people are completely discredited and have very little following either in Spain or in Spanish emigre circles.

American aid is today the chief source of Franco's remaining strength. Without it his regime would probably have collapsed already, a victim of its own internal contradictions and of the popular resistance. In 1931, the Spanish monarchy fell following a series of general strikes and student demonstrations. This pattern may very well be followed again, if not this time, then three months or three years from now.

The General Strike is the most powerful of all the weapons against tyranny and exploitation. And Spain, with its very high traditions of solidarity, is the country where that weapon has in the past been used oftenest and with the greatest effect.

On May 14th, the anniversary of the establishment of the Spanish Republic, the "liberal" Democratic mayor of New York officially received Franco's foreign ministry Alberto Martin Artajo. A message of protest was issued by Norman Thomas, chairman of the Committee to Defend Franco's Labor Victims, and the mayor's residence at Gracie Mansion was picketed by over fifty persons of that committee. Slogans carried in the picketing included:

- No welcome for fascists
- The Spanish strike is our strike
- Against dictatorship in Spain and' Russia

- Jesús de Galindez marches with us.

On Sunday, May 15th, Senor Alberto Martin Artajo attended mass at St. Patrick's cathedral and was personally received and blessed by Porky Pig.

Quoting our contemporaries:

It simply passes all understanding how indifferent Jehovah can be to the frequent destruction of His temples on this mundane sphere. We are not speaking about pagan or heretical joss houses. Indifference, yes, even hostility toward them is understandable. No, we refer to His very own temples of the Church that enjoys His special favor.

The latest instance is the total ruin by fire of the R.C. Cathedral at Trenton, N.J., with a financial loss of from two to three million dollars, One priest, vicar general of the diocese and two women, housekeepers at the rectory adjoining, to their lives.

Only a year or so ago a similar fire destroyed the cathedral in the adjoining diocese of Newark, N.J. No claim was made in either case that the fires were the work of arsonists so they must be classed as acts of God. But that brings us right back where we started from. Why does God want to destroy his own temples? Truly his ways pass all understanding. —from THE LIBERAL

Some New Voices Speak

In this age of conformity, it is always a source of satisfaction to encounter voices of dissent. While we may not agree with much that they say, their very presence is a source of satisfaction and of hope. With this issue of Views and Comments, the Libertarian League extends its fraternal greetings (and criticism of course, for we also have the right to dissent) to two new magazines—LIBERATION and THE NEEDLE.

LIBERATION has an editorial board consisting of Dave Dellinger, Roy Finch, A.J. Muste, Bayard Rustin and Charles Walker as well as a very impressive list of associate editors and contributors. The March issue (No. 1) publishes a statement of principles called "Tract for the Times." On final objectives and basic attitudes we find ourselves in substantial agreement with these comrades. However we feel that they left much unstated. While accepting their policy of non-violent resistance as a very useful tactic in many situations, such as the current one in Montgomery, Alabama, we consider it wrong to assume dogmatically a position which cannot apply to every situation. In the struggle for a better world, there are times when the elementary right of self-defense must be exercised by other means. Non-violence as a general policy will, for example, never bring down the Bolshevik dictatorship, whereas a few uprisings such as those in Vorkuta and in East Berlin are the sort of actions that can ultimately destroy totalitarianism. We will agree with our anarcho-pacifist comrades that all possibilities of non-violent resistance must be explored first. But what of those cases where the exploration brings up negative results? And what is one to do when there is no time for exploration and experiments—as in Spain in 1936?

Since there are no barricades envisioned for the immediate future—in America at least—there will be considerable opportunity for experimentation and discussion in every field of thought and of action. While working together with comrades of various ideological persuasions, a revolutionary strategy for the future may develop and with it a movement better able to cope with

the problems of the future. In the course of working for common goals, we must be prepared to cooperate with all tendencies to the extent of our agreement.

THE NEEDLE is in some respects a successor to the defunct magazine RESISTANCE. Its general orientation is similar although an effort is made at humor in addition to the usual "art" and "poetry." As an expression of the strivings of the bohemian left we feel it falls far short of the magazine CLIMAX, published in New Orleans. As the expression of an ideological tendency all too prevalent in the American Libertarian movement it is in the best tradition of RESISTANCE and more literate than the late lamented INDIVIDUAL ACTION.

The following is quoted from some introductory remarks in the first issue (April) of THE NEEDLE:

"We are convinced that the basic philosophical and functional foundations of our modern statist world are spurious and we will try to pinpoint these fallacies. Further, because we each are moved by need of a society based on peace and love and dignity, we hope to offer an alternative philosophical and functional system operational today. We are not concerned with what society in the future will be like, IF. But rather with how to make the life we live less threatened and more a positive, growing, satisfying experience. So, our twofold purpose: The Needling—the piercing of the illusions. And the Mending—the extension of the acts of love, community, peace and freedom.

"This is not an age for the political broadsides addressed to a revolutionary mass movement. The revolutionary Masses seem to have dwindled to a handful of individuals like ourselves, grimly holding out against the onslaught of growing totalitarian norms. So, the Needle will not be theoretical and polemical, but rather, we hope, an unorthodox expression of criticism, reflecting the thinking of those individuals not yet captured by our statist culture. And, by a non-dogmatic attitude, reach into those circles of youths and individuals whose rebellious spirit is unexpressed except for outbursts of anger and sullen non-participation and perhaps help make their struggle against our stifling mores, a more positive, enlightened force."

We do not share what we feel is the pessimism and sense of futility of the individualist anarchists. We agree with them that the situation is tough, and the struggle is hard. But it is not made any easier if we all become hermits. To the extent that THE NEEDLE succeeds in needling people not yet in the movement into thinking for themselves its work will be useful, but to the extent that onanism in an ivory tower is preferable to the more virile activity of multiplying the libertarian species in the fields and factories, we believe their work to be self-defeating for the very ideas we know they sincerely believe in. Knowing these comrades personally, and knowing what they could do, we truly wish their activities were directed along more constructive lines.

LIBERATION

110 Christopher St., New York 14, N.Y. Monthly, \$3 per year

THE NEEDLE

216 Second Ave, San Francisco, Calif., Subscriptions free—contributions voluntary

Those interested in CLIMAX, which describes itself as "a creative review in the jazz spirit," can send one dollar for each issue or four dollars for four issues. It appears to appear spasmodically. In spite of its price, undoubtedly worth it to those that "go" for what "sends" them. The address is CLIMAX, P.O. Box 979, New Orleans 8, La.

BUT

Before you start sending your money around to these other good people, how about that contribution you have been preparing to send to V & C. We need it the most to say the least.

News From Franco's Paradise

Word has just been received from Spain of the latest manifestation of the barbarity latent in Franco's regime.

On February sixth two Spanish comrades, members of the F.A.I. (Anarchist Federation of Iberia) and a common prisoner tried to escape from the Penitentiary of San Miguel de los Reyes, province of Valencia.

They scaled the prison wall, then leaped down the other side. The common prisoner was lucky and escaped. However, the comrade who followed him broke his leg and involuntarily cried out, alerting the prison guards.

Both comrades were caught immediately, taken back to the prison and mercilessly beaten by Civil Guards with their rifle butts. They suffered fractures in various parts of their bodies and one of the men was vomiting blood when they were thrown into solitary confinement, where they will remain with little or no medical care for the next six months. They are not expected to live.

Statement on the Galindez Case

On March 12, Jesús de Galindez disappeared in New York. Before this happened he had made statements and written letters which showed that he knew his life was in danger because of his outspoken opposition to dictatorship in the Dominican Republic. This dictatorship was established, and is actively supported, by the United States.

We had the opportunity to work with Jesús de Galindez. A Basque Catholic-Nationalist and an exile from Franco's tyranny, he fought against dictatorship in many parts of the world. He joined with us in protesting the execution and imprisonment of anarchists and socialists in Spain, though he differed with us on many questions—his concern for freedom was not narrow and partisan. He was an active supporter of the Committee to Defend Franco's Labor Victims.

We wish to add our voices to those already raised in protest against his disappearance, to join with them in emphasizing that those responsible for this crime must be found and brought to justice. In this we wish to express our solidarity with the group which has been formed and which has offered a reward in this case.

We have every hope that Galindez is still alive. As long as there is any chance that he is, no effort must be spared in searching for him. And if he has paid with his life for his convictions then it is not only a question of our demanding that the criminals who perpetrated this outrage be apprehended; it seems also that we must rededicate ourselves to the principles of freedom, to that opposition to the dictatorship in Spain, the Dominican Republic, Russia and anywhere else, which Galindez represented.

[signed by]

- The Catholic Worker
- Independent Socialist League
- Industrial Workers Of The World
- Libertarian League

- Solidaridad Internacional Antifascista
- War Resisters League
- Young Socialist League

The Upper Class

FORTUNE magazine, no apologist for the working class, asked a number of the nation's top executives how they arrived at major decisions. The answers are candid and revealing.

"I'm damned if I know." —Right Joyce (Glidden Paint)

"There are no rules." —Charles Dickey (J.P. Morgan & Co.)

"Whenever I think, I make a mistake." —Roger Stevens (New York real estate)

"You don't know how you do it; you just do it." —Benjamin Fairless (U.S. Steel)

"I don't think businessmen know how they make decisions, I know I don't."

—Charles Cox (Kennecott Copper)

Now gentle reader, if the boss doesn't know why he's doing what he's doing why should we let him continue?

— READING LABOR ADVOCATE

Stalinism Without Stalin

In spite of serious ideological and political differences with the Independent Socialist League, we have long considered their weekly paper, LABOR ACTION, to be one of the best radical publications in the country. The current series of articles by Hal Draper on "Stalinism Without Stalin" should be read carefully by everyone interested in the recent switch inside the Soviet Union.

After giving considerable background material, much of which is already well known throughout the anti-Stalinist left, comrade Draper takes issue with those who see in the events in Russia changes of a fundamental nature in the regime itself. He declares that Stalinism continues intact without Stalin. He demonstrates conclusively, with a wealth of detail and examples coupled with sound reasoning, that the present "collective leadership" in Moscow is every bit as totalitarian as was the one-man leadership of Stalin. Numerous examples are given and the whole subject is done up brown except for one important point, and this to us is decisive.

It is claimed that the essence of Stalinism remains and that there has been no return to Lenin's policies, which are referred to as being "democratic" etc. Anyone excepting a Trotskyite or ex-Trotskyite would by this time have come inevitably to the conclusion that the basis of Stalin's repressive policies against opposition within the party were but an extension of Lenin's and Trotsky's policies of repressions against opposition and dissident elements within the working class of Russia and the revolution itself. It was not "Stalinism" that destroyed the revolution, prepared the way for the madness of Stalinism. In this sense the "essence of Bolshevism" remained under Stalin and remains also today.

Our friends of the Independent Socialist League have come far in their ethical and social thinking since breaking officially with Trotskyism in 1939. They "stand for" the principles of democratic socialism and have renounced the discredited concept of the one-party dictatorship. We

feel that in some respects these comrades are evolving in a generally libertarian direction. On the fundamental question of an evaluation of Bolshevism however they lag sadly. The umbilical cord has been weakened somewhat but it is still there.

May we recommend to our ISL and YSL friends a careful re-perusal of the writings of Rosa Luxembourg and of the Russian anarchists who foresaw in Bolshevism the seeds that developed into what we know today as Stalinism.

(To those of our readers who are interested in examining the positions taken by the anarchist movement in the Russian revolution, we recommend the following two books by Voline: 1917, THE REVOLUTION BETRAYED and THE UNKNOWN REVOLUTION, reviewed in this issue. The latter deals in detail with Kronstadt and the Makhno movement. They can be purchased through V & C for \$3.50 each.)

Note

In Jackson, Miss., a 16-year-old boy told police that he had decided to kill his grandmother a week before he did, but had put it off until he returned from a church meeting. He has had a previous acquaintance with the police concerning a job of braking and entering. Just think what he might have done to his grandma if he had no religious restraints?

Reprinted from THE LIBERAL

Some Random Thoughts on Parliamentarism and Labor Parties

In the last century the socialist parties have been in the forefront of agitation for the new social order based on exploitation and oppression. But paradoxically, the demands of the socialist parties and the socialist influenced "Labor Parties" for more and more welfarism and nationalization have tended to strengthen capitalism and world chaos. By adopting the welfarist programs of socialists the capitalist states have provided themselves with an excellent form of insulation against the discontent of the masses. Not only have the nationalization programs served to sustain capitalism through its periods of economic turmoil but nationalization and welfarism have destroyed the political effectiveness of the socialist movement. As the state nationalizes and welfarizes, to the same degree the program of the socialists loses its appeal among the masses. The rise of the New Deal brought the decline of American socialism simply because the capitalist state had stolen the thunder from the socialist program. As the state penetrates deeper into the preserves of laissez-faire it fortifies itself and develops itself into a new and stronger form of capitalism called "State Capitalism."

There are other features of socialism that are even more pernicious than the strengthening of the capitalist state but they are not obvious for they are intangibles that stem from the type of mentality and outlook that socialist agitation impresses on the masses. The socialists say, "The working class must rule the state." But how can 80 million workers rule the state? What they really mean is "Let us socialists rule the state in the name of you workers. Thereby you shall rule the state through us." The socialists delude the masses into believing that the new social order can be achieved by exchanging capitalist politicians for socialist politicians; but politicians, socialist and otherwise, are not really interested in workers' control of production. They want a complete, bureaucratic, politicians' control. The workers really have nothing for they run no

industries directly. They have neither industries nor the self-reliance that comes from a tradition of direct action and in the face of fascism they have neither spirit nor power.

Let us digress for a moment and reinforce our perspective by a short study of the most illustrious socialist “labor party” of them all, the German Social Democratic Party. Lenin and Luxemburg referred to the Social Democrats as the “jewel” of the working class movements of Europe. In the ranks of the Social Democrats were many of the finest theoreticians of Marxism. Yet all their theory was for naught, for in the end the Social Democrats were the midwives of the twin ogres of Fascism and Stalinism. These socialists; after World War I, rode the tidal wave of mass discontent to the seat of state power. When they took power everything changed and yet nothing changed. The rhetoric of the Kaiser-capitalist politicians disappeared and into its place blew the glaring red hot air of the socialist politicians. In the political and economic institutions of bourgeois society nothing changed. Production for use and not for profit remained as remote from reality after a decade of Socialist rule as it was before. But the socialists accomplished one thing that was very tangible. They helped spread the power of the state into every cranny of public life. When the crises came the state socialism of the socialists was as vulnerable to economic dislocation as any other capitalism. This, in itself, is a tragedy, but the tragedy of tragedies is that the power of the state that the socialists had worked so hard to strengthen was used by the fascists to decapitate the German working class. What is Fascism but the replacement of the little directing pinnacle of well intentioned but bumbling bureaucrats of state socialism with a little pinnacle of viciously intentioned but effective bureaucrats of totalitarian state socialism?

A New First Reader

(To be read slowly and carefully.)

“We are going to Brooklyn,” says Father.

“Oh, how lovely,” says Mother.

“Bow-wow,” says Rover, “Bow-wow.”

“I shall take my Princess Margaret doll,” says Jane.

“..and I shall take my toy Nuclear Disintegrator,” says Peter.

“What a wonderful time we shall have,” says Mother.

“The train has left Harrison,” says Father, “and soon we will be in Jersey City.”

“Oh, what a lovely view!” exclaims Mother “Do you not smell the odor of lilacs?”

“Now,” says Father, “we are passing through Jersey City, famous for its mayors.”

“We have many famous statesmen,” says Mother.

“Yes,” says Jane, “I am glad I am an American.”

“Here we are, at last,” says Father. “This is Hudson Terminal. Let us pass through this turnstile and take the subway to Brooklyn.”

“See the posters in the subway,” says Peter. “What is V.D.?”

“Look over there, Peter,” says Mother. “See the new Buick.”

“Oh Mother,” cries Jane, “when I am grown, I too shall wear a Younlassform Bra!”

“Hush,” says Mother, “we are entering a tunnel.”

“See the funny cloud,” says Peter. “What is a cobalt bomb?”

“See the glass of fruit juice,” says Mother. “Does it not look refreshing?”

“Let us see which of those things we have at home,” says Father.

"We have a refrigerator," says Mother.
"We have a Buick," says Father.
"We have television," says Peter.
"We have a washing machine," says Jane.
"We have religion," says Father.
"Yes," says Mother. "We are very, very happy."

Crisis in the Middle East

With the Middle East girding its loins for a final struggle to determine who rules, we of the Libertarian League feel that a conventional approach through the governments of the countries involved is bound to be a failure. Although the U.N. unanimously calls for peace, the member nations are unable to follow any course other than that which their respective national interests dictate.

Britain and the U.S.A., fearing the loss of their valuable control of the oil trade through the emergence of a powerful Israel, are supporting the Arab League in the hope that the petty monarchs and dictators of these countries will reciprocate by continuing to endorse the military and trade pacts that exist between them.

Russia, seeing the general unrest that prevails among the Arab nations, and hoping to extend the scope of her satellites, or at least to get some important oil concessions, also fears that Israeli leadership would lessen the chances for ultimate domination.

The Arab nations are experiencing the pangs of upsurging nationalism. They are leery of western colonialism, but they fear a strong Israel even more intensely.

The upper classes of the Arab nations are watching with growing apprehension the increasing prosperity of the Israelis. They fear demands by their people for corresponding improvements, possibly necessitating a depletion of their harems, bank accounts, etc.

The Israeli government cannot indefinitely withstand the pressures being exerted upon it from all sides. Racked as she is by internal dissension, the agencies of the Government are incapable of taking the action necessary for Israel to survive.

We feel that the Israeli free communes, operating independently, are capable of dealing with many of the dangerous situations which face the people of the Middle East. Already the Kibbutzim militias have been established, a free system of labor and commodity exchange has been in operation since the beginning—in short, a beginning has been made. This, unfortunately, is not enough. We, feeling that the freedom and integrity of the people of an entire area of the world are at stake, would make the following suggestions:

1. The freedom and welfare of the people of the Middle East depends not upon any one nation or group. The welfare of the Arab, as well as the Israeli populations is vital to the peace of the Holy Land area.
2. The Kibbutzim must realize that the defense of their land, homes, and lives ultimately rests with themselves and make their plans accordingly. A system of closer coordination must be instituted among the various Kibbutz militias.
3. Support from abroad is necessary if the communes are to survive. Public opinion must be aroused to bring pressure on the politicians.

We must bear in mind that peace and security for any one nation is a mockery unless its neighbors also enjoy these benefits. Our aim must not be merely a free Israel or even a free Middle East but a free world.

Book review by SW

Mutual Aid by Peter Kropotkin

A new edition, published by Extending Horizons Books, Boston, Mass. paper, \$2; Cloth, \$3 (available through V & C)

This new edition of *Mutual Aid* contains a foreword by Dr. Ashley Montagu, chairman of the department of Anthropology at Rutgers University, lecturer in psychiatry and author of many books on social and scientific problems. The book also contains Thomas H. Huxley's "The Struggle for Existence." This famous article caused Kropotkin to write a series of essays in the *Nineteenth Century* (an English magazine), as a criticism of Huxley's evolutionary extremism. The views expressed by Huxley on "The Struggle For Existence" and the "survival of the fittest" were hailed by the "Laissez Faire" capitalists as a scientific justification for their ruthless economic order.

Kropotkin dealt with *Mutual Aid* among animals, among "savages" and "barbarians," and traced the development of the mutual aid tendency in the medieval city to the modern period. He maintained that mutual aid is a major factor in evolution, that where mutual aid was practised the most, the survival and continued progress of society was the greatest.

Dr. Montagu points out that "Mutual Aid" has been misunderstood by those who got their information from second or third hand sources. This applies to some scientists who never read the book and made incorrect statements about it. Kropotkin did not consider that mutual aid contradicted Darwin's theory of natural selection. He regarded it as the "most significant generalization of the nineteenth century."

Dr. Montagu states that "We are not far removed from the time when mutual aid will become part of the generally accepted canons of evolutionary biology." In the foreword to *Mutual Aid* and in his two books (*On Being Human* and *The Direction of Human Development*), Dr. Montagu supports the theory of Kropotkin and brings it up to date in the field of anthropology and psychology. He says that "Investigations by "Wheeler, Emerson and others in ecology, and anthropologists too numerous to mention have independently arrived at the theory of mutual aid as a factor in evolution." The data upon which Kropotkin based his theory have stood up remarkably well in the light of modern research. Dr. Pitrim Sorokin of Harvard declared that *Mutual Aid* is one of the great classics of social science and ethics. Alvin Johnson, editor of *Social Research*, calls the book "one of the most important contributions to the theory of evolution." Melville Herskovits of Northwestern University regards it as "exceedingly important for all social scientists." They all agree that the book is important particularly at this time because it stresses the "humanistic aspects of social science."

Important as these contributions are, they hold for us a special meaning. Kropotkin proved that there was no real antagonism between the individuals and society, when the individuals who ARE society are not prevented from exercising the natural function of mutual aid. While by no means ignoring the effect of economic conditions on social life, he refutes the mechanistic view of history which sees in the economic system the sole lever of social change. Kropotkin shows that

the mutual aid principle is the constructive factor in social life. Kropotkin did not write *Mutual Aid* merely for the sake of scientific accuracy. He was more than a scientist. He was an active fighter in the revolutionary movement of his period and suffered exile and imprisonment for his activities. In addition to *Mutual Aid* Kropotkin wrote numerous books, pamphlets and articles in which he proved that the libertarian ideology was solidly based on historical, sociological, scientific and ethical foundations. He disproved the contentions of the self-styled “scientific socialists” that we were “utopians” and showed that authoritarian and statist ideas are the main obstacle to the progressive unfolding of a free and just society.

Book review

The Unknown Revolution (Kronstadt 1921—Ukraine 1918–21) by Voline. Libertarian Book Club, 270 pp. \$3.50 (available through V & C)

This is the second half of the translation of Voline’s *La Revolution Inconnue*, the first part of which has been published already under the title *Nineteen-Seventeen* (also available through V & C).

This is the history of the book but you must read it yourself to appreciate the contents. Here is the story of two of the most heroic and tragic episodes of the Russian revolution and what was behind them, told by a man who was near one and a part of the other, written with feeling and fire but with an iron objectivity. Here are the facts and details reported nowhere else, incidents of vital importance ignored by historians but of obvious significance to a full understanding of the revolution.

The section on Kronstadt is shorter and more heavily documented than that on the Makhnovists. Here are quotes from the Kronstadt *Izvestia* and various other reliable sources that bring to life the tragic plight of a city that would not tolerate half a revolution and died rather than compromise their beliefs with Bolshevik authoritarianism. Here is the great Trotsky’s most shameful hour—the murder of the men of Kronstadt, done with the mighty Lenin’s approval and done so thoroughly that even their martyr’s glory was hidden from the eyes of the world.

But it is in the section on the Ukraine that Voline shows us his skill as a writer. Probably because of the author’s close association with the events he relates, the story of the movement called Makhnovist and the man called Makhno comes alive and fresh out of the pages. Here are dedicated men, peasants, loving freedom and willing to fight and die to defend it—not merely in one battle, against one enemy—but continuously, against the whole gamut of statist thugs—Petlurists, Whites, Bolsheviks, anyone who tried to take from them their hard won freedom.

But they are very human people too and Voline does not spare us the glimpses at the shabbier side of their lives in his desire to present a real and objective picture of their days of glory and finally—thanks to the Bolsheviks, of defeat and death.

The book reads easily and stands up well alongside the first. Translator Holley Cantine is to be commended for a skillful job marred only by a slight overuse of brackets. The Libertarian Book Club deserves sincere thanks for presenting us with such a monumental historical work.

Briefly noted

A new pocket edition of Orwell's *Animal Farm* is out from Signet Books at 25 cents. This is a beautiful satire on totalitarianism in general and the Bolshevik brand in particular. If you cannot obtain a copy in your vicinity send 30 cents to V&C and we'll mail you one.

A Tree in Space ***Fiction by Ananda***

The road was dry like the rest of the surrounding country. A slight breeze, enough perhaps to dislodge some of the dust that clung to the scaly green brown leaves stirred about, distributing the heat a little more evenly. A dull, dry hot day, festering like a sore—awaiting an evening that seemed already delayed.

The man who walked the road was black. His name, if you could pronounce it, might sound something like "Drvxl" or "Drabil." No matter. He was a large man with skin the color of mahogany and he walked methodically with a stride that covered the ground easily, raising little puffs of dust and leaving prints that seemed just a little strange.

He stopped for a moment, seeming to adjust his footgear, and then, hearing the sound of voices, he looked up. Approaching him was a group of people. They were dressed in clothing somewhat similar to his own and some of them were carrying ropes.

"Humanoid," he thought, "Strange skin coloration." He stood up and waited.

"Is that him, Ben?"

"Yeah I think so."

"You sure? We don't want to make no mistakes."

"Yeah: that's him all right. Fits Josie's description like a glove. I guess he ain't gonna fool with no more white women for a while. Hey Nigger!"

The man stood easy, still waiting. He was smiling slightly.

A thousand miles away, in a little silver sliver, two men sat, watching the globe beneath them, observing oceans and continents slowly whirl into darkness. A third man entered the compartment.

"They've murdered Drwxl." The men tensed. "They broke his neck with a rope."

After a few minutes one of the men rose and strode to a large instrument panel. As the man pressed the button that would destroy the entire planet his mouth stretched tightly across his face—perhaps it was a smile.

The Anarchist Library (Mirror)
Anti-Copyright



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