

Involuntary Martyrdom

NOT BY BREAD ALONE: A Novel by Vladimir Dudintsev. Translated from the Russian by Dr. Edith Bone. E. P. Dutton & Co. \$4.95 512 pages.

Reviewed by JAMES MURPHY

AS the author states in his preface to the American edition, this book was written for a reason: "to 'wash dirty linen in public' for the purpose of making it cleaner." He did not conceive of himself as a modern Tolstoy or Dostoievski, but as a good Communist working toward worthwhile collectivistic goals. While not in a thorough-going literary manner of his predecessors, it is sufficiently upsetting for modern Communist party bureaucrats to take alarm and summarily ban his book, demand a revision and bring him up on charges of deviationism.

The careers of Dudintsev and his hero Lopatkin, illustrate the fate that awaits the non-conformist in a dictatorship — involuntary martyrdom. The mere fact that a potential martyr exists is cause for alarm in party circles. Usually they manage to execute a minor martyr without the knowledge of the public, thus rendering futile such self sacrifice. But the modern and very effective method of dealing with prominent potential martyrs is to give them minor posts within the party, at one stroke stealing their thunder and diverting it in useful, harmless tasks. Such has been the fate of most of the recent dissenters—Molotov, Kaganovitch, and Malenkov.

The present news from Russia passes in silence over Dudintsev's fate. Perhaps he was turned into an involuntary martyr, without benefit of public immolation. Just a quiet disappearance, no fuss, no bother, for dictatorships know too well the

disruptive power of dramatic, emotion-stirring martyrdoms. The most anyone will admit publicly about Dudintsev in Russia today, is that his literary abilities are not very great.

As to the book itself, *Not By Bread Alone* is the story of a lone inventor, Lopatkin, and his seemingly futile struggle against the arbitrary, reactionary policies of the Soviet's Organization Men. The epitome of the Organization Man—Drozdov, a pushy bureaucrat, sees, and rightly, in Lopatkin both a promise and a threat to the Soviet society and especially to Communist ideology. While Drozdov secretly admires Lopatkin, he knows that to champion such an unpopular cause could jeopardize the brilliant career he has mapped out for himself. Later in order to protect his position, Drozdov actively obstructs the inventor.

Lopatkin, however, refuses to take no for an answer. His one-man campaign against the Foundry Bureau for recognition of his superior method of casting pipes centrifugally, so antagonizes the top brass that he is framed on a charge of divulging state secrets and railroaded to Siberia. Only the intervention of a powerful ally, Galitsky, saves him and his invention from oblivion. The eventual fate of the hero is left open at the end, just as the author's is in real life. Lopatkin sees ahead of him another road—the political road to the people's emancipation—and on this note the story ends.

The story ends, but the train of thought lingers. Little man, what now? For he is a little man in comparison to the titans of the past. Will he enter the political arena as a real champion of the people or as another Drozdov, willing to com-

promise principle for the good of the party? How long will he last in the corrupting atmosphere of political power? These and many more questions arise in this reader's mind and there are other more cogent questions that could be asked.

For those whose sympathies are for the individual as against the

cloying collective, *Not By Bread Alone* will furnish fresh ammunition to use in the fight for self-determination and the dignity of man. While the struggle promises to be long, the martyrs few and the prospects dim, the stakes are high and the eventual reward worth while.

Is *Progress and Poverty* a Great Book?

There is a Great Books discussion in full swing at the New York Henry George School, and students who have studied Henry George are now deep in other world classics. From time to time, Georgists who look over the program of the Great Books Foundation are disappointed to find that Henry George's *Progress and Poverty* is nowhere included.

Some letters have been written and these are answered, very cordially, by Mortimer J. Adler, head of the Great Books program. Dr. Adler evidently has respect for George's work, and he writes: "There is no denying . . . that the reading of *Progress and Poverty* is an unforgettable experience for which no other book is a complete substitute. When new volumes are added to the Great Books . . . the merits of Henry George should be seriously considered. I should be inclined to argue for the inclusion of *Progress and Poverty* . . . as an incomparable statement of the democratic credo, as a vision of justice in which the possession and enjoyment of the earth has reverted to the human species . . . The selection of great books, automatic in most cases, is a matter of prolonged reflection and debate in others, and the more people who express their views, the better."

This indicates that expressions of opinion will influence the Great Books program. If you think *Progress and Poverty* deserves inclusion why not drop Great Books a line? Address: Dr. Mortimer J. Adler, Great Books, 425 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago 11, Illinois.

