

DOES NOT
CIRCULATE

free

◀ "My Sweet Little Village," a Czecho-slovakian Comedy, opens at Cinema 7
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HAPPENING



FROM CASTLES WOODS

Review by Jim Stigok

Birth of a Cooperative, Hoedads, Inc.

A Worker-Owned Forest
Labor Co-op

Written by Hal Hartzell, Jr.

Published by Hulogos'i, 1987

The old Northwest forest is almost gone. Impressive remnants still cling to the highways, but ride up any of the countless logging roads and the path becomes apparent: a charred board of slash-strewn charred rubble wastes. After almost a century of clearcuts, it wasn't until the 1960's that money for treeplanting became plentiful. Unscrupulous contractors jumped into the suddenly lucrative industry, burning seedlings to fatten their payments, bouncing checks on their crews, generally reaching heights of dishonesty rarely achieved outside of Chicago politics.

Into this treeplanter's war zone slogged the Hoedads, a three-person partnership that mushroomed into the largest forest labor cooperative in the country. Ground to a rare temper between government inspectors and fierce weather, Hoedads spearheaded the reforestation boom of the 1970's, evolving into a powerhouse of ideas and leadership that influenced forestry practices around the world.

Soon after joining the Hoedads in 1972, Hal Hartzell, Jr. decided it was a movement in need of a historian. What began as a summertime project culminated, seven years later, in *Birth of a Cooperative*. From hundreds of hours of tapes and mountains of documents, he has blended the recollections of some 50 treeplanters with his own prose to create a work that is both high adventure and political study.

"The first night, a storm came in and blew the tent over. It rained all night and we woke up in our sleeping bags, soaked. The last thing I remember about that contract was the sun finally coming

out in the first two weeks of February, as it often does. The people were yelling out across the unit, so full of energy and life. The strength of those howls and yells still rings in my ears."

Embellished with almost 200 photos and illustrations, *Birth of a Cooperative* takes the reader to steep mountain sides, small valley towns, and tensely raucous meetings. It follows tribes of treeplanters struggling to keep their ideals afloat against mud and bureaucracy en route to becoming a moving environmental and political force.

"You are what you plant. Recorded in some Book of Life is the care we put into each tree, and there are only two marks: alive or dead. If you're on the line and not quite sure about that last tree, bothered by that nagging twinge of doubt, rest assured it's that little tree trying to tell you, 'YOU'RE KILLING ME!'"

The creation of this book followed a path almost as long and rocky as the Hoedads themselves. To realize his dream Hartzell finally had to instigate the formation of a publishing company, Hulogos'i, named after the Yahi Indians' word for Yew tree, a plant many ancient cultures associated with immortality. With the company but a year old, and given the high attrition rate for small presses, the appropriateness of this name remains to be seen.

Hulogos'i is a worker-owned company, registered under Oregon law as a cooperative corporation. It primarily publishes works on the culture and environment of the Northwest and issues of workplace democracy. The dozen members of the cooperative also provide production and editorial services to writers and groups with similar interests.

Besides *Birth of a Cooperative*,

Hulogos'i has published *Klamath Canyon*, a poem by Jerry Rust about the sacred lands of the Shasta Indians, and *Close to the Ground*, a collection of poems about treeplanting. Two more books are in production: *Putting Democracy to Work*, a handbook for setting up cooperative businesses, written by two authorities in the Industrial Cooperative Association, and a new translation of German poet Rainer Maria Rilke's *Duino Elegies* by Grateful Dead lyricist Robert Hunter.

To introduce their works and authors to the community, Hulogos'i has arranged two events this weekend.

Friday, April 17, from 5 pm on into the night there will be slides, music, refreshments and festivities in Studio A on the Mezzanine of the Eugene Hilton. The three authors will be selling and signing their books and reading selections from them at 6 and 8 pm, and there will be a no-host bar. On Saturday, April 18, from noon until 3 pm, the authors will also be selling and autographing their books at the Literary Lion Bookstore on the Eugene downtown mall.

