

spring 1972

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With Concern for Those Not Free

Alexander Solzhenitsyn

Means of Transport

In Memoriam A. Tvardovsky

George Seferis

Colonus Hippos

Milovan Djilas

Stone and Violets

José Cardoso Pires

Changing a Nation's Way of Thinking;
Censorship as a Technique

Jenefer Coates

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A chronicle of censorship around the world

on censorship

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EDITOR: MICHAEL SCAMMELL

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Editorial board: Victoria Brittain Jenefer Coates Stuart Hampshire Peter Reddaway Stephen Spender

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WRITERS AND SCHOLARS INTERNATIONAL

Introduction

Writers & Scholars International is an organization formed by a group of writers, scholars, artists and intellectuals in response to appeals from colleagues in various parts of the world. These appeals bear witness to one of the most persistent problems of the present moment: the suppression of intellectual freedom. Our aim is to draw attention to this situation, publish the facts and promote free discussion of relevant issues.

The scope of the Problem

All over the world censorship is being employed as an instrument of government. Writers, scholars, artists and journalists are being persecuted for expressing opinions unpopular with those in authority, and innumerable restrictions are placed on the free exchange of works of the imagination and on the exchange of information. Instances of the use of such restrictions are well known in, for example, Portugal, the Soviet Union, Brazil, Spain, South Africa, Greece, most of Eastern Europe, China, Indonesia, and in some of the emergent countries of Africa. Naturally this list is far from exhaustive and the situation is constantly changing. Nor can we ignore the fact that there are recurrent threats of censorship in North America, Britain, France and other western countries.

Freedom of expression is not self-perpetuating, but rather has to be maintained through the constant vigilance of those who care about it. Suppression of such freedom is plainly a matter of degree and takes different forms in different places. It may be enforced judicially or lawlessly. Legal measures, such as subversion acts, sedition acts, suppression of communism acts, can all be deployed to restrict the freedom of the artist to depict experience as he sees it, and to suppress comment or information unwelcome to the authorities. Alternatively, existing laws may be cynically ignored, or overruled on the whim of a country's political leaders.

Writers, scholars and artists, by the nature of their professions, are most obviously affected by restrictions and threats which prevent them from expressing the truth as they see it and from exchanging ideas. Such suppression does not always consist in preventing the author from publishing what he wishes to write, the scholar from freely teaching students or from holding free discussion with other scholars. It may, and often does, also mean physical ill-treatment and forcible restriction. In addition to those cases of imprisonment, torture and judicial murder which become well known and are reported, there are very many cases of great suffering caused by lesser, but continuously applied forms of persecution and by the pervasive atmosphere of fear. The lesser ways in which individuals can be restricted range from banning their works and placing restrictions on their freedom of movement, or on their freedom to have a passport, to dismissal from their posts, and to their being assigned to the most inappropriate and unskilled jobs in their society. Such acts of more or less petty harassment usually go unreported; yet, the cumulative burden of suffering that they impose is very great, and such measures might be described as the coarse diet on which tyranny thrives.

General Conclusions

It is clear that the suppression of ideas and the harassment of those who wish to express

themselves freely results in a loss for us all and for civilization. As John Stuart Mill wrote, it is on freedom of opinion, and freedom of the expression of opinion, that the well-being of mankind depends. The means for disseminating information and ideas have reached a degree of efficiency never before attained. It might seem that we were moving towards a state of affairs in which there could be an international exchange of ideas within a world community of intellect and imagination. It is therefore paradoxical that attempts to nullify the artist's vision, and to thwart the communication of ideas, appear to increase proportionately with the improvement in the media of communication.

Plan of Action

Writers & Scholars International has been founded to make people more continuously aware of the suppression of freedom of expression, wherever it occurs. It has been formed by a group of individuals who have no political, or ideological, axe to grind. They are not concerned with drawing attention to the lack of freedom in one part of the world in order to paint an exaggerated picture of the freedoms supposedly enjoyed in another. Rather they want to keep the facts continuously in view. On a more personal level, they are, as intellectuals themselves, concerned with making the appeals of colleagues heard, and in making the conditions in which these colleagues live and work known. The purpose of the organization is to collect, publish and disseminate information which draws attention to the discrepancy between actual conditions in respect of freedom of expression and to aims set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

To this end, Writers & Scholars International has resolved to take the following steps:

1. It will promote by various means the study of constitutions, laws and regulations relating to freedom of expression and publication and will encourage inquiry into censorship as a psychological and philosophical phenomenon.
2. It will publish a regular journal, INDEX, informing the public of the activities of Writers & Scholars International in furtherance of its aims. It will also record and analyze all inroads into freedom of expression and examine the censorship situation in individual countries and in relation to various constitutions and legal codes. Examples of censored material (poetry, prose, articles), as well as the results of its findings, will be published in the journal.
3. It will assist in the publication of books, pamphlets, articles, etc. that would not otherwise be available to the public because of censorship and other restrictions in their countries of origin.
4. It will provide information to the communications media concerning infringements of the laws relating to freedom of expression and on censorship trends in various parts of the world.
5. It will keep the public informed about the plight of writers, artists, scholars and intellectuals subjected to censorship, and will keep their names before the public.
6. It will cooperate with other organizations with related interests insofar as they wish.

WITH CONCERN FOR THOSE NOT FREE

Stephen Spender

It may be that the year 1968 will prove to have been a turning-point in the development of intellectual freedom. This may be true in spite of discouraging reports since then from Russia, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Brazil, South Africa, and certain 'new' countries in Africa, which sometimes make it seem as though we were moving into a period of reaction and repression.

In suggesting that 1968 was a turning-point, I am not thinking of the sensational events of that year of protests, demonstrations, and barricades. More significant than these were several appeals from writers, scientists and scholars in Eastern Europe to colleagues in the West. Some of these were connected with trials like those of Daniel and Sinyavsky. They were appeals against injustice to a court of world opinion. Important as these were, they were by no means unprecedented. But there were also letters written by individual intellectuals and writers to colleagues abroad. This was perhaps a new development, which has more recently been taken up by writers in Greece and in South Africa. The Russian writers seemed to take it for granted that in spite of the ideological conditioning of the society in which they live, there is nevertheless an international community of scientists, writers and scholars thinking about the same problems and applying to them the same human values. These intellectuals regard certain guarantees of freedom as essential if they are to develop their ideas fruitfully. It is as though they take it for granted that freedom of intellect and imagination transcends the 'bourgeois' or 'proletarian' social context.

Freedom, for them, consists primarily of conditions which make exchange of ideas and truthfully recorded experiences of life possible. Surprisingly, it

was sometimes very young people (precisely those whom one might have expected to be most brainwashed) who wrote in this spirit. For example, there was the letter (published in *The Times* of 17 January 1970) of Alexander Daniel, the eighteen-year-old son of the Soviet writer Yuli Daniel, to Graham Greene, in which the young man described the trial of his father, who had been sent to a labour camp. Alexander Daniel's letter was a protest against procedures which would have seemed equally inhuman under any law. It was above all written in the name of decency and morality bound to no ideology, and it was written on the assumption that people can talk across frontiers of dictatorship and democracy – East and West – and address one another as human beings; ask one another questions to which answers can be given, in which questioner and answerer are not addressing one another as communist and non-communist but simply as human beings. 'What is it that I want of you Mr. Greene? I don't know what you can do nor what you will want to do, neither do I know in general what can be done in this predicament.' The answer to the appeal is already implicit in these uncertain questionings. That Mr. Greene should listen was the answer, and although there was nothing that he could do, to publish Alexander Daniel's letter was already a form of action.

Essentially Alexander Daniel's appeal is the same as that put out in the summer of 1968 by members of the Faculty, and by students, of Charles University, after the Russian invasion of Prague, which was published in *Le Monde*. This asked that those outside Czechoslovakia should concern themselves with the fate of their Czechoslovak colleagues, keep themselves informed, follow what was happening to them. The request conveys the idea that there are or there should be international values which are those of the university. For a moment, in the summer of 1968, Czechoslovak intellectuals seem to have been buoyed up by the hope that their academic colleagues would feel that what was happening to Charles University was also happening to Oxford and Cambridge and London, Paris and Harvard and Chicago. Indeed, qualitatively and quantitatively, it was happening to every university and in every place where there is a life of the intellect. For contemporary civilization, dependent on the minds of a few thousand people living all over the world, is a sum. And the subtraction of the numbers of those concerned with it in one country is a loss to the whole world, like the loss of some rare species, an asset to the whole world, in some particular place.

One writer – now packed away in a Russian Labour camp – did have a positive idea of the ways in which colleagues in the countries of comparative freedom could help those in the lands of censorship and repression. He wrote to an English writer asking him whether it might not be possible to form an organization in England of intellectuals who made it their business to publish

information about what was happening to their censored, suppressed, and sometimes imprisoned colleagues. He insisted that such an organization should not concern itself only with writers in Russia and Eastern Europe but throughout the world. He thought that an attempt could also be made to obtain and publish censored works, together with the news about the writers of them.

The Times also published a letter from Pavel Litvinov, appealing directly and openly for the sustained concern of colleagues abroad. A few of us decided to answer this appeal, in a direct and personal way, by telegram. The text of this message is worth recording: 'We, a group of friends representing no organization, support your statement, admire your courage, think of you and will help in any way possible.' This was signed by Cecil Day-Lewis, Yehudi Menuhin, W.H. Auden, Henry Moore, Stephen Spender, A.J. Ayer, Bertrand Russell, Julian Huxley, Mary McCarthy, J.B. Priestley, Jacquetta Hawkes, Paul Scofield, Igor Stravinsky, Stuart Hampshire, Maurice Bowra and Sonia Orwell.

An organization called Writers and Scholars International has now been formed whose aims have much in common with the sentiments expressed in this telegram. WSI has a council, under the chairmanship of Lord Gardiner, whose members are David Astor, Louis Blom-Cooper, Victoria Brittain, Peter Calvocoressi, Edward Crankshaw, Stuart Hampshire, Elizabeth Longford, Roland Penrose, Peter Reddaway, Mrs. J. Edward Sieff, Stephen Spender and Zbynek Zeman, and the director, Michael Scammell. So far the tasks of this committee have been those of a working party assembled for the purpose of launching the organization.

The main activity of WSI will be to publish a journal called *Index*, edited by Michael Scammell, which will (to quote its stated aims) 'record and analyse all forms of inroads into freedom of expression and examine the censorship situation in individual countries and in relation to various constitutions and legal codes. Examples of censored material (poetry, prose, articles) as well as the results of its findings will be published in the journal'.

Obviously there is the risk of a magazine of this kind becoming a bulletin of frustration. However, the material by writers which is censored in Eastern Europe, Greece, South Africa and other countries is among the most exciting that is being written today. Moreover, the question of censorship has become a matter of impassioned debate; and it is one which does not only concern totalitarian societies. There are problems of censorship in England, the United States, and France, for example. There is the question whether it is not right for certain works to be censored or at any rate limited to a defined readership. The problem of censorship is part of larger ones about the use and abuse of freedom.

The founders of WSI are well aware that there are other organisations doing parallel work with some of whom they are already cooperating. For

example, there is Amnesty International, which, among other activities, conducts inquiries into abuses of the Declaration of Human Rights and international law, and which organizes legal aid for victims of political persecution; there is the PEN Club which has given much support to political exiles, and whose International Congresses provide models of free discussion between writers from all over the world, including those where there are dictatorships.

The role of WSI will be to study the situation of those who are silenced in their own countries and to make their circumstances known in the world community to which they spiritually belong. I think that doing this is not just an act of charity. It is a way of facilitating and extending an international consciousness, traversing political boundaries, which is already coming into being, though it is much hindered by dictatorships, censorship and acts of persecution. The world is moving in two directions: one is towards the narrowing of distances through travel, increasing interchange between scientists (who take a world view of problems such as the exploration of space, ecology, population): the other is towards the shutting down of frontiers, the ever more jealous surveillance by governments and police of individual freedom. The opposites are fear and openness; and in being concerned with the situation of those who are deprived of their freedoms one is taking the side of openness.

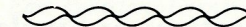
The writers and scholars whom one relies on to support WSI would obviously include those at universities. For the universities represent the developing international consciousness which depends so much on the free interchange of people, and of ideas. It is therefore right and normal and healthy that members of universities should be concerned with what happens wherever freedom of expression is attacked.

Naturally WSI's role in this sphere cannot be all-embracing. As an educational trust its aim will be to study those manifestations of state or governmental power that seek to frustrate or suppress the right to free expression and to educate the public on the situation in the world today. But if I were to express the feelings that led me to support this venture and my motives for acting in this way I would put it somewhat as follows.

Our need today is for organs of consciousness that could help us to know and to care about other members of the same intellectual community, much as Christians once were vigilant for other Christians in times of religious persecution. The word 'freedom' is of course an abstraction, and people today are probably weary of it. The simple point I would like to make is that at this moment, in many countries, there are writers and scholars interested in ideas, or in describing life exactly as they see it, who are sent to labour camps and prisons; or who are blackmailed by threats of what may happen to themselves or their families; or who are harassed by not being allowed to

go abroad and meet like-minded people; or who are simply reduced to silence by various forms of censorship. Each reader of this article might say to himself: 'On the most elementary level of consideration, I might suffer similar deprivations; so I should alleviate their lot, which might easily be my own. More important, if a writer whose works are banned wishes to be published, and if I am in a position to help him to be published, then to refuse to give help is for me to support the censorship. If I complacently accept the idea that freedom is something that happens in some places and is prevented in others, I am implying that freedom is a matter of accident, or privilege, occurring — if I happen to have it — at the place where I live. This attitude to freedom really undermines it, for it is to support the views of those who hold freedom to be a luxury enjoyed by bourgeois individualists. Therefore if I consider myself not just in my role of lucky or unlucky person but as an instrument of consciousness, the writer or scholar deprived of freedom is also an instrument of consciousness, and through the prohibition imposed on him my freedom is also prohibited.'

The basis of the appeal made by Writers and Scholars International is that it is a beginning and that its foundation is itself in partial answer to an appeal: which is from those who are censored, banned or imprisoned to consider their case as our own.



FILM CENSORSHIP

One of the hardest areas of censorship to keep track of is that of films, since the banning is carried out before the film reaches the screen or comes to the attention of the wider public. In recent months two lists of banned films have come to our attention – one from Czechoslovakia (published in Listy No. 4-5) and the other from the Soviet Union (published in the Chronicle of Current Events No. 19). We publish the details below and would be grateful for further information about films banned in other parts of the world.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

BANNED FILMS

Seventh Day, Eighth Night. Scenario by Zdeněk Mahler, directed by Evald Schorm.

Aesop. Scenario Angel Wagenstein, directed

by Rangel Valčanov; a Czech-Bulgarian co-production.

Little Larks on Threads. Based on a story by Bohumil Rrabal 'Advertisement for a

house in which I do not wish to live', directed by Jiří Menzel.

A Grand Funeral. Based on a story by Eva Kanturkova, directed by Zdeněk Sirový.

The Ear. Scenario by Jan Procházka, directed by Karel Kachyňa.

Little Birds, Orphans and Fools. Scenario by J. Jakubisko and Karel Sidon, directed by Juraj Jakubisko.

The Killed Sunday. Based on a prizewinning

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SOVIET UNION

"ARRESTED" FILMS

A Nasty Tale. A. Alov, V. Naumov (Based on the story by F. Dostoyevsky). Mosfilm, 1966.

Kievan Frescoes. S. Paradzhanov. Dovzhenko Studio [Kiev], 1966 (the film was not assembled).

Intervention. G. Poloka. (Based on the play by L. Salvin). Lenfilm, 1968.

The prints of "arrested" films are stored in the Special Department of the State Committee for Cinematography.

FILMS WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN RELEASED

Christ's Second Coming. V. Bychkov. Belarus-film [Belorussia], 1967. Banned.

The Price. M. Kalik.* (Based on the play by Arthur Miller). Central Television, 1969. Not passed for showing.

About Asya Klyachina, who was in love but did not marry because she was proud (Lame Girl Asya). A. Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky; Mosfilm, 1966. In 1969 the film was given a new sound-track and passed for hire with the title *Asya's Happiness*. It has not gone on general release.

story by Jiří Křenka, directed by Drahomíra Vihanová.

Deserters and Wanderers. A triptych of stories. 'Deserters': scenario by J. Jakubisko and L. Tažký; '. . .and. . .': scenario based on a chapter of the novel by L. Tažký 'Inn full of Wolves'; 'Wanderers': scenario by J. Jakubisko and Karol Sidon. All three parts directed by Juraj Jakubisko.

Nudity. Scenario by Václav Matějka. This film was banned because the leading actress later fled to the west.

Andrei Rublyov. A. Tarkovsky. Mosfilm, 1966. In 1969 the film was sold abroad and awarded a prize in France. In 1970 A. Romanov, chairman of the State Committee for Cinematography, signed the order allowing prints to be made of the film. It has not been released.

Ballot by Name [Poimyonnoye Golosovaniye]. L. Pchylkin. (About the 4th Congress of Soviets, which ratified the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Script by M. Shatrov, M. Ulyanov in the role of Lenin). Central Television, 1967-69. Showing forbidden.

An Hour in Lenin's Study. L. Pchylkin. (script by M. Shatrov, M. Ulyanov in the role of Lenin). Central Television, 1967-69. Showing forbidden.

"RESTRICTED" FILMS

Entreaty. T. Abuladze. Gruziya-film [Georgia], 1968. Not released in the capital.

Cavalier of a Dream. V. Derbenev. Moldova-film [Moldavia], 1969. Not released in the capital.

* M. Kalik has since emigrated to Israel.

Feelings. A. Grikevicius, Dausa. Vilnius Film Studio, 1969. It ran for three days in one Moscow cinema.

The Stone Cross. L. Osyka. Dovzhenko Studio, 1968. Not released in the capital.

Sayat Nova. S. Paradzhanov. Armenfilm [Armenia], 1968. Released in Armenia in 1969 under the title *The Colour of Garnet*. Passed for exhibition throughout the country. Not released in the capital.

The Stars by Day. I. Talankin. (after O[Iga] Berggolts). Mosfilm, 1967. It ran for three days in three Moscow cinemas and for three days in one Leningrad cinema.

A FILM WITH A "STORY"

To Love . . . M. Kalik*. Moldova-film, 1968. The film was cut without the director's knowledge and released in the provinces in a distorted form. When the State Committee for Cinematography refused to remove the director's name from the credits, on which he insisted, Kalik tried unsuccessfully to take legal action against the Committee. The version released for hire consisted of less than 1,000 metres of the 15,000 which had been shot, the director retaining 900 metres. The remaining 13,000 metres were seized. Criminal proceedings were instituted against Kalik for showing his own version of the film *To Love . . .* (see Chronicle No. 18).

ANDREI AMALRIK'S FINAL PLEA

In the Soviet Union the defendant in a trial has the right to a 'last word' or final plea. Andrei Amalrik, who was convicted in November 1970 for circulating 'anti-Soviet fabrications', declined to request anything from the court, but made the following statement.

The criminal prosecution of people for their statements or opinions reminds me of the middle ages with their 'witch trials' and indexes of forbidden books. But if the mediaeval struggle against heretical ideas could be partially explained by religious fanaticism, everything that is happening now is due only to the cowardice of a regime which perceives danger in the dissemination of any thought or any idea alien to the upper strata of the bureaucracy.

These people understand that the collapse of any regime is first preceded by its ideological capitulation. But, while holding forth about an ideological struggle, they can in reality oppose ideas only with the threat of criminal prosecution. Conscious of their ideological helplessness, they clutch fearfully at the criminal code, prisons, camps and psychiatric hospitals.

It is precisely this fear of the thoughts I have expressed, and of the facts I adduce in my books, which forces these people to put me in the dock like a criminal. This fear has reached such proportions that they were even afraid to try me in Moscow and brought me here [Sverdlovsk], calculating that here my trial would attract less attention.

But it is just these manifestations of fear which prove best of all the strength and correctness of my opinions. My books will be none the worse for the abusive epithets with which they have here been described. The opinions I have expressed will not become less correct if I am imprisoned for a few years because of them. On the contrary, this can only impart greater strength to my convictions. The trick which says that people are tried not for their convictions but for circulating them seems to me to be empty sophistry, since convictions which do not manifest themselves in any way are not genuine convictions.

As I have already said, I shall not here enter into a discussion of my opinions, since a court is not the place for that. I wish only to answer the assertion that several of my statements are directed against my people and my country. It seems to me that my country's principal task at present is to throw off the burden of its hard past, for which, above all, it needs criticism and not eulogies. I think I am a better patriot than those who loudly hold forth about love for their country, meaning by that—love for their own privileges.

Neither the 'witch-hunt' conducted by the regime nor this trial—an individual example of it—produces in me the slightest respect, nor even fear. I understand, of course, that trials like this are calculated to intimidate many, and many will be intimidated—but I still think that the process of ideological liberation which has now begun is irreversible.

I have no requests to make of the court.

It is one of the commonest forms of self-deception amongst otherwise honest men of goodwill to imagine they are achieving something by urging moderation on one side in a conflict, on the grounds that too radical a position will only injure that side's interests and antagonize the other so much that a situation, now just tolerable, will be aggravated beyond bearing. This was a popular calculation at the time we are speaking of, but a basically false one. It never yielded a correct solution to any problem, but only a host of bogus moral dilemmas, chronically arrested crises and delusively soothing prescriptions for the treatment of fear, bad conscience and—to give it its right name—plain cowardice. It was a calculation that never worked when one side of the conflict was in various ways looking for the truth, while all the power was concentrated on the other. By preaching peace to one side the advocate (so frequent a figure in our country) of compromise, or rather of the 'middle way', is really serving the interests of the other, whatever he may think. When the unremitting tensions finally, after many timid postponements, make a showdown inevitable, the man in the middle is either forced into open support of the side that wields power or is unkindly pushed aside as useless, however aggrieved and misjudged he feels.

[From 'Writers Against Rulers', pp. 84-5.]

index index

It is the intention of INDEX to publish a quarterly chronicle of events around the world illustrating the various ways in which freedom of expression is being limited or denied. Such a chronicle can never be complete, still less is it claimed that the examples cited in this first number of INDEX add up to a comprehensive picture. They should be regarded, rather, as a supplement to the information and comment that appears elsewhere in these pages and as an indication of the scope and nature of the problem of maintaining freedom of expression. It is our aim in the future to expand and amplify this section as much as possible and information from readers will be warmly welcomed.

ANTIGUA

In September 1971 the government introduced legislation seeking to prohibit publications that 'threatened to harm the national interest'. One of the measures proposed is the imposition of an annual licence fee and the deposit of \$5,000 before a newspaper can start publication.

BOLIVIA

In the latter half of 1971 the homes of a number of Bolivian journalists were searched and the Bolivian correspondent of the *Deutsche Presse Agentur* was arrested. Several journalists asked for political asylum in foreign embassies and protests were made by the Foreign Correspondents Association and the La Paz Syndicate of Newspaper Workers. A subsequent report from the Cuban Union of Journalists indicated that over one hundred journalists were arrested in the aftermath of the coup.

BRAZIL

The Rio de Janeiro newspaper *Tribuna da Imprensa* was closed for two days and its editor, **Helio Fernandes**, arrested in August 1971 for publishing an editorial critical of the army and government.

The Sao Paulo news magazine, *Veja*, had all its copies confiscated on 1 December 1971 on the order of the Minister of Justice. Its cover story dealt with the resignation of the Governor of the state of Parana.

The film *Zabriskie Point*, directed by **Michelangelo Antonioni**, has been banned on the grounds of

'insulting a friendly country'. The country in question, the U.S.A., has not banned *Zabriskie Point*.

Enio Silveira, a distinguished publisher from one of Brazil's largest publishing houses, *Editora Civilização Brasileira*, was acquitted by a military court on 18 February of a charge of endangering state security by publishing in 1968 *Fundamentos da Filosofia* by **Professor V. Afanasiev**, professor of philosophy at Moscow University. He now faces two further charges, one for a book published in 1965: *Brasil, Guerra Quente na America Latina* ('Brazil, Hot War in Latin America') by **Maia Netto** and another for *Les Damnés de la Terre* by **Franz Fanon**, published as long ago as 1963, a year before the present government came to power.

BULGARIA

Boris Krumov, editor-in-chief of the Sofia newspaper, *Anteni*, was dismissed at the end of 1971 for publishing articles that were out of line with the foreign policy of the government.

CAMBODIA

Pre-censorship of the press was reintroduced in December 1971 after having earlier been abolished. Press offenders will now be tried by military courts 'to stop the anarchy reigning in the press' and no new journals will be permitted.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

In October 1971 the weekly *Jeune Afrique* was banned for three years with no official explanation.

CUBA

The *IAPA News* (newsletter of the Inter-American Press Association) announced in January that there are over 40 journalists in jail in Cuba, some of them having been held without trial for over 12 years.

CYPRUS

Bambis Avdellopoulos, a Greek journalist resident in Cyprus for the past 12 years and co-publisher of the Greek language bi-monthly, *Kosmos Simera*, was expelled from Cyprus in January after publishing articles alleging that the Soviet Embassy in Nicosia is used for espionage in the Near East. A government spokesman said he was expelled for failing to renew his work and residence permits.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Jiří Lederer, a journalist, was sentenced to two years' imprisonment in February 1972 for having written three articles in 1968 criticizing the Polish government under Wladyslaw Gomulka.

Any person purchasing a typewriter in Czechoslovakia has to have his name and address and a sample of the type registered with the secret police (STB). The penalty for typing out clandestine journals or documents is 18 months to two years.

According to a Czech news agency announcement in January 1972, an unknown number of Czech citizens had been arrested for printing and disseminating 'anti-state leaflets'. They are being charged under paragraphs 98, 100, 102 and 105 of the Criminal Code, which deal with 'subversion', 'hostility to the socialist system', the 'mass distribution of anti-state material' and 'attempting to overthrow the government'. Those arrested are said to include: **Luděk Pachman**, the chess grand master, who was jailed for more than a year from 1969-70 and then released without trial; **Karel Kyncl**, former New York correspondent of Czech radio and television; **Milan Huebl**, an economist and sociologist of the Communist Party University in Prague; **Jaroslav Šabata** a former party leader from Brno; **Dr. Jan Tesář**, a historian; **Dr. Ladislav Hejdanek**, a philosopher; **Dr. Rudolf Battěk**, a sociologist and former deputy to the Czech National Council; one Evangelical minister, **Miroslav Duš** and two members of his church council, **Dr.**

Jirásek and **Mr. Novák**; **Jan Šling** and **Jan Vlk**, students, who were subsequently released although the charges against them still stand.

Up to seven unofficial newspapers are now said to be published in Czechoslovakia. The two best known are the monthly, *Facts, Views and Comments*, with an estimated circulation of 35,000 and *Behind the Censor's Curtain*, a monthly based in Moravia.

An Italian journalist, **Valerio Ochetto**, was arrested in Prague in February 1972 on a charge of inciting 'individuals and groups to hostile and anti-state activities'. Ochetto, who is an employee of the Italian state radio and television network, RAI, was accused of acting as a courier for **Jiří Pelikán**, the former head of Czechoslovak Television and later cultural attaché at the Czechoslovak embassy in Rome. Pelikán now lives in Rome and edits a Czech monthly, *Listy*.

A group of intellectuals arrested at the beginning of February 1972 is said to include **Jiří Hochman**, former editor of the weekly *Reporter* and author of a recently published satirical novel, *Jelení Brod* ('Deer's ford'). **Dr. Vladimír Nepraš**, a journalist who used to write for the *Reporter* and for the Party newspaper, *Rudé Pravo*; **Professor Karel Kosik**, a philosopher and communist theoretician; **Dr. Karel Kaplan**, a scientist; **Karel Bartosek**, a historian; **Jiří Litera**, a former secretary of the Prague Party Committee; **Rudolf Slansky**. **Jiří Hochman**, **Karel Kosik**, **Jiří Litera** and **Rudolf Slanský** were subsequently released from detention but the charges against them still stand.

EGYPT

A number of radio, television and newspaper journalists are said to have been dismissed in the second half of 1971 for their alleged connection with the people put on trial for plotting against President Sadat.

Restrictions on foreign books about Israel were lifted in January under a decree issued by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Culture, **Dr. Abdel Kater Hatem**. The heavy censorship to which these books were earlier subjected has been removed, according to the decree, 'so that Egyptians may know everything about the enemy'.

was to have been part of the series, 'The World About Us', and would have been scripted by **Lord Kennet**.

POLAND

No Western journalists were admitted to the congress of writers held in Lodz on 5 February, but unofficial reports confirm that the meeting's theme was one of compromise and liberalization. Among other things **Artur Sandauer**, a leading literary critic, said: 'Censorship is halting constructive tendencies in Polish literature. We are able to speak only half truths and we can never read the whole truth'. Observers noted that elections to the board of the Writers' Union reflected a definite trend towards greater tolerance and freedom of expression.

Six Vienna-based correspondents specializing in East European affairs were refused visas to attend the sixth Congress of the Communist Party in Warsaw in December 1971. They were **Paul Lendvai** (*Financial Times*), **Anneliese Schulz** (*Daily Telegraph*), **Dr. Harry Schleicher** (*Frankfurter Rundschau*), **Dr. Enzo Bettiza** (*Corriere della Sera*), **Eric Bourne** (*Christian Science Monitor*) and **Bruno Tedeschi** (*Il Messagero*). Altogether some 250 newsmen attended the congress in December, by far the largest number for many years.

PORTUGAL

The Secretary-General of the Portuguese Union of Journalists, **Antonio Dos Santos**, was arrested last August after his Union had rejected some of the government's proposals for a new law on censorship to replace the old law of 45 years' standing. The new law provides for a greater reliance upon self-censorship. The provision that the Journalists' Union took particular exception to was that providing for all journalists to be registered with the government. The government rejected the Union's alternative suggestions and in February Dos Santos was sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment and five years' loss of civil rights for 'activities endangering the security of the state'.

RUMANIA

The new law passed by the Rumanian government in December 1971 forbids people to give inter-

views to foreign correspondents without official approval. Also covered by the law are state secrets, which are defined as anything 'which obviously has this character as well as that declared and qualified as such by the Council of Ministers'. Anyone with access to secrets may only travel abroad or join international organizations with special permission. The chairman of the Rumanian State Security Council has said that the law would stop 'bragging and jabbering'.

SAMOA

The managing editor and two reporters of *The Samoan News* were deported from Samoa last September by the Governor of American Samoa for having criticized the administration. A charge of attempting to suppress opinion was brought by the President of the American Newspaper Guild.

SIERRE LEONE

The government has closed down the daily newspaper *Unity Independent* after first taking control of it and then dismissing its editor, **Sam Metzger**, who was temporarily replaced by the editor from another government-owned paper, *Daily Mail*. No official reason was given, but it is generally recognized that recent articles on national and international questions met with disapproval in government circles.

SINGAPORE

Kerk Loong Sing, public relations manager of the Chinese-language daily *Nanyang Siang Pau* has been released after being detained without trial since May 1971. The paper's chairman, **Lee Eu Sang**, and his brother **Lee Mau Seng**, the former general manager, have had their passports confiscated. They, together with the editor-in-chief, **Shamsuddin Tung Tao Chang** and the senior editorial-writer, **Ly Singko**, are still in prison. They are all accused by the Singapore government of 'glamourizing communism' and of trying to stir up racial unrest in some editorials that were critical of government policy on the use of the Chinese language in Singapore. The detainees argue that they were exercising their right of freedom of speech as responsible journalists.

SOUTH AFRICA

At his trial on 29 November 1971 **Benjamin Pogrund**, night editor of the *Rand Daily Mail*, pleaded not guilty to charges of theft and possessing documents banned under the Suppression of Communism Act. Pogrund was working on a Ph. D. thesis concerning the development of South African nationalism. Many of the confiscated documents are 20-year old publications which have only recently been banned and which represent the bulk of his research material. Also produced as evidence were Pogrund's notes on the forbidden African National Congress, which Pogrund claimed to have been part of his thesis work. His trial was adjourned until 21 January 1972.

Donald Woods the editor of the *East London Daily Despatch*, is to sue the head of South Africa's bureau for State Security (BOSS), **General Hennie van den Bergh**, for defamation because the latter has implied that within the English-language press 'enemies of public safety' have been organizing criticism of the South African government.

SOUTH VIETNAM

In October 1971 the government suspended the news agency, *Tin Mien Nam*, for publishing an article entitled 'The government has taken measures to encourage people to vote on October 3'. On 19 October police seized editions of 14 out of Saigon's 43 Vietnamese-language newspapers, accusing them of publishing articles 'likely to sow confusion among the masses and harm national security'. In February 1971 the news agency *Tin Viet* was closed down indefinitely.

The Saigon daily newspaper, *Lap Truong*, was forced to cease publication at the end of 1971 because its printers were no longer prepared — after receiving certain warnings — to undertake the printing. Previously the Minister of Information had ordered the Vietnamese police to confiscate 67 out of the last 82 issues of the paper, which had taken a line strongly critical of the government and supporting Vice-President Ky.

SOVIET UNION

The world premiere of two one-act plays by **Andrei Amalrik** was held in London on 8 December 1971. The two plays, *Tale of the Little White*

Bull, and *East-West*, are part of a collection of six short plays by Amalrik that have not yet been published either in the Soviet Union or abroad. Amalrik, who is the author of two books banned in the Soviet Union, *Involuntary Journey to Siberia* and *Will the USSR Survive Until 1984?*, is at present serving a sentence of three years' hard labour in Magadan, in the far east of Siberia, after having been sentenced in November 1970 for having circulated 'anti-Soviet fabrications'.

Vladimir Bukovsky, a publicist and former secretary to the writer **Vladimir Maximov**, was sentenced to two years in prison, five years in a labour camp and five years of exile on 5 January on charges of 'anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda' under article 70 of the criminal code. Bukovsky had earlier served 15 months in a prison between 1963-5 for distributing copies of *The New Class* by **Milovan Djilas**, eight months in a mental hospital in 1966, and three years in a labour camp from 1967-70 for demonstrating against the trial of the four authors of *The White Book* (on the trial of **Andrei Sinyavsky** and **Yuli Daniel**). Bukovsky is thought to have been sentenced for giving interviews to foreign correspondents about the imprisonment of dissenters in mental hospitals and for sending material on this subject abroad together with an appeal to foreign psychiatrists to study this practice. The International Commission of Jurists stated that the procedures used at the trial were 'a travesty of justice' and protested at 'the persistent repression of freedom of speech in the Soviet Union'.

A resolution is reported to have been adopted at a special meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party on 30 December 1971 to suppress the unofficial periodical, *Chronicle of Current Events*, of which 22 issues had appeared up to that time. Nevertheless, number 23 of the *Chronicle* appeared in the first week of February. The *Chronicle*, which specializes in recording unconstitutional acts of oppression and the suppression of freedom of speech in the Soviet Union, is one of six unofficial journals currently appearing there. The others are: *Veche* ('Forum'); the Jewish journal *Vestnik Iskhoda* ('Exodus Herald' — a successor to *Iskhod* — 'Exodus'); *Obshchestvenniye problemy* ('Social Problems'), published by the unofficial Human Rights Committee of the Soviet Union; the Ukrainian *Visnik*

('Herald') and a new journal called *Obozreniye* ('Survey').

David Bonavia, the Moscow correspondent of *The Times*, was detained by police on 16 January after leaving the home of the historian **Pyotr Yakir**. Bonavia was held at the police station for half an hour and then released with the warning: 'Do not interfere in our internal affairs and do not go back to that address'. Yakir's flat was searched the same day and a large number of books and papers removed. It had also been searched two days beforehand. On 17 January the home of the astronomer, **Kronid Lubarsky**, was searched by the police and Lubarsky was detained for questioning.

On 20 October 1971 the Canadian prime minister **Pierre Trudeau** raised the question of the imprisonment of the Ukrainian historian **Valentyn Moroz** with Soviet premier **Kosygin** during the latter's tour of Canada. Moroz had been sentenced to four years' imprisonment in 1965 on a charge of 'advocating the secession of the Ukraine from the USSR'. In June 1970, after a year at liberty, he was rearrested and sentenced to six years in prison, three years in a labour camp and five years' exile for having written three essays on Ukrainian problems: *A Chronicle of Resistance*, *Among the Snows* and *Moses and Dathan*. He had also been condemned for having written *A Report from the Beria Reservation* during his first period of imprisonment. Mr Kosygin remarked that he was unfamiliar with Moroz's case, but undertook to look into it upon his return home.

A decree published by the Central Committee of the Communist Party on 25 January called on literary and art critics to concentrate more on 'exposing the reactionary essence of bourgeois "mass culture" and decadent trends'. The decree also called for the appointment of 'politically mature' people to editorial boards and the boards of publishing houses and said that art and literature should serve the purposes of communist construction.

A Lithuanian teacher of sociology, **Vaclav Sevruck**, was arrested on 14 January on suspicion of having conducted 'anti-Soviet agitation'. About one hundred other people were detained for questioning in the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius, but no

further arrests have been reported.

Alexander Galich, a playwright and prominent songwriter, was expelled from the Moscow branch of the Writers' Union on 3 January for 'behaviour incompatible with the status of a writer'. He was accused of trying to corrupt Soviet Jews and persuade them to emigrate to Israel, and of having links with 'Zionists and anti-semites'. Galich's songs are widely known in the Soviet Union from unofficial tape recordings and typewritten copies of the lyrics, but have never been officially recognized or published. The young poet **Yevgeny Markin** was expelled at the same meeting for having written an allegorical poem in praise of Solzhenitsyn.

An unusually large number of writers and university staff were rounded up in the Ukraine in February in a wave of KGB arrests unprecedented in recent years. The three most prominent individuals were **Ivan Svitlychny**, a literary critic and translator; **Vyacheslav Chornovil**, a journalist and author of the *samizdat* collection of documents, *The Chornovil Papers*; and **Yevgen Sverstyuk**, a literary critic and educationist. In addition the names of thirteen more of the arrested have since been disclosed: **Irene Stasir**, a poetess; **Stephanie Shabaturova**, an artist; **Vasyl Stus**, poet and literary critic; **Alexander Sergiyenko**, a teacher; **Leonid Zeleznenko**; **Zinovy Antoniyuk**; **Nicholas Shumuk**; **Stephanie Hulyk**, a student; **Michael Osadchy**, a poet and philosopher; **Ivan Hel**, a student; **Rev. Vasyl Romanyuk**, a Roman Catholic priest; **Gregory Chubay**, a poet; and **Hryhoriy Kochur**, a translator. It appears that the arrests were connected with an attempt to close down the unofficial journal *Visnik* ('Herald'). The majority of the people detained were subsequently released, but Svitlychny, Chornovil and Sverstyuk are expected to go for trial on charges of being involved with the publication and distribution of the 'Herald'.

On 2 March 1972 **Ivan Dzyuba** was expelled from the Ukrainian Writers' Union for 'contravening the statutes of the Union, preparing and disseminating anti-Soviet and anti-communist materials and slandering the Soviet nationalities' policy'. Dzyuba is best known abroad for his book *Internationalism or Russification?* first published in London in 1968.

Annasoltan Kekilova, a young Turkmenian poet was confined to a psychiatric hospital last September after protesting to the Communist Party about conditions in the Turkmenian Soviet Republic. After her complaints she was dismissed from her job, her books were withdrawn from sale and her poems ceased to be read in radio programmes.

SPAIN

On 25 November 1971 the evening newspaper, *Madrid*, was closed by the government on the grounds that the owners had 'violated the laws on the declaration of newspaper ownership'. The government denied at the time that this was an act of censorship, but the Director-General of the Press at the Ministry of Information later conceded that '*Madrid* was suspended for political reasons'. The immediate occasion of the closure in November is thought to have been the publication of the first in a series of articles entitled 'The fight for power inside *Madrid*' by the newspaper's majority shareholder and main proprietor, **Rafael Calvo Serer**. This appeared on 11 October and disclosed the details of a prolonged campaign by certain members of the government to take the newspaper over. Almost immediately Serer moved to Paris and on 3 December published a long article in *Le Monde* entitled 'Moi aussi, j'accuse. . .' As a result of this article a warrant was issued for his arrest on a charge of 'endangering the external security of the state'. At the end of December the newspaper's editor, **Antonio Fontan**, resigned in an attempt to open negotiations for the newspaper's reappearance and attempts were made for it to reopen under the aegis of the Spanish Press Association and the state-controlled trade union organization. These negotiations were vetoed by the government, however, and in February it was announced that 'the newspaper is dead'.

Over 300 Spanish intellectuals sent a letter to the Ministry of Information last November protesting over the ban on a lecture to commemorate Picasso's ninetieth birthday, and demanding the release of the art critic **Jose Maria Moreno Galvan**, who had defied the ban by delivering an impromptu speech to students in the Madrid University cafeteria. Galvan was subsequently arrested, together with others who had made speeches, and was ordered to pay a fine of £1,500 (this has been made possible under a recently reformed law of public order). Being unable to pay, Galvan was

sent to jail. Although later called to trial, he was not released from prison to attend; the public prosecutor informed the court that he was going to ask for sentences of two years' imprisonment for Galvan and two students. The latter described the ban and the arrest as 'an insult to freedom of expression and a violation of basic human rights'.

On 2 December 1971 the novelist and film critic, **Luciano Rincón**, was to have been tried *in camera* on a charge of 'insulting the head of state'. Rincón had been arrested the previous May after the appearance of an article in Paris about the succession to General Franco. The article was published in an issue of the Spanish language journal, *Cuadernos de Ruedo Iberico*, under the pseudonym Luis Ramirez, and Rincón, as a regular contributor to the *Cuadernos*, was suspected of being the author. A group of Spanish writers living in Paris subsequently swore an oath that it was they, not Rincón, who had used this pseudonym and that Rincón's contributions invariably appeared under his own name. In spite of this and the protests of the PEN Club, Amnesty International and numerous European writers, the trial was rearranged for 29 February 1972 when he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

On 20 December 1971 the Public Order Court in Madrid, which tries political offences, brought charges against the poet, **Gabriel Aresti**, author of numerous works in Spanish and Basque, and also a member of the Academy of Basque Languages. The charges against Aresti are said to be that in a recently published volume of poems, he 'tried to arouse Basque regional solidarity', advocated the 'liberation' of the Basques from the rest of Spain, including by force, and 'compared Lenin and Che Guevara with Jesus Christ'.

The February issue of the Magazine, *Mundo Social*, published by the Company of Jesus, was seized by order of the Ministry of Information and Tourism before it has been distributed. The Company announced that two articles were the cause of the seizure: 'We Go to Europe or We Stay at Home' by **Dr. Emilio Manrique** and 'Extended Disorder in the University' by **Father Fernando Prieto, S.J.** The February number of the magazine, *Discusión y Convivencia*, was also seized, but it is not known which articles were responsible.

A finalist in the 'Nadal 1971' literary competition,

it was while on his way there that he was banned from entry to West Germany and deported.

YUGOSLAVIA

The Zagreb philosophical journal *Praxis* was twice confiscated last autumn on a charge of publishing 'false reports'. The first time was for publishing documents in connection with the students' strike in June 1968 and the second was for a special number devoted to 'Yugoslav Socialism Today'. The Belgrade literary magazine, *Kultura*, was banned at about the same time for republishing an 'anti-Marxist' article by the Russian philosopher, **Berdyyayev**. In both cases the magazines had circulated freely for some time before the ban came into operation.

On 11 January the century-old Croatian cultural organization *Matica Hrvatska* was raided, its archives confiscated and its weekly newspaper *Hrvatski Tjednik* ('Croatian Weekly') closed down. At the same time hundreds of intellectuals were detained for questioning, their homes were searched, and 11 leading members of the *Matica's* board were arrested on charges of plotting to overthrow the social and political system of Yugoslavia. They were also charged with setting up a counter-revolutionary organization and advocating the secession of Croatia. Their names are: **Aute Bačić**; **Dr Sime Djodan**, senior lecturer at the University of Zagreb; **Ante Glibota**, secretary to the editorial board of the *Hrvatski Gospodarski Glasnik* ('Croatian Economic Review'); **Vlado Gotovac**, poet and editor of the *Hrvatski Tjednik*; **Jozo Ivcevic**, lecturer in Law at Zagreb University, general secretary of the *Matica Hrvatska* and editor-in-chief of the *Hrvatski Tjednik*; Major-General (retired) **Zvonimir Komavica**, director of the Institute for the Study of Croatian Emigrants Abroad; **Vlatko Paveltić**, literary critic, essayist and editor-in-chief of the literary monthly, *Kritika*; **Dr. Hrvoje Šošić**, lecturer in economics at the Economic Institute of Zagreb; **Dr Franjo Tudjman**, author and historian, formerly professor of history, director of the Institute of Military History in Belgrade and later of the Institute for the History of the Workers' Movement in Croatia at Zagreb; **Dr. Marko Veselica**, senior lecturer in political economics at the University of Zagreb.

Ivo Frangeš, resigned as head of the Yugoslav Writers' Federation and Chairman of the Croatian

Writers' Union on 22 January as a result of being attacked for his nationalist views. In a letter to the federation he said he was 'shaken and confused' by the misinterpretation of his statements on the national culture. Earlier a calendar containing one of his lectures has been banned by a court at Pula and a Zagreb weekly had accused him of holding 'extreme nationalist views'.

The editor-in-chief and two political commentators were dismissed at the end of January from the Zagreb weekly supplement, *Vjesnik u Srijedu* ('Wednesday Herald'), published by the daily paper *Vjesnik* ('Herald'). Their crime was said to be in sympathy with the Croatian nationalists.

Mihajlo Mihajlov, writer and literary critic and formerly lecturer in Russian literature at the Philosophical Faculty (a branch of Zagreb University) in Zadar, was sentenced to 30 days' imprisonment on 8 February for allegedly breaking the ban on publishing his writings in Yugoslavia. Mihajlov, who was released from prison in March 1970 after serving three and a half years of a four and a half years' sentence for writing 'hostile propaganda', is forbidden to work or to publish his writings in Yugoslavia and has been repeatedly denied a passport to travel abroad. The items for which he was convicted were an article, 'Thoughts on Society', published in the *New York Times* on 24 October 1970 and a letter to the *New York Times* published on 12 February 1971. Mihajlov has appealed on the grounds that the *New York Times* does not circulate freely in Yugoslavia (it is available only on subscription) and therefore is not covered by the law. The sudden decision to re-activate this case after over a year's delay is thought to be connected with the recent events in Croatia.

The celebrated film *WR: Mysteries of the Organism*, directed by **Dušan Makavejev**, has still not been shown in Yugoslavia. It was due to be displayed at the National Film Festival at Pula last summer, but was taken off at the last moment. No plans have been announced for its premiere.

The Belgrade students' magazine, *Student*, was banned for the third time within a year in January for criticizing President Tito's official visit to Persepolis in Iran.

Что о беде да что о красоте,
когда само обмана захотело
нагое, как разбойник на кресте,
счастливое, беспмятное тело.

Кто плачет и курлычет надо мной,
перелетая снежную границу,
где ветер зимний, ветер ледяной
вистуживает светлую кривизну.

И в неземной сведенности страстей,
в разлуке рук, в разреженном дыханье,
как на кресте, и тихий хруст костей,
как на костре и треск, и полиханье.

*Russian text of the
poem below as it
appears in the
samizdat edition.*

Why talk of disaster or beauty
when the oblivious body, happy,
naked as the thief's upon the cross,
wants to be deceived.

Who is it weeps and cries over me like a crane
crossing the snow line,
where the winter wind, the icy wind,
chills the bright surface of a well.

And this transcendental merging of passions,
these clutching hands, this gasping breath,
is like bones breaking softly on the cross
and, at the stake, the crackle and the blaze.

1964

Turn the sky over,
lower it into the sea,
the silent into the voiceless.
Help the sea to rise,
lift the sea into the sky,
sea-blue into sky-blue,
height and depth
bring into balance.

Balance yourself and the world,
the world and the ladybird,
the wavelet and the wave
that drags you under to the bottom.
And go down to the bottom, softly
banging the moist doors behind you.

1964

Strength of salt wind
light, leaves and water
sky-coloured sweater
faded, bleached
boat bobbing far off
on the waves
a shriek on the sands
wet tracks in the dunes
sand on my temples.

1964

FOURTEEN POEMS

Natalya Gorbanevskaya

And you, candle, determined I
must be a holder for your eyes, your wax,
that in the pitch-black everlasting night
your trembling flame alone should gaze into the dark.

But the sill is a frontier to candlelight,
the curtain's swaying is your Boreas,
and where is the fire-worshipper more secure
than in November behind double windows.

I am not a flame, not a candle, but a light,
I am a fire-fly in the damp tangled
grass. The grass flows swiftly after me
and the woodland beast homes on me in silence:

the faintest of brightening fire-flies,
the brightest of failing fire-flies,
by whose light the night skies are not pierced,
yet the stars in their courses are guided.



The title and facing pages of a samizdat edition of Gorbanevskaya's poems. The title says simply 'Verses 1962-1967'. The pen and ink drawing on this copy is by an unknown artist.

Drink! cries the quail.
So why not?
We'll get through somewhere, get dead drunk,
drink up our last sou, somehow get through,
get through, get through.

Ah quail, call me in the field,
call me under fire, call me in hell,
whether the lot's gone in drink or not
doesn't matter does it,
anyway no one's to blame one bit.

And you quail, neverending,
you're not a bit to blame, not one bit,
life is god's slip of the tongue,
and a bottle is perpetual renewal;
crouched over the stream I am dying of thirst.

1964

My losses hurt me more in the mornings,
I rise forever from my deserted pillow,
the houses stand like soldiers in two ranks,
their aerials bristling like sabres.

Forever in the street, between the ranks
of little soldiers with eyes like empty windows.
Again this morning
in the latest news bulletin,
a last farewell.

1964

Nothing at all happens — neither fear
nor stiffening before the executioner:
I let my head fall on the hollowed block,
as on a casual lover's shoulder.

Roll, curly head, over the planed boards,
don't get a splinter in your parted lips:
the boards bruise your temples,
the solemn fanfare sounds in your ears,

the polished copper dazzles the eyes,
the horses' manes toss —
O, what a day to die on!

Another day dawns sunless,

and to me in the twilight, half awake, or suffering
from some old fever or some new apocrypha,
my casual lover's shoulder
still smells of pine shavings.

1965

In my own twentieth century
where there are more dead than graves
to bury them in, my miserable
forever unshared love

among these Goya images
is nervous faint absurd
as, after the screaming of jets,
the trump of Jericho.

1966

Goodbye! — and I am myself amazed
how bright and cold it grows,
how the rain stops drizzling.
Goodbye! — like a little ladleful I spill
into the broad clear river,
into deep gentle Lethe.

1966

Wipe the bliss of half-sleep from your cheeks
and open your eyes wide until the lids ache,
the filth and whiteness of the ward
is like the voluntary flag of your bondage.

The emptiness and narrowness of the ward —
close your eyes tightly until your cheeks ache.
Wipe the smile off your chapped lips,
but swallow the ineffectual scream.

The half-dark, half-light of the ward
and your neighbour with closed eyes
insensibly cursing the white light,
dissolving soundlessly in tears.

1966

Sonata Evening

to V.A.

Green mirage of May,
punch holes in pianos,
the Sixth, the Seventh, the Eighth
visit me in my kennel.

My unfailing memory
always produces these three,
a dense flame of green,
like the sea of your exile.

Ah, mirage of May through the window,
dark, green and damp, billow,
obscure my gaze in your swirls.
Until my two hands break,
the Sixth, the Seventh, the Eighth,
I shall thump and thump on the table.

1967

What is forever? What does forever mean?
Water drops in an antique clock,
in another sand falls,
but my alarm clock aims at my temples

and wakes me (this time forever)
from the brief coloured dream –
me, you and everyone, my friend,
for eternity, for the new everlasting pains.

1967

I know them all by sight
in the conservatoire pack
but who'll send me one little word
one little letter from freedom

when I lie on my rough plank-bed
exhausted as a wolf
to whose lips shall I press mine
passionately tenderly

and whose hullo hullo my friend
shall I hear as I freeze
a huge light like a chandelier
and myself – such darkness

1967

The french horn of the train sighs, weeps a little,
an unattainable myth.
Through the prison bars a match gleam trickles,
the whole world is eclipsed.

The horn takes wing, into the night it sweeps.
To flick through tracks
like notes. Oh how am I to reach
that rainy platform?

Forsaken, sleepless, deserted,
deserted without me –
cloud tatters like letters drift down
to your concrete,

and inscribing the puddles with full stops,
with hooks and tails,
their treble voices ring out after
the departed train.

1970



Natalya Gorbanevskaya with her son Yasik.

THE ORDEAL OF NATALYA GORBANEVSKAYA

Daniel Weissbort

Natalya Gorbanevskaya was released from detention in a psychiatric hospital on 24 February this year.

Natalya Gorbanyevskaya is a poet and one of the more recent victims of the revived Russian practice of confining political opponents to mental hospitals. She is one of the leading members of a Moscow group of dissident intellectuals and one of the fifteen founder members of the Action Group for the Defence of Civil Rights in the USSR, formed in May 1969. Though some of her poetry was published in the *samizdat Phoenix* collections of 1961 and 1966, little was known of Gorbanyevskaya until her name started appearing in connection with the civil rights movement, in particular in the pages of the unofficial journal, *Chronicle of Current Events*.

Gorbanyevskaya was born in 1936 and graduated from the philological faculty of Leningrad University in 1963. Afterwards she worked in the State Institute of Experimental Design and Technical Research (*Giprotis*) as an engineer and translator, but her main interest in life was and remains poetry. In fact, only nine of her poems are known to have appeared in officially authorized Soviet journals, but since 1961, when her poems first appeared in *Phoenix*, no less than five *samizdat* collections of her verse have been privately circulated. In 1969, *Possev-Verlag*, the Frankfurt publishing firm, brought out a volume containing these collections in Russian and a selection of her verse in English translation is currently being prepared¹. Gorbanyevskaya's other main activity has been social protest, which came to a head in January 1968 when she was one of the twelve signatories of a letter addressed to the

Chairman of the Moscow Municipal Court demanding an open trial for Alexander Ginzburg (who had compiled the *White Book* on the Sinyavsky-Daniel trial in 1966 and was editor of the *samizdat* magazine *Syntax*), Yuri Galanskov (the editor of *Phoenix*, 1966), Aleksandr Dobrovolsky and Vera Lashkova, who had helped in the typing. She was also one of thirty people who signed a joint letter to the Editor-in-chief of *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, with a copy to the Board of the Union of Journalists, protesting against 'The Lackeys', an article by F. Ovcharenko in the 18 January 1968 issue of the paper, dealing with the Ginzburg, Galanskov, Dobrovolsky, Lashkova case. And there followed a petition to party leaders and judicial and legal authorities protesting against violations of legality in the actual conduct of the trial.

Immediately after her participation in the protests against the trial of the four, in February 1968 Gorbanyevskaya suffered the nightmarish experience that she has recorded in a series of notes entitled 'Free Health Service' (*Besplatnaya Meditsinskaya Pomoshch*), which has been published as an appendix to the *Possev* volume of her poetry. This tells how she was admitted to a maternity hospital on account of a threatened miscarriage and describes her efforts to get herself discharged. These efforts were unavailing, various excuses being offered, and later she was transferred to the notorious Kashchenko mental hospital at which point she began to doubt whether she would ever be permitted to leave. As she subsequently discovered—and as she suspected at the time—the KGB were at the back of this incident, but she was in any case released, which she attributes to the fact that she was pregnant.

Gorbanyevskaya's description of life in the hospital, of the behaviour of the staff and of her own mental state is naturally harrowing, but it appears not to have done her any damage, and she concludes:

If they did want to frighten, confuse and shock me, they did not succeed. I am waiting for the birth of my child quite calmly, and neither my pregnancy nor his birth will prevent me from doing what I wish—which includes participating in every protest against any act of tyranny.

Not to be deflected from the course she regarded as the right one, though the hospital piece (like her poetry) provides ample evidence of her emotional vulnerability, Gorbanyevskaya, during the build-up to the Soviet armed intervention in Czechoslovakia, took part in protests against the official campaign of vilification of the Czechoslovak political development, a development which, needless to say, was a source of great hope to liberals and civil rights activists in the Soviet Union. When on 21 August, Anatoly Marchenko, the author of *My Testimony*, was sentenced to a year's hard labour on a trumped-up charge of infringing the passport regulations (in July he had sent a letter to Czech papers denouncing the Soviet campaign

against Czechoslovakia and talking of the danger of intervention) Gorbanyevskaya, along with a number of Marchenko's friends, wrote a letter disclosing the real reasons for Marchenko's arrest and sentence. Four days later on 25 August she took part in a peaceful demonstration in Red Square against the invasion of Czechoslovakia, the other demonstrators being Pavel Litvinov (the grandson of the late Soviet foreign minister), Larisa Bogoraz-Daniel (wife of Yuli Daniel), Vadim Delone (a poet), Vladimir Dremlyuga (a worker), Konstantin Babitsky (a linguist), and Viktor Fainberg (an art critic).

Although she was arrested at the same time as the others, Gorbanyevskaya was again released, apparently for the sake of her three-month old child who had been with her. On 28 August 1968 she addressed a letter to the world press (it was published in *The Times* among other papers) in which, 'as the only participant... still free', she described the demonstration and its consequences and the provocative behaviour of civilian militia men and KGB agents there, who had attempted to inflame onlookers with anti-intellectual and anti-semitic slogans. Later, having been excluded from the trial that followed (as was Viktor Fainberg, who was so badly beaten up he could not conveniently be produced in court at the time—he was subsequently declared insane), Gorbanyevskaya was informed that she must present herself to the Serbsky Institute of Forensic Psychiatry in Moscow. She was examined on 5 September by a 'committee of experts' under Professor Lunts (whose other identity as a KGB colonel is well-known) and was declared to be non-responsible for her actions — 'The possibility of low-profile schizophrenia is not excluded'. It was recommended that 'she be declared insane and lodged in a penal category psychiatric hospital for compulsory treatment'. Surprisingly, however, the procurator's office simply ordered the case to be closed, in view of her alleged mental instability and the youth of her two children, and placed her under her mother's guardianship. It was during the course of her interviews at the Serbsky Institute that she saw evidence of the part played by the KGB in her previous short confinement in the Kashchenko mental hospital.

Although it was by now perfectly clear that she stood in imminent danger of being committed for an indefinite term to a penal psychiatric institution, Gorbanyevskaya felt it her duty, while still at liberty, to continue to protest and bear witness. Therefore she set about compiling an account of the demonstration in Red Square and of the trial of her fellow demonstrators, just as Ginzburg had done in connection with the Sinyavsky-Daniel trial and Pavel Litvinov with the trial of Ginzburg and his friends. In her book, which she called 'Noon' (*Polden*), she ironically remarked: 'The possibility is not excluded that Professor Lunts' conclusions may yet re-echo in my life': On 21 August 1969, the anniversary of the invasion of Czechoslovakia, Gorbanyevskaya again signed a protest as a member of the Action Group for

BUTYRKA PRISON

Mummy darling, I am so sorry my letters haven't reached you. I'll try and say briefly what's most important. I think that all I did was right and justified, but it is terrible to feel that you and the children have to pay for the right things I did. The weight that has fallen on you – that weight I have felt fully only in prison. Before, it seemed to me that it would only be a question of my suffering, my loss. So believe me, whenever it is that I come out, from wherever it is, I will do everything I can so that you may live the rest of your life in peace, and I will refrain, however sad that may be, from all that kind of activity. I miss home, and the children, and you very much. I think that I ought often to have been much more patient and tolerant, but now I have learnt patience. I myself am well, I'm not cold or hungry, generally speaking everything's all right, but I am very worried about your health. As soon as I am out, you will go straight to a sanatorium, and have proper treatment. I miss the children terribly. Do they remember me? Olya has probably forgotten me. Can you find him some photo of me? Mummy, please don't keep my friends away from the children altogether, especially Vera [Lashkova], after all she is so fond of them both. Don't believe all the frightening things people say. I approve of your plans for the summer. The trial will probably be in June and Yasik will still be in Moscow, so he can come to see me. After the trial I will be able to write, and he can write from the country, and you can send on his letters to me.

Big, big kisses to you all.

Love to every one of you!

NATASHA

NOTE: The Serbsky Institute's diagnosis of Gorbanevskaya stated that she 'showed a hostile attitude to her mother' and 'showed no concern for her children'. Her letters at the time, of which this is one, utterly refute the diagnosis, but were not admitted as evidence.

the Defence of Civil Rights in the USSR. Four months later on 24 December 1969, she was arrested, the last straw, apparently, being the appearance of her book in *samizdat*, and was confined to Butyrka prison.

The conclusion of a commission presided over by the Moscow City Psychiatrist I.K. Yanushevsky, which was called in to investigate the condition of Natalya Gorbanyevskaya on 19 November 1969, was that there were no grounds for a diagnosis of schizophrenia, but a forensic psychiatric examination at the Serbsky Institute on 6 April the following year declared her to be suffering from schizophrenia. It also recommended that 'because of her mental condition and in connection with the persistence of the pathological experiences which determine her conduct, Gorbanyevskaya should be sent for compulsory treatment to a psychiatric hospital of a

special type'. Subsequently, at a session of the Moscow City Court on 7 July 1970, she was declared to have committed acts falling under articles 190-1 and 191 of the Russian Criminal Code while of unsound mind, and ordered to be placed in a psychiatric hospital of a special type for compulsory treatment. The period of treatment was not indicated. Defence counsel, S.V. Kallistratova, could not persuade the court to take into account the existence of two conflicting medical opinions about Gorbanyevskaya's mental state. She also failed to secure the attachment to the case of Gorbanyevskaya's extremely affectionate letters to her mother and children, in spite of allegations, written as facts into the Serbsky Institute report, that her emotional coldness to her mother and brother and her indifference to the future or fate of her children were symptoms of mental illness. The court further refused to accept the appointment of a supplementary examination team, containing experts of various types, to clarify the question of whether Gorbanyevskaya's poetry and translations bore witness to any pathological changes in her personality or not, nor would it admit the attachment to the case of a list of her published works and an appreciation of her work written by the well-known and respected Soviet poet, Boris Slutsky.

Gorbanyevskaya was therefore removed to the hospital section of Butyrka prison in Moscow. On 9 January 1971, she was transferred from Butyrka to the special psychiatric hospital in Kazan where a course of treatment by haloperidol was prescribed for her. As for conditions in Kazan, they have recently been described in No. 10 of the *Chronicle of Current Events*, which notes, among other things, that

If the patients commit offences, refuse to take medicine, quarrel with the doctors or fight, they are strapped to their beds for three days, sometimes more. With this form of punishment, the elementary rules of sanitation are ignored: the patients are not allowed to go to the lavatory and bedpans are not provided.

In conversation with the present writer, Vladimir Ashkenazi, the young Russian-born pianist, who knew Gorbanyevskaya in Russia and corresponded with her after he left, referred continually to her 'spirituality'. It was her absolute honesty and sincerity that impressed him above all. In company she was reserved, somewhat remote. In view of Gorbanyevskaya's frequent use of religious imagery in her poetry, I asked Ashkenazi whether she was herself religious. He was quite certain she was, though she never forced her religious ideas on others. Her religion evidently supported her in her determination to live as she felt she must and there was a sense in which she could not be harmed (though Ashkenazi felt that one should not regard Gorbanyevskaya, or other activists for that matter, as fatalistic: they genuinely believe that the situation will improve as a result of their activity). Ashkenazi added that Gorbanyevskaya would be considered anywhere as *strange*, but – and he repeated this several times – she was certainly not *mad*.

It is clear, therefore, that Gorbanyevskaya's 'insanity' is that of any artist striving to find adequate means of expressing the reality of which he is part. Of course, the activist political course to which she is committed may, in the conditions of the Soviet Union, be described as *suicidal*. Indeed, actual physical suicide is clearly an idea so familiar to the poet that she can even jest with it in a half-tender, half-ironical way, as in the poem 'Goodbye - and I myself am amazed. . .' It might further be argued that offenders against the gross norms of Soviet society *are*, from a certain point of view, abnormal! As the 30 June Appeal of the Action Group to the UN states: '...the very fact of disagreeing with official policies is viewed by the Soviet psychiatrists involved as symptoms of mental illness'. The Appeal goes on to describe the procedure whereby the Soviet authorities deprive the person concerned of any opportunity to defend himself and seek to persuade world opinion that 'disregard of human rights in the Soviet Union is not a real fact but the fruit of the sick imagination of a few madmen'. The oppositionists in the Soviet Union, though they may stick together, are indeed so isolated from the great, largely materialistic mass, that it would not be surprising if some of them did indeed begin to doubt their sanity, and something of this alienation and isolation is expressed in Gorbanyevskaya's poems, for instance in such poems as 'My losses hurt me more on mornings. . .' and 'I know everyone by name in the conservatoire pack. . .'

What is quite clear is that Gorbanyevskaya has not tried to avert the calamity that has been threatening her for so long. In her determination to live as a free human being, in her refusal to compromise, she has inevitably exposed herself. One might suppose that her verse would reflect her political activity. It is, on the contrary, intensely personal and unpublic. It transcends politics. It does not accuse, but describes, in the highest sense of that word, the psychic reality of her situation. So expressive of this inner reality is it that it becomes universal. It is the mark of her talent as an artist that her public and political activity has, as it were, freed her from the need to seek overt expression for her political views in her writing. One is familiar with the allegorical handling of material into which strict political censorship and the pressure of state-imposed dogma forces writers, and it is not surprising that many of Russia's young *samizdat* writers have exploded in direct, often crude, though always burningly passionate literary assaults on the repressive establishment. The intensity of Gorbanyevskaya's feeling does not admit of such an approach. She fights her way through to images that may adequately express these feelings. Her at times near-hysterical shrillness, her staccato alliterative beat (it must be remembered that Marina Tsvetayeva was her mentor) is contained within a taut framework that her flexibility, her poetic skill and energy are able to construct anew for each new poem.

It is at the most intimate level, in her love lyrics, that Gorbanyevskaya is par-

ticularly memorable. The old Russian mystique of regeneration through suffering is vividly evoked. Love, physical love, becomes an ordeal in the poem 'Why talk of disaster or beauty. . .', corresponding to that of Christ's on the Cross, while in the poem, 'Nothing at all happens—neither fear...', her lover's shoulder is likened to the executioner's block. Gorbanyevskaya clearly lives her life as near to breaking point as possible. She does this by remaining vulnerable, by exposing herself to pain. Masterfully controlled, hers is a poetry of pain, of separation, of isolation, of despair, of threatening disaster, of disaster present. Yet, at the same time, it affirms. It affirms because it is poetry.

1. *Selected Poems by Natalya Gorbanevskaya with a transcript of her trial and papers relating to her detention in a prison psychiatric hospital*, edited and introduced by Daniel Weissbort, 156 pp. Carcanet Press, Oxford. £2.00.

battalion; his youngest brother, a strapping, fair-haired village lad; then two counter-revolutionary officers, one short, lean and dark, the other a red-haired, bearded man of medium height; and last of all, a tall, erect old man dressed in sumptuous, traditional peasant costume. All of them, prisoners and guards alike, appeared to walk absent-mindedly, yet with such care that not even a grunt or the grating of a pebble disturbed the silence: had the guards been unarmed and the prisoners unbound, there would have been no way to distinguish between them.

And even the conversation of the three leaders, although carried on in an undertone, turned on minor, everyday matters – not a word was said about the decision taken that morning, nor about what had just taken place in the early afternoon and was now shortly to be brought to a conclusion....

Nevertheless their aimless, run-of-the-mill conversation was charged with the passionate, conflicting tensions that had arisen out of their disagreement that morning – not about the fate of the prisoners, for they had agreed the previous night, before lying down to sleep beside each other on the floor, that all except the battalion commander's middle brother deserved the death penalty – but about the way in which the sentences should be carried out.

For the prisoners were a mixed bag, they differed both in their crimes and their political views; so that when the Commander had suggested that morning that they should all be executed together without further delay, the Commissar had protested. 'Comrades, I wouldn't want you to think that I disagree with you because the battalion commander and his brother are my cousins! But till yesterday they were our comrades and fellow-partisans and it's neither right nor humane for them to be executed with counter-revolutionaries and to lay with them in the same grave. And another thing – we've no call to execute the officers in public. So far we've never done it with reactionaries and we've less reason than ever now to allow their families to trade on their grief and turn their graves into memorials for martyrs. The battalion commander and his brother are a different matter altogether – we should give them a public execution and explain their crime to the people. For though they disobeyed and broke the laws of the revolution, they didn't go over to the enemy and we shouldn't prevent their family from mourning them and giving them a decent burial. Their lives and beliefs set them apart from the others – so let them die and rot apart!'

The unwritten law was for the Secretary to have the last word. But since he had not yet expressed an opinion, the Commander again spoke up: 'It's of no importance! Have we or haven't we got to put them to death? We have! That's the only thing that matters – all the rest is by the way. The enemy may break through at any moment! The sick and wounded are going to the front, and here we are keeping a whole battalion back for the sake of a few troubles on account of these traitors! I agree that the battalion

commander and his brother aren't in the same class as the officers, but we've no time to waste, and certainly not on public executions where you have to round up the people and tie up your units. We can explain the differences between the crimes of the commander and the officers to our soldiers and people later – not that I see any great need even for that. What has to be, has to be! Death's death and the grave is the grave.'

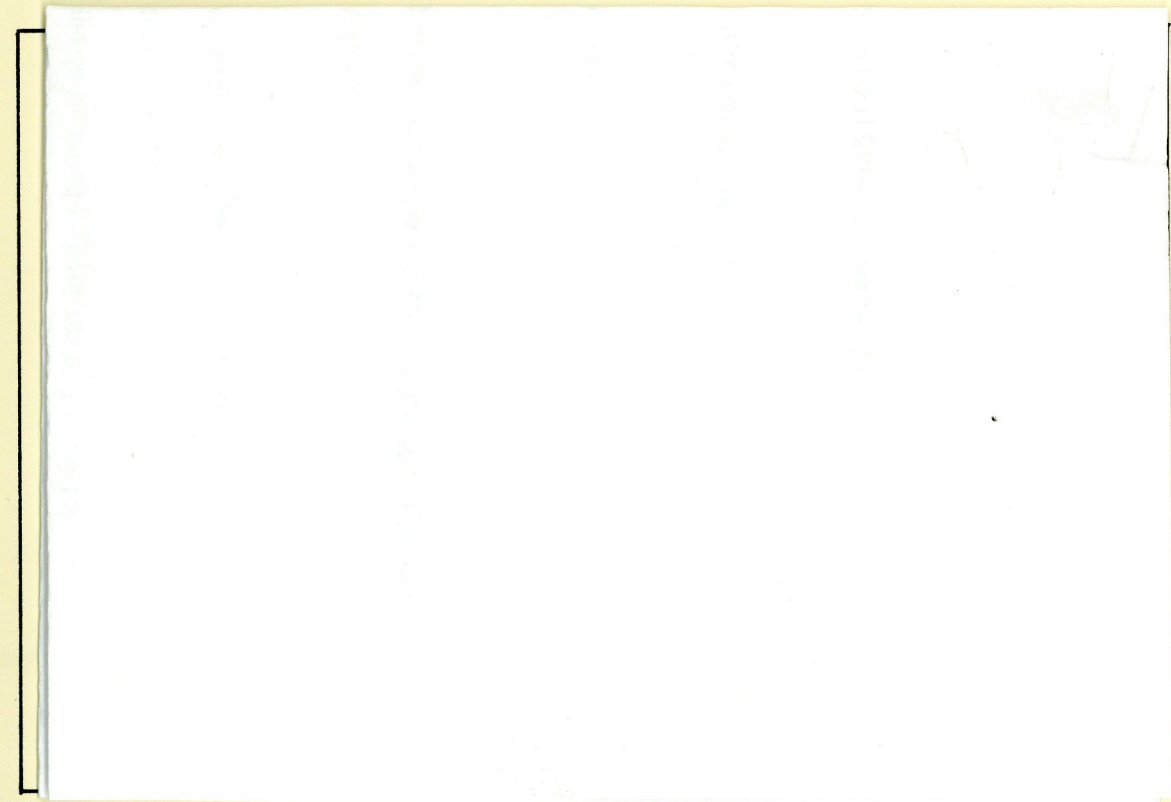
The Secretary continued to maintain a prudent silence and the Commissar replied: 'But the problem is exactly that there are deaths and deaths. The battalion commander is perhaps – no, not perhaps, is certainly more guilty than the officers. The officers haven't done anything: like most of their class they're potential enemies – they were lying low so that they could join up with the counter-revolutionaries when the right moment came. But the battalion commander, though he'd never have fought against us, refused to set fire to his own village, in spite of the fact that it was the only way – although we're against such methods in principle – of preventing it from being used by reactionary forces from the neighbouring town as a rallying point and outlying stronghold. The officers might have joined the enemy tomorrow, but the battalion commander, by his action, has sown disorder and confusion within our own ranks, and *that* when the very existence of the revolution and the future of our people is at stake! But even so, he shouldn't be buried in the same grave as the officers. Let him die as he lived – a revolutionary who, for personal, sentimental reasons, wavered when the pinch came and broke the rules and laws of his own movement. Both the people and our lads will understand and approve – and forget him all the quicker for it. The sole purpose of his execution is to reinforce order and discipline in our own ranks; the people will be satisfied and the morale of our soldiers raised if only the battalion commander and his youngest brother are given a public execution.'

The Commander made no rejoinder – a sign that as usual he was beginning to yield to the political wisdom of the Commissar's arguments and was now looking for an alternative course of action. Then – with perfect timing – the Secretary put in his word: 'The prisoners are not only our fellow countrymen, they're also from our own parts, men we know personally. What's more – all three of us have relatives among them: one of the officers is your first cousin, Comrade Commander, and the other officer is a relation of his. The battalion commander is related to Comrade Commissar and the old man is my uncle – when I was an orphan he took me in and looked after me. So this is a test of our loyalty, not just to the revolution but to ourselves as well. For we're not like other men; our existence depends on the continual destruction of the past and the resurrection of the future within ourselves. That is our destiny, our vocation, and the man who hasn't understood that, hasn't found himself in the cause, nor the revolution within himself. That is why I

cannot agree with the Commissar's views, however sound and shrewd they may be, nor with the Commander's arguments, although they have a military justification. In the past the revolution made itself felt in social relations, but now it has crept into the revolutionaries' very souls! The weak will go under, but the strong will gain in strength! We cannot hope to win unless we recognize our own weaknesses as the spirit of reaction in disguise, unless we root out the weaklings from our midst and destroy them together with the counter-revolutionary scum. Doubt and confusion will arise among the people and the enemy will gain a hold if we revolutionaries are not ruthless with ourselves and with our weaklings. The people can be enlightened and liberated only if we are implacable and don't hesitate to shed blood! And right now that means we should mete out the same punishment to those who have betrayed the revolution as to our opponents. For as we all know, example is the best teacher and the ultimate criterion. My uncle was too busy shooting off his mouth against us, bragging that no one would dare lay a finger on him so long as I, his adopted son, was Party Secretary; but when our bullets silence him my conscience will be as clear as a new-borne babe's. For the cause, for the revolution, it's not important who you were or what you are, but whether you subordinate yourself to them — whether and to what extent you help to realize them. Necessity is more important than personality — history is our aim, not ethics! Don't get me wrong — this doesn't mean we should torture any man, it means that when there is no alternative we should kill him in the most humane and expedient manner possible. In this case, then, the most practical and ideologically correct solution is to execute them all together in public, but without letting their grave become a rallying point for reactionaries or demonstrations of grief, for that, objectively speaking, would also be reactionary.'

The Commander had no serious objections to the Secretary's views — a public execution would not mean too much delay for forces needed in the field. The Commissar, for his part, pleased by the way the Secretary's remarks had supported and augmented his own, proposed that they immediately summon their best soldiers from the various units to take part in the execution, while he personally prepared a speech for the occasion. His proposals, like those of the Commander and Secretary, were based on experience and previous successes and they were adopted and worked out further with mutual care and confidence. Nevertheless no solution was found to the problem of how to hold a public execution and yet prevent mourning on the dead men's graves.

It was the Secretary who finally pointed out with a smile: 'There's no need to fear that their grave may become a place of pilgrimage; supporters of the revolution won't gather there because of the officers and our opponents won't on account of the battalion commander and his brother.'



Only we must see to it that they are executed and buried in some out-of-the-way spot, which won't be under peoples' eyes and a constant reminder of their fate and our severity — however necessary and justified.'

Inspiration came to the Commander: 'Why don't we throw their bodies down a pot-hole — that's how our ancestors used to deal with sinners? I remember that when I was a boy minding sheep, I often used to come across pot-holes in the hills round here. I'll go and look for one that's remote enough while you take care of the other arrangements.'

But the Secretary would not close the meeting until they had spoken to the battalion commander's younger brother, the one whose life was to be spared in consideration for his sincere repentance, which he had proved by informing them about his brothers' criminal statements and plotting. 'Clearly,' said the Secretary, 'he can no longer be secretary of the village party committee, but we should give him the opportunity as a common soldier to redeem himself in the eyes of the movement and the revolution. But in his case as I'm not sure whether I'm being too strict or perhaps too soft on him, so it's better if you weigh him up as well.'

STONE AND VIOLETS

Milovan Djilas

Under a troubled spring sky the procession crawled through the stony ravine. The barren hills merged with the sky and the dumb procession, clad in grey, wintry colours, merged with the boulders and scrub. The hard grey-ness was relieved only by the fitful clatter and gleam of weapons, which were denser at the head and rear of the column.

A group of about twenty men, dressed in a motley assortment of military uniforms, civilian clothes and peasant costumes walked about twenty yards ahead of the procession. They kept pace with each other, ignoring the crowd that followed. Yet the gap between the two groups never varied, the crowd seemed intent on keeping it unchanged, as if loathe to disturb the hushed and solemn order in which they advanced over the uneven stony ground.

Only the three men leading the advance group remained largely unaffected by the impenetrable silence and slow unvarying pace of the crowd. They talked among themselves and walked either three abreast, in pairs or in single file, depending on the narrowness of the path and the steepness of the ground. A heavily built dark man with a moustache stood out amongst them — the commander of the partisan platoon, whose heavy boots, fur-lined jacket and otterskin cap gave him a clumsy, even savage appearance. His two companions were the pale, thin platoon commissar, and the secretary of the regional party organization, a man with a large head and coarse features. There was also a fourth with them, the dark, skinny, callow-looking middle brother of two of the men condemned to death. He took no part in the conversation of the other three, and kept at a slight distance behind them.

They were followed by five men walking in single file, bound with wire and heavily guarded: the tallish ruddy-faced commander of a partisan

The guards brought in the middle brother.

The impressions he had formed during the previous night's talk with this prisoner had led the Secretary to expect a repentant, cowed and conciliatory man. Instead the man that appeared before them seemed confident and even carefree. On being requested by the Secretary to give the other comrades an account of his misdeeds and his present attitude to them, the words poured eagerly and uncontrollably from his lips: 'I've already told you all the facts, but they are far from being able to lighten the terrible, shameful darkness of my soul and mind! Comrades, I have often wished you dead; when my younger brother swore that your headquarters and committee should have a bomb thrown at them, it was from me he took his evil inspiration! Even last night, comrades, all the time I was confessing my sins to the comrade Secretary, I was thinking how I could best deceive him and save my miserable, selfish, worthless life. My cowardice forced me to reveal more and more and I cast the blame on my own brothers — but their guilt is less than mine, for they are less deceitful! I blamed them so as to mislead and betray the revolution and the cause. Even now, do not believe me, comrades; always be on your guard against those who, even if only in their thoughts and dreams have faltered in the holy struggle! For, in truth, such men are the first to betray themselves — their conscience and their very being! And I am one of the most depraved, for I sinned without reason, without cause — out of sheer perversity! Neither my own blood, nor that of my brothers; can ever wash me clean! I deserve to be burnt alive at the stake, to rid the world of every trace of my corrupt body and soul! One thing only would I ask of you, comrades: before I die in disgrace, lead me through all the villages in the district and let me confess my sins to the people. Let the people witness my curse and the young learn from my disgrace and downfall!'

Since no one, himself least of all, had been able to foresee an end to these outpourings, much less anticipate what this eruption of his inner torment might throw up; the Secretary had taken advantage of his first pause for breath to interrupt him before he embarked on a new flood of confession and self-denunciation: 'I have already informed the comrades here of your sincere repentance and unless they wish to comment on the statements you have just made, I may inform you of our decision.'

As neither the Commander nor the Commissar had any comments to make, the Secretary announced: 'We are dismissing you from all positions of responsibility and transferring you to a unit where you will fight with the rank and file. We are offering you the opportunity to prove your repentance by deeds. You are to attend the execution with us, where you may be called upon to show your loyalty to the cause by making a speech explaining their treachery.'

'Isn't that too great, too generous a reward for a traitor?' asked the prisoner

hesitantly.

'Our aim is not to liquidate, but to re-educate,' responded the Secretary.

And with that the morning's deliberations had ended. The other prisoners were not even interrogated — their crimes were already known and proven, their sentences decided on. None of them was informed: the three leaders had had more than enough to do as it was, and each had hurried off to see to their tasks — the Commander to give orders to the units, the Secretary to inform the Party cells and instruct them to summon the people, and the Commissar to find a pot-hole and make preparations for the execution itself.

Each had carried out his task, and now, leading the crowd, they came to the neck of the gorge where a path disappeared into a gash in the rocks.

'How are the people going to get through here?' protested the Commander, stopping short. 'Where does it lead to, anyway?'

'It wasn't easy to find,' replied the Commissar. 'To tell the truth, I'd never have found it without the help of the shepherd boys from the Party youth organization. But you'll see it's an ideal spot.'

Without further ado the Commander walked on, while the Secretary added as he caught up with him: 'No need to worry about the people — they'll follow us in any case. They're used to scrambling over the rocks and rough ground.'

By now it was too much of a struggle to keep abreast of one another and they fell silent, unused to having their words overheard, however insignificant, overheard, even when they were completely trivial and even when it was by men who in half an hour would be killed and thrown into a bottomless pit. All at once they found themselves cut off from the crowd by boulders and spurs of rock punctuating the sharp twists of the track, alone with the prisoners stumbling their way over the stones. They continued like this for some ten minutes. But just as they were emerging into a shallow depression ringed round by rocks and just as they thought they were free of the stony silence in which every clink of horse-shoe or rifle-butt, every cough and sigh could be clearly heard, the old man, the Secretary's uncle, let out such a sudden, wild cry that the very rocks seemed to split asunder and come crashing down. 'May your seed turn to stone, damn you! A curse on you, my own adopted son! Will you not kill us and bury us like human beings?'

'Silence him!', bellowed the Commander.

The Commissar paused, presumably to explain to the guards how to carry out this command, but the Secretary stopped him with a gesture: 'Let him be! Don't pay any attention to him — he's got nothing left to say.'

By now they were already entering the circular depression, which was no more than fifty yards across: it was in fact a levelled patch of ground filled with soil that had been washed down by thawing snow and rain from the

surrounding bare rocks. The old man fell silent. The Commissar hurried over to the far right-hand side of the hollow, stopping some ten feet from its rim to wait for the others, with a large stone in his hand.

'Here we are!' he said, pointing to a grinning pile of stones that jutted to about knee-height above ground.

Only then did the Commander and Secretary notice the black hole in the middle of the stones. The Commissar threw his stone into it. They listened carefully to the dull, heavy thudding of the stone against the sides of the shaft and continued to strain their ears even after all sound had been swallowed up by the unfathomable depths.

The Commander was the first to recover. 'Absolutely perfect,' he commented, looking over his shoulder and all around him.

The Secretary said: 'Yes, it's perfect, and what's more important, there's plenty of room for the people to gather round.'

The Commissar grinned with satisfaction: 'That's what I had in mind — like a theatre.'

Only then did they become aware of the prisoners and their guards standing beside them, pale and numb, and the crowd pouring into the hollow like a muddy, turbulent stream. They had already divided their duties among themselves: the Commander was to line the prisoners up and post the firing-squad, the Commissar was to explain to the military delegates the crimes the prisoners had committed and the purpose of the execution, while the Secretary, with the aid of Party members, was to marshal the people in their places.

Everything went with unexpected ease and speed: the people hastily followed the Secretary's hushed instructions and silent gestures, and even the prisoners lined up obediently and stood petrified, mute and motionless between the pot-hole and the rocky slope.

But when the people had taken their places and were seated on the boulders in a semi-circle, the silence was so complete that all could hear the twittering of a yellow-hammer among the rocks and the gurgling of water deep underground. This stony hush, broken only by the voices of the bird and water, seemed suddenly to rouse the Commissar who was busy with the soldiers; with long strides he hurried over to the rocks round the pot-hole and climbed onto the highest one he could find.

But just as he had opened his mouth to speak, one of the prisoners, the battalion commander, suddenly began to bellow so that the veins stood out on his forehead and it looked as though he was about to burst from his bonds: 'Long live the revolution! Long live the Party! Long live the people's freedom!'

Aroused and spurred on by his cries, the other prisoners began in turn to shout whatever lay closest to their hearts, whatever they wished to be

remembered by. The battalion commander's youngest brother, with tears streaming down his face, screamed that he wasn't guilty of any crime, except for some rash words he had let slip in a moment of anger; the ginger-haired officer, also weeping, shouted that his only crime was to be an officer; while the dark officer, choking with rage and straining at his bonds, hissed unintelligible abuse that was aimed equally at his craven colleague and his executioners. The old man, the Secretary's stepfather, dropped to the ground on his knees and began to beat the rock in front of him with a stone, hammering out his curses just as the people had always done since time immemorial to strengthen the force of their oaths. Soon the disturbance and clamour provoked a counter reaction from Party members and from members of the youth organization, from fathers and mothers of men who had given their lives for the revolution and from the sisters and wives of partisans — from the suffering, impoverished and embittered people. Some even began to hurl stones at the prisoners.

At a loss what to do, the Commissar shrugged his shoulders and looked around for the Secretary, who was lost from sight among the rocks and crowd. And he descended from the stones as if being carried away by the wave of fury and tumult; but the Secretary emerged from among the rocks and crowd and brandished his hand, like a sword, at the Commander, telling him to get on with the job.

The Commander shouted the command. It was not very loud, nor clear — except to the soldiers — yet it silenced the uproar and confusion among the crowd, if not the prisoners' cries. His second command was drowned by a deafening volley. The prisoners all fell, except for the old man, who stood swaying, the stone with which he had hammered out the curses still clasped in his hand. He opened his mouth to cry out one last curse, but instead of words a jet of blood streamed from his lips, staining his white moustache. Then he too collapsed. But all at once the dark officer and the battalion commander's youngest brother half raised themselves from the ground, the former supporting himself on his right elbow, the latter on both arms.

'Swine!' spat the officer, baring his teeth.

'Forgive me, brothers!' sobbed the young man. 'Maybe I can recover — let me redeem myself in the ranks!'

But another volley silenced them and cut them down.

Nevertheless the Commander carefully examined each corpse, holding his pistol at the ready, and fired a shot into two heads that still seemed to show traces of life. The military delegates, headed by the Commissar, seized the body of the battalion commander first and flung it into the pot-hole. Then they threw the others in after him. But no one listened for or heard their bodies hit the sides of the shaft as they descended: the crowd was wildly bawling in unison, mouthing the slogans that the Secretary dictated to them

from that same rock from which the Commissar had attempted to make a speech.

As soon as he had stepped down, the battalion commander's brother came up to him. 'You said you might want me to make a speech about the traitors and prove my loyalty, but I didn't get the chance! What do you say, would it suit your plans if I led them in dancing the *kolo*?'

'You must judge that for yourself,' answered the Secretary, as he joined the Commander and Commissar, who were already moving away from the pot-hole towards the gap that lead out of the hollow.

'Come on, folks! The *kolo*! Let's sing and dance to the death of traitors!'

The dancers quickly joined hands and the puny figure of the brother of the two dead men was quickly lost to sight in the excited singing and dancing throng.

Watching the *kolo*, the Commander observed: 'The sky has cleared.'

'In more ways than one, you mean?' said the Commissar with a laugh.

'If you like,' remarked the Secretary and added: 'It's a gruesome business — but that's the way it has to be.'

They started to leave, but were pulled up short by the sound of wailing among the rocks. Almost simultaneously two women ran forward from different sides, pushed their way through the ring of dancers and approached the pot-hole. The three leaders recognised the dark, gaunt woman as the sister of the two dead brothers and the plump, blond one as the wife of the ginger-haired officer.

'Bloody hell!' swore the Secretary. 'Didn't we say we'd post guards along the path, and didn't we tell them specially to prevent those two women from coming and stirring up the people with their weeping and wailing?'

'The guards were posted,' retorted the Commander angrily, 'but they must have slipped through some other way.'

'Someone must have warned them,' explained the Commissar, 'or else they watched the crowd and by-passed the guards.'

But the women had ceased their wailing. The sister got there first. She sat down on a stone, bent her head and pulled back her headscarf as professional mourners do when they are about to begin their lament. But all of a sudden she noticed the officer's wife standing there with a bunch of violets in her hand. She got up, knotted her scarf under her chin and screamed at her opponent: 'Do you think, you slut, that I'm going to lament for those traitors of yours too?'

The officer's wife looked at her for a moment in dumb amazement. Then, laying down her violets, her face flushed crimson, she hurled herself at her opponent: 'And do you imagine, you yokel, that I would scatter flowers over those cut-throats of yours?'

The *kolo* had come to a silent halt. But when the two women began to

hurl insults at each other and at the dead men, many people began to laugh and goad them on with jeers. The Commander himself was roaring with laughter, the Commissar looked on with a kind of curiosity and the Secretary with a grave, inscrutable expression.

But in the midst of the womens' furious screams and the cheerful uproar of the crowd, an old man, bearded and stooping, pushed his way over to the pot-hole, leaning heavily on a knobbed stick. Someone called out: 'Silence, silence!' and indeed the old man's progress was accompanied by a hushed murmur of curiosity. He walked slowly, with not a glance to left or right — he clearly had no fear or was too old to be concerned any more about his life. When he reached the pot-hole he slowly removed his spotted lambskin cap, crossed himself and sighed: 'May God rest their souls!' Then he picked up the violets from the stone and threw them gently into the hole.

'Who's that?' asked the Secretary.

'Some madman who lives up in the caves,' answered the Commander.

And the Commissar added: 'An old man.'

Hastily and awkwardly the old man crammed his cap onto his rosy, bald pate and, still leaning heavily on his stick, made off in the opposite direction to that by which the leaders, prisoners and people had come, and by which they were now departing.

His grey, homespun peasant clothes merged with the rocks, and within a few moments he had vanished from sight.



This is the first publication in any language of this story by Djilas which forms part of a new collection of stories due to appear in English later this year. Djilas has been unable to publish anything in his own country since his trial in 1963 after publishing Conversations with Stalin abroad. At that time he was sentenced to twelve years of strict prison regime and banned for eight years from publishing in Yugoslavia. The former sentence was revoked and Djilas released in December 1966, but the ban on publishing continued in force until December 1971. It remains to be seen whether his work will now appear in Yugoslavia.

This is the first English publication of a hitherto little known story from the cycle Krokhotki ('miniature stories'). The translation is of a text derived from a private recording made by Solzhenitsyn some years ago in Moscow. Since Solzhenitsyn chose not to include it in the authorized volume of his shorter works (English version published by Bodley Head in 1971), it should be regarded as a simple jeu d'esprit. It is presented here as an additional example of the works of Solzhenitsyn circulating in samizdat, together with the prose elegy to A. Tvardovsky that is now circulating in hundreds of copies.

MEANS OF TRANSPORT

Alexander Solzhenitsyn

What was the horse, playfully arching his back, pawing the ground with his hooves, his mane flying in the wind, with his sapient fiery eye? What was the camel, that twin-humped swan, that leisurely sage, with a knowing smile on his thick lips? Or even old black-nosed moke with his patient obstinacy and tender pricked-up ears?

But we have chosen this most absurd of all earth's creatures, borne on six swift rubber paws, with its lifeless glass eyes, blunt ribbed snout and humped iron box of a back. Never will it snort over the joys of the open steppe, the scent of grass, or for love of its mate or master. All it can do is clatter and screech its iron body and belch out gob after gob of stinking black smoke.

Ah well, as we are, so is our means of transport.

IN MEMORIAM ALEXANDER TVARDOVSKY

Alexander Solzhenitsyn

There are many ways of killing a poet – the method chosen for Tvardovsky was to take away his offspring, his passion, his journal.

The sixteen years of insults meekly endured by this hero were as nothing so long as his journal survived, so long as literature was not stopped, so long as people could be printed in it, so long as people could go on reading it. But then they heaped the coals of disbandment, destruction and mortification upon him, and within six months these coals had consumed him. Within six months he took to his deathbed; and only his characteristic fortitude sustained him till now, to the last drop of his consciousness, of his suffering.

Third day. The portrait over the coffin shows the dead man still only forty, his brow unfurrowed by the sweetly bitter burdens of his journal, radiant with that childishly luminescent trust that he managed to carry with him throughout his mortal life and that returned to him even when he was already doomed.

To that best of all music they bear wreaths, they bear wreaths – ‘From Soviet soldiers’ . . . And with reason. I remember how the lads at the front as one man preferred to marvel of his trusty ‘Tyorkin’ to all other wartime books. And let us remember too how army libraries were forbidden to subscribe to *Novy Mir*, and how not so long ago men were hauled before the C.O. for questioning for reading the light blue journal.

And now the whole gang from the Writers’ Union has flopped onto the scene. The guard of honour comprises that same flabby crowd that hunted him down with unholy shrieks and cries. Yes, it’s an old old custom of ours, it was the same with Pushkin: it is precisely into the hands of his enemies that the dead poet falls. And they hastily dispose of the body, covering up with glib speeches.

They crowd round the coffin in a solid ring and think they have fenced it off. Just as they destroyed our only journal and think they have won.

But you need to be deaf and blind to the last century of Russia’s history to regard this as a victory and not an irreparable blunder.

Madmen! When the voices of the young resound, keen-edged, how you will miss this patient critic, whose gentle admonitory voice was heeded by all. Then you will be set to tear the earth with your hands for the sake of returning Trifonich. But then it will be too late.

HOMAGE TO ALEXANDER SOLZHENITSYN

Rodis Roufos

The reactions to the recent award of the Nobel Prize to Alexander Solzhenitsyn recall the case of that other prize-winning heretic, Boris Pasternak. The Soviet Establishment has once more accused the Swedish Academy of partiality, despite the fact that between Pasternak and Solzhenitsyn it had honoured Mikhail Sholokhov, an obedient pillar of neo-Stalinist orthodoxy.

This accusation is even more unreasonable than that associated with Pasternak's award. In the latter's case it could be argued in good faith, from the Soviet point of view, that *Dr. Zhivago* was a 'reactionary' novel, in that it drew a nostalgic picture of pre-revolutionary Russia. But Solzhenitsyn is a child and model citizen of the Soviet State. Born after the Revolution and educated in the Soviet Union where he has spent all his life, he fought bravely in World War II and was decorated for it—before being arrested and deported for many years, without trial, for having criticized Stalin in a private letter. One can search his work in vain for any attack on socialism or any yearning for a political and social past which he never knew. Solzhenitsyn has no quarrel with his country's economic system. He only demands that socialism should be imbued with justice and humanity. In this sense, therefore, his work is in accordance with the socialist ideal and the generous vision of Marx. The style of his novels, on the other hand, is above all realistic. He describes, with a simplicity that carries conviction, a social reality that he has experienced—in the prisons and hospitals where he has spent so much of his life. If ever a literary work has deserved to be called 'socialist realism'—provided words are used in their customary meaning—it is the work of Solzhenitsyn (such was also the view of the well-known Marxist theorist Georg Lukacs, which I discovered after having written the above).

But every totalitarian system twists the meaning of words. To the Soviet Establishment, a novel is 'socialist' and 'realistic' only if it presents a conventional idealisation of all aspects of Soviet life—any reservation, any doubt is suspicious. To protest against injustice and inhumanity in capitalist countries and their colonies is laudable. To take pity on those who are oppressed within the Soviet Union itself (or Czechoslovakia) is a political offence. And that was Solzhenitsyn's unforgivable sin, for which he has had to pay so high a price.

Solzhenitsyn had the audacity to express open compassion for the humble and the despised among his own people. To compound his transgressions, he made fun—mild fun, devoid of any real malice—of the social climbers who have thrown their own humanity overboard in order to achieve success in Soviet society. Yet it is precisely those features that bring Solzhenitsyn's work within the great moral tradition of the social novel, which from the 19th century onwards has flaunted the vices of capitalist society. The prosecutor of *The First Circle* and the informer of *The Cancer Ward* possess twin brothers in every authoritarian administration—yesterday's or today's, in Tsarist Russia or in some modern Western countries—selfishly clinging to their class privileges and material comforts, anxious to ensure the good will of those more powerful than themselves. Such characters are a good reminder of Lord Acton's eternally topical saying: 'All power corrupts. Absolute power corrupts absolutely.' The only characters in Solzhenitsyn's work who enjoy true integrity and spiritual freedom, apart from a number of scientists dedicated to their work, are political prisoners, deportees, and those on the threshold of death—because they have nothing more to lose. It is those disinherited ones who keep the spark of humanity and brotherhood alive, just as they did in earlier social novels. Solzhenitsyn's struggle in the Soviet Union is motivated by a sense of duty towards justice and truth akin to that of Western writers who denounce corruption in capitalist societies—with less danger, when they happen to live in democracies.

The differences between the cases of Pasternak and Solzhenitsyn, however, go beyond their respective attitudes as novelists and human beings. They also concern the circumstances surrounding their work and the reactions provoked by it. *Dr. Zhivago* was never printed in the Soviet Union, whereas *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, Solzhenitsyn's first novel, was printed and published at the time of the 'thaw' which followed the 20th Congress in 1956. (In fact, this made its author famous overnight and aroused world interest for his subsequent works, which can only be read surreptitiously in his own country.) Protests against the behaviour of the Soviet authorities towards Pasternak had come chiefly from Western liberals (they also came from some Pharisees who seized the opportunity for a hypocritical, demagogic and one-sided denunciation of Soviet tyranny, while never having a word to

spare about the various Trujillos and Batistas of this world), whereas the treatment of Solzhenitsyn has been criticized within the Soviet Union itself, as well as by a number of Western communists like the poet Aragon. These differences seem to justify, at least *prima facie*, some slight hope that a little progress has been achieved in the communist world with regard to intellectual freedom . . . very little, to be sure, and dearly paid for by the few courageous pioneers, but still progress in comparison to the stifling silence and conformity of the Stalin era.

On the side of the other authoritarian regimes, the picture is similar. In army-ruled Brazil it has been possible to publish a book denouncing the rulers' use of torture on their political opponents. In Spain the explosive novel of Isabel Alvarez de Toledo, *The Strike*, did get published, though it cost her a jail sentence of six months. Nothing of the kind would have been thinkable in Spain ten years ago, not to mention under the regimes of Hitler, Mussolini and the other pre-war dictatorships that employed preventive censorship. Here, again, there is some progress in comparison to the past. None of these regimes is a free one, of course. Still, if one may paraphrase Orwell: All dictatorships are insufferable, but some are more insufferable than the others.

Does this mean that we are headed for a slow, relative improvement? And what is the explanation?

The concept of freedom has become more comprehensive in our time. A few decades ago it became obvious that classic liberalism, with its disregard for the economic facts of life, had led to the undermining of formal democratic equality through the actual inequalities of wealth and want. When one lacks the bare necessities, or lives in fear of being deprived of them, one cannot be a truly free and equal citizen of a democracy. (Anatole France put it in a nutshell with his epigrammatic wit: 'True, the rich and the poor are equally free to sleep under bridges.') This awareness was at the root of the formulation of the Atlantic Charter during the last war: for the first time 'freedom from want' was added to the other liberties.

At the same time as the concept of freedom was being enriched and perfected, however, the enemies of freedom were changing their tactics accordingly. Authoritarianism has been undergoing a process of evolution, of modernization, of cunning adaptation to new conditions.

Three main factors have given modern dictatorships a face-lift that distinguishes them from those of the 1920's and 1930's.

The first factor is economic, with psychological overtones. Beyond a certain degree of economic development one no longer finds those destitute masses of 1917-1933, eager to follow any popular prophet of a millenium to come. More sophisticated standards of living and education have made people less gullible to the effects of such crude dramatics. Masses no longer

rise to destroy freedom for the sake of a charismatic leader or an ideology. The unceasing spread of middle-class features among ever wider social strata tends to make citizens politically more phlegmatic, not to say apathetic. They are more inclined to criticize regimes or make fun of them than to attempt violent overthrows. At the same time, and for the same reasons, highly developed societies are losing their willingness to fight and suffer in order to preserve or regain their freedom. Prosperity breeds selfishness and petty calculations. As with the Athenians in the days of Demosthenes, every man expects his neighbour to take the first step. Even proletarians, in a contemporary affluent society, have far more to lose than the proverbial chains mentioned by the *Communist Manifesto*. All this can be expressed by the Roman axiom: *beati possidentes* (blessed are the possessors)—in this instance, those in possession of power, whoever they may be. A successful popular revolution becomes less and less likely, in Europe—East or West—as in North America. Power may change hands here and there by violence, legality may be overthrown—but by means of ‘palace revolutions’, foreign interventions, military coups. The serious challengers of constitutional government are no longer fanatical masses or parties, but, as Luttwak has rightly pointed out (in *Coup d’Etat*, 1968), professional groups of conspirators who can usually count on help from within the State machinery itself.

A second reason for the beatitude of the ‘possessors’—lawful or unlawful, constitutionally elected or usurpers—is technological progress, which works in their favour. This applies to the field of mass media, the monopoly or control of which gives a government enormous facilities for conditioning people’s minds. It applies to electronic devices, whose continuous improvement allows an up-to-date police force to exercise a hitherto unknown degree of control over citizen’s lives. Last but not least, it applies to modern weapons, which none but official armies can have at their disposal. Everywhere we meet with the same pattern: rulers have become stronger, citizens weaker than ever before. Technology is scandalously partial to all Establishments, irrespectively of their ideology.

The third factor of change is that, since the last war, ‘dictatorship’ has become a dirty word. No contemporary dictatorship dares to call itself by its own name. They all pay lip-service to some kind of ‘democracy’. (True, the latter is usually qualified by an adjective such as ‘genuine’, ‘popular’, ‘corporative’—which almost invariably indicates that the noun is emptied of its substance.) Perfunctory though this lip-service may be, however—Tartuffe making the sign of the cross before a church—it does occasionally make it necessary to keep up some pretences, particularly when it becomes imperative to fool gullible foreigners—a practice which the more overt dictatorships of a generation ago would have despised.

Today’s dictatorships are slowly adapting themselves to these changed circumstances. They are beginning to realise that they no longer require charismatic leader-figures, personal cults and hysterical mobs; gone is the need for a political party, for popularity, and even, in most cases, for an ideology. Such regimes tend to acquire a prosaic, cool and impersonal touch; being assured of their technical superiority and of their people’s subservience, they do not always need to resort to harsh, conspicuous measures in order to ensure conformity among their subjects. Thus, preventive censorship is being gradually replaced by more subtle, indirect means of pressure. Besides draconian repressive laws and conveniently malleable courts of justice, their arsenal contains unobtrusive economic sanctions that can hit at the vulnerable spot—the newly acquired, and as yet very relative, ‘freedom from want.’ (Modern capitalist States have become so interventionist that they, too, have the power—though to a lesser degree than communist States—of subjecting vast segments of the population to an often intolerable ‘blackmail on livelihood’.) At the same time, brain-washing by means of controlled mass media enhances, in the long run, both conformity and selfish motivations, with the purpose of turning the responsible citizen into a stultified consumer.

Within the context of these changes one can better understand why, in many dictatorships, the persecution of intellectual freedom is relaxing. One can hear timid voices of protest and dissent, which in the past would not have been tolerated even as whispers.

There are indications that the pace of this evolution is quicker in Western than in Eastern dictatorships. One reason for this is fairly obvious. As a rule, the former depend on the United States, where tiresome senators and newspapermen ask embarrassing questions, thus making it now and then necessary to throw a cloak of respectability over the more indecent practices. This does not apply to dictatorships depending on the Soviet Union. Another, less obvious reason may be connected with a factor that has been stressed by George Steiner in *Language and Silence* and C.P. Snow in his essay on Stalin: the severe control of literature in the Eastern world is due to the very importance attached to literature there, and more generally to the written word. After all, Marxism is an intellectual doctrine which necessarily implies a high rating of the intellect and of critical thought, two qualities very much feared by the totalitarian governments that have sprung out of Marxism. There was no comparable problem for the older kind of Western fascism: the adepts of a ‘master race’ or ‘power’ had nothing but contempt for the mind; their ideologies were openly anti-intellectual. (That may explain why Hitler allowed his intellectual opponents, at least in the beginning, to emigrate and write abroad; he did not fear them. Stalin, on the contrary, paid ‘dangerous’

writers the dubious compliment of liquidating them, because he was aware of the power of the word.) As for the current neo-fascist regimes in the West, the more developed they are the less they fear free expression, for they believe that the grumbling of the intellectuals can be effectively drowned by loud advertising and injunctions to buy a new refrigerator and a bigger car than one's neighbour.

In other words: intellectual freedom is granted by today's dictatorships to the exact extent that they deem it harmless.

In many dictatorships today, therefore, there is a margin for criticism and dissent that was not to be found in pre-war totalitarian systems. But what is the position of the writer confronted with this margin of freedom?

Many writers do not care to use it at all. Some because they are afraid. Others because they are neutral, indifferent, aesthetically bound to their ivory towers, who may experience an urge to write about love, flowers or metaphysics while the man next door is being tortured. A problem exists only for the writer who feels that he *has* to take sides with regard to the major issues of his time—that is to commit himself.

A writer's 'commitment' has many possible meanings and is liable to as many misunderstandings.

To begin with, there is such a thing as commitment to an existing regime, which is customarily rewarded with titles, honours or just plain money. In all places and at all times men can be found, with more or less talent (usually less), who are willing to become the bards of conformity. This type of commitment—the more despicable when the regime is tyrannical and persecutes its opponents—is a kind of prostitution which has little bearing on our problem.

The opposite type of commitment is against a regime but supports an anti-theoretical ideology — Marxists in capitalist countries for example. This type of commitment is more worthy of respect because it is not motivated by the same crass self-interest and is much more likely to be dangerous to the existing regime. But it can also lead to the most extreme narrow-mindedness and to the harshest—albeit theoretical—inhumanity, when the creed takes precedence over the critical attitude; when the committed writer develops a blind trust in another specific regime which may look ideal from afar but in reality is just as inhuman as the one he is fighting at home. Brecht is a classic example of such a writer. At the same time as he fought fascism, he also condoned the infamous Moscow trials. He wrote *The Chalk Circle*, which vibrates with compassion, but he also wrote *The Measure*, in which the assassination of a noble humanitarian is approved on the grounds of expediency 'for the good of the cause'. It took the uprising of the East German workers in 1953 to make Brecht realize, towards the end of his life, that red totalitarianism is no

more acceptable than the black variety, and to bring him to write the well-known poem about it.

Lastly, one can be committed to certain ideals — freedom, justice, human dignity — unconnected with any *raison d'état* or partisan interest. This commitment has to be entirely personal, unbiased, and coupled with a sense of responsibility, an open mind and a readiness to fight evil wherever it may be found. This is the only kind of commitment compatible with intellectual integrity, and it can never be regarded as an enforceable obligation. Each individual writer must gauge his own moral responsibility and decide in accordance with his own conscience. It is not permissible to try to impose, in the name of freedom, any kind of 'line' or conformity.

And so the question arises: 'Should I leave, or stay on? If I stay, should I keep silent or write? If I write, what should I write about since I am not allowed to say everything?'

To which the answer must be: 'If you can neither speak at all, nor hope that one day you will be able to do so, nor live without free speech — then leave, as Thomas Mann left Hitler's Germany. Otherwise stay in your country, be patient for as long as it is necessary. Gather within yourself, quietly, the pain and passion of your people—as the root gathers strength, in winter, from the tortured earth. And when the ice begins to thaw—fore-runner of a spring that may still be far away—then speak out, as much and in whichever way you can, even indirectly, even in parables.

It is enough that the reader should understand what the police are powerless to prevent. Take hold of your pen as if it were a sword, a ray of light, and fight darkness without a pause. Fight without glory, anonymously if you must, in order that some consciences may be kept awake, that the spark of humanity may not disappear from the world. As a monk of the new Middle Ages, as a pious keeper of the ancient message, you will pass it on to other fighters who have taken the same oath as you. Never forget, in the heat of the battle, that the torturers and jailers of all tyrannies are the same, no matter what uniform they wear, and that it makes no difference to the prisoner if the festive chariots parading outside his prison are decorated with huge birds, like those of the Nazis¹ or with stars, like the red one of Soviet communists. Fight, as far as possible, with hatred in your heart against the institutions of slavery, but not against people. Fight with your thoughts bent on the victims of injustice and contempt. Fight, with your soul bound to the other fighting brothers, known or unknown, wherever they may be—in the East or in the West, very far or very near. Fight, with the vision and the hope of a new world to dawn—a world that will not be perfect (beware of the

1. The symbol of the present Greek regime is a soldier holding a rifle with fixed bayonet and a giant phoenix rising from the ashes.

chimerical, pitiless pursuers of the Absolute!), but in which nobody will suffer starvation, torture or humiliation because of his ideas or the colour of his skin.'

The young writer may then ask: 'What is the use, if they only give us a few drops of freedom because they despise us? How can my desperate whisper compete with the shrill voices and the military marches of the tyrants, with their millions of loudspeakers?'

The answer to this will be: 'Swift is the pace of History in our time, and her ways impenetrable. You will sow a seed which may never bring fruit – or may bear it even in our own days. Wherever charity and truth are in peril, it will be your duty to muster individual consciences to awareness. Some of them will respond. Great is the power of the spirit, when it blows over dormant waters . . . And you will always be prepared to pay the price, if it is demanded. Remember those lines of Pushkin's quoted by a Solzhenitsyn character:

*In this, our age of infamy,
Man's choice is but to be
A tyrant, traitor, prisoner;
No other choice has he.*²

Well, then, a prisoner. In a prison large or small, actual or metaphorical. But wide awake. And with a voice that reaches beyond its bars and may one day bend them.

Translated by Geoffrey Ryan

2. From Rebecca Frank's translation of *The Cancer Ward* (Dial Press, USA).

Rodis Roufos is a historian, novelist and former diplomat who resigned his post in the Foreign Service at the time of the coup d'état in Greece. This essay of his first appeared in New Texts, an anthology of work by Greek writers opposed to the restraints of free speech practised in Greece today. This is its first publication in English.

experience such intrusions. The struggle against such intrusions is a necessary, but usually small, part of the larger struggle for change. As Medvedev reminds us, both Marx and Engels were constantly troubled by the presence of an unwanted readership and devised a variety of modest security measures to offset the worst effects of this. There is little that is new in the censorship game; snoopers international may have updated their technologies, but their spirit remains remarkably constant.

What is new in the problem of censorship and culture control is part of a general problem of contemporary society—namely the professionalization of everything. Consequently, where in the past an interest in censorship stemmed naturally from the role of the dissenter and the revolutionary, it is now the paid job of specialists. The question of civil liberties in, for example, the Soviet Union, becomes the subject of study of professional observers, who will zealously watch for and report infringements in another society, while in the contexts of their own societies, it is not unknown for them at worst to join actively in witch hunts against dissenters and at best to do nothing in their defence. This, it seems to me, is a typical price to pay for the professionalization of everything.

Zhores Medvedev is an amateur, and I would restore the word to its old and best sense. His everyday work is as a biologist, trying to work on problems of ageing, which, because of their interconnection with genetic issues, have for many years been almost unstudyable in the Soviet Union. The 'Papers' are a logical sequel to his earlier book, *The Rise and Fall of T.D. Lysenko*. Although science's 'Stalin' has been removed from power, his shadow is still long. The new work is concerned to show the precise mechanisms of censorship and control as it affects the work of the Soviet scientist, and without wishing to embrace any absurd position that scientists ought to be allowed to do exactly what they wish, like spoilt babies in white coats, the kind of control Medvedev describes is manifestly counter-productive to the general activity of doing science, and to the more general contribution of an intellectual to the community. We feel as we read him that this is one of Solzhenitsyn's scientists from *The First Circle*, who has assumed a life of his own and is retelling us, in autobiographical form, the precise problems of bureaucracy in science.

It is a very considerable achievement to write a book about censorship and culture control which does not descend to the mere recitation of events whose cumulative effect is frankly boring. It is the

brutal truth that the mere rapportage of pain, suffering and torture is in one sense boring: in order to go on living oneself one has to shut off, whether the account is of Belsen, Algeria, My Lai or more modestly British camps in Northern Ireland. Only gradually, as I read through the book, did I realise that I was fascinated not by the sheer awfulness of the situation, but by Medvedev's capacity to get a human and intellectual grip on a Kafkaesque situation. This work is no mere recital of oppression and bureaucratic bloodmindedness; instead it is an extended study in the sociology of extreme situations, minutely recorded, analysed and lived through. I did not think to compare this work with the sociology of the concentration camp, but I am irresistibly reminded of Bettelheim's analysis of how he survived the camp. There is more than a passing similarity between the survival strategies of the psychologist and the biochemist, and in understanding these we learn a good deal more about the sociology of science than from many conventionally conceived and situated studies. It is, as we are reminded by the prison notebooks of Gramsci or the writings of the Soledad Brothers, not just the experience itself that matters, but how it is perceived and received, and how far the reader is compelled to share that perception.

The book is a methodological *tour de force*. Through an analysis of the apparently trivial — the messed up foreign conference, the pencilled numbers on letters, the absurdities of not permitting foreign travel to Soviet scientists and the problems of publication in the Soviet Union — there emerges a critique of the ways in which scientific and intellectual life is managed to serve the bureaucracy. Yet despite the far reaching implications of this critique, there is throughout the book an underlying quality of optimism. Partly this optimism comes from the craftsman-like satisfaction involved in solving a scientific problem, but it comes partly also from the knowledge that this problem is tremendously important to his own country and to the Soviet people. It is essentially a socialist optimism and one which many, such as Orwell, or for that matter Spender, lost as they saw the revolution begin, like so many other revolutions, to eat its own children. It stems from the certainty that if men can understand their own situation they are making a small and crucial step towards correcting it.

A new breed of animals is being born on animal farm. It is tough and resourceful — it knows all about the pigs and it hasn't forgotten about the humans either — and still it wants a world where all animals are equal.

The Medvedev Papers Zhores Medvedev

(Macmillan £4.95)

HILARY ROSE

In a way I was puzzled by Zhores Medvedev's intention to write a book about the ways in which his post was read, his letters and books 'lost', journals censored and telephone wires tapped. An incisive and witty essay about the significance of censorship and culture control on the work of the scientist—that, it seemed to me, was one thing—a whole book was another. After all, every time I exchange correspondence with a biologist at one American university concerning the current military technology deployed in South East Asia, it gets 'lost' in the post. Fortunately a colleague less favoured with Mr. Hoover's attention is able to receive correspondence on his behalf. For that matter, a British bio-chemist needing a visa to

attend a scientific congress was told by the American Embassy that the Biochemical Society was a communist front organisation. Or take the case of the lawyer active in trade union affairs who found it necessary to check the privacy of his post by posting letters simultaneously to himself and to a neighbour. When, after an interval of several months, the letters addressed to himself ceased to come systematically a day late, it seemed reasonable to assume that his post was now free of its extraneous readership. Without getting unnecessarily excited about it, therefore, it would seem that those who believe, and are prepared to act by their beliefs, wherever they live, that the present social order requires far reaching change, are likely to

Writers Against Rulers Dušan Hamšík

(Huchinson £2.00)

ANTONIO DE FIGUEIREDO

One is sorry for those writers and artists, in any society, who have never felt restricted in their freedom, for that is a sign that they had nothing new of their own to say. Even in those countries in the West where institutionalized censorship does not exist, there is a daily struggle going on, inside each newspaper, television or broadcasting house, between the functionaries of conformity and those who believe that a writer can no more turn his face away from controversial issues than a doctor refuse treatment because a case appears to be too difficult. Indeed, each time one sees an article or a report which is embarrassing to powerful established interests, one can be sure that those of enquiring and independent minds have won over the mercenaries of the intellect, who sit behind so many editorial desks, typewriters and micro-phones.

But whereas in most cases artists and writers at any time, anywhere, have been against rulers, in totalitarian and authoritarian regimes of whatever ideology, rulers are against writers. Under such regimes with ideas programmed from above, with institutionalized censorship, party control of the media and other repressive devices, the creative mind has to resort to more clandestine and subtler means of indicating doubts and criticisms so that it may survive. This book by Dušan Hamšík, a former editor of *Literární noviny*, the official newspaper of the Writers' Union of Czechoslovakia is a study of what can happen on the literary front in a battle against a dictatorship. It describes the events surrounding the Writers' Congress in June 1967 when Czech writers tried to lessen the weight of the censorship then stifling them. Fighting against tremendous odds—and eventually against foreign tanks—they did not win their battle. On the contrary, by way of punishment, they really 'lost everything', as one enraged party official and functionary of repression shouted at them when he realized he could no longer keep Czech writers as orderly as inmates in a prison. While *Literární noviny* was confiscated and handed over to the Ministry of Culture, the Czech people themselves came to lose what little they had in the way of freedom and independence. From the events of

1968 on, in addition to the invisible shackles carried by every ordinary Czech citizen, writers have had to continue to breath through gags as well.

Some readers will appreciate this book mostly for its value as a historical record of events of great significance in contemporary politics. But for people like myself, a Portuguese exile from a right-wing colonialist regime, the book is a useful lesson in other ways as well. What Dušan Hamšík tells us about the routine workings of censorship and its long term effects upon the Czech people is disturbingly coincidental with the experience of countries like Spain, Portugal and Brazil, to mention only those I happen to know better. And this is an important coincidence, because it proves that, irrespective of ideologies and purposes, totalitarian means of Government produce the same unhappy results.

In Czechoslovakia, in an article by Jiří Lederer on conditions in a country village, a phrase had to be removed from a passage quoting a schoolmistress: 'Everyone is afraid of everyone else. . .' In a Portuguese ruled territory, in an article by a local journalist, the word 'muddy' was zealously replaced by the censor with the word 'blue' in a phrase reading: 'The South African fleet had arrived at the muddy waters of the Espirito Santo'. Dušan Hamšík gives another amusing example in a longer passage, also excised from the monologue of a local Party branch chairman. If one replaced the work 'communist' with 'nationalist', one might find the kind of thing that would be edited out by either the publishers or censors of controlled newspapers in Spain, Portugal or Brazil, where 'nationalism' has become an industry:

You know I keep wondering what sort of people we communists really are. What is it that makes us better, different and all that? Is it our work? Our characters? Or our knowledge? I know a lot of people outside the Party who are better in all those ways. . . Aren't our Party cards perhaps just passports to better jobs and earlier salary increases in reward for our 'work', our 'character', our 'knowledge'? And aren't they sometimes the only passports to these things. . .?

The affinities in this situation extend to the fact that the author of this book, Dušan Hamšík,

The function of the machinery they formed part of was not to encourage thought and creativeness, but to supervise the constraints upon thought and creativeness, and they were not selected for their education or sense of justice but for their knowledge of the rules and ability to see them meticulously adhered to. A censor who happened to have been at school with me told me on one occasion with evident sincerity how sorry he was to have to reject a piece I had written, though he himself could see nothing objectionable in it. . . (Writers Against Rulers, p.104)

had to join the ranks of Czechs in exile, in the same way that Spanish and Brazilian writers and artists, from Picasso to Salvador de Madariaga, from Celso Furtado, Josue de Castro, Darcy Ribeiro to cinema director Glauber Rocha, have had to leave their countries so as to avoid having their minds buried alive by censorship and other forms of repression.

But although exiled artists and writers from totalitarian countries, East and West, meet freely in a number of cosmopolitan cities in North and South America and Western Europe, they are inevitably caught, by various ways and means, in the workings of the ideological cold war. Seeing so many writers used for various political purposes, on both sides of the 'cold war', writers themselves tend to improvise an ideological 'alignment' and view each other reciprocally with suspicion and

prejudice. In this they often forget that the conflict between communist ideology and capitalist doctrines, is not the one and only historical issue. An even older question is that of freedom, understood not only as the right to say no, but the right to create ideas by the very nature of creation new and, more often than not, rebellious.

The essential aim of any writer in relation to society, as suggested by Garcia Lorca, is to open, or, break windows, so that clarity and fresh air can shake the sacristies of obscurantist regimes such as those in Spain, Greece, Portugal or Brazil, as well as the bureaucratic offices of any 1984-type of dictatorship. I have always believed that it is quite natural for artists and writers in the west to be cynical or sceptical about, or opposed to, capitalism. In the same way I believe that a writers' social conscience in the countries

No country, of course, turns the searchlight of publicity on its censors and their work. But Stalinist socialism tried to conceal their existence altogether, and did so all the more energetically as their activities increasingly conflicted with official protestations that there was more and more freedom, and that harmony prevailed between the interests of state and people. To this day I cannot tell whether the methods of censorship that evolved in our country were based on any carefully weighed previous experience or represented a new addition to the sum of knowledge. At all events it was characterized not only by the bureaucratic brutality normal under Stalinism, but also by a certain hypocritical slyness and calm pretence that nothing was amiss. These traits, I fear, represent the Czech contribution to the subject.

(Writers Against Rulers, p. 110)

of Eastern Europe is better demonstrated by his resistance to the dangers of collectivization and robotization of life. To put it more clearly, I believe that Solzhenitsyn shares a deep kinship with Bertrand Russell and Jean Paul Sartre; for they all, in their respective societies, have preferred the risks of challenge to the comfort of apology.

I began to read this book with an ingrained attitude of reserve, lest it might be another piece of anti-communist propaganda. But I found that the old struggle for freedom is already old in modern communist societies as well, and that the dilemma of the writer and artist has not changed just because there has been a revolution in the social system. That dilemma is succinctly put by Ludvik Vaculik, one of the Czech writers who took part in the fateful Fourth Congress of the

Writers Union:

Art and literature cannot abstain from discussing government, for to govern means, directly or indirectly, to make continuous administrative decisions about people's lives, about their wellbeing and their disappointments, about the subject of their thoughts and about things that cannot be decided and are nevertheless for ever being decided. So art cannot abandon the criticism of government, seeing that governments, whoever they consist of and however they behave, are the products of national culture.

It certainly is of no comfort to those who feel captive under the totalitarian regimes in the east, that the answer given to such words in countries like Spain, Portugal, Greece, South Africa, Brazil and a few more, would also be, in the first instance, the blue pencil of the censor, and later, if necessary, the gun of the guardians of oppression.