

# CACC

## NEWSLETTER

September 1, 1971

### COMMUNISM—THE POWER TO STARVE

### THE PUNISHMENT OF WRITERS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

### THE INTERNMENT OF SOVIET DISSENTERS IN MENTAL HOSPITALS

### THE MIGHTY PEN

### COMMUNISM—THE POWER TO STARVE

When Boris Pasternak, the author of the novel “Dr. Zhivago,” died, I suggested the possibility that he had starved to death. There is now evidence from his own statements that Pasternak himself was vitally concerned with this possibility. This evidence is presented in a book, “Moscow Under the Skin”, written by an Italian journalist, Viro Roberti, who interviewed Pasternak several times during his ordeal. The sequence of events leading to the death of Pasternak is as follows:

1. Pasternak wrote the novel “Dr. Zhivago.” He submitted it to the Soviet Publishing House, Novy Mir, which refused to publish it.
2. He submitted it to an Italian publisher believing that he had the agreement of the Soviet authorities to do this. The book was first published in Italian.
3. In October, 1958, he was awarded the Nobel prize.

The Soviet authorities were irate at the award and stated that if Pasternak chose to go to Stockholm to accept the award, he would be allowed to go but would not be permitted to return to Russia.

On October 28, Boris Pasternak was expelled from the Union of Soviet Writers.

On October 31, the Moscow branch of the Union of Soviet Writers unanimously passed a resolution asking the government to deprive Boris Pasternak of Soviet citizenship and to expel him from U.S.S.R. territory.

On May 30, 1960, Boris Pasternak died, allegedly of cancer of the lung, preceded by a long period of increasing debility.

When Pasternak was expelled from the Union of Soviet Writers, he became unemployable and was obviously faced with the problem of securing money to buy the food necessary for survival. When the Communist Party has a monopoly of political, judicial, economic, military, police and cultural power, it obviously has the power to isolate an individual and deprive him of food.

I have never claimed that Pasternak did starve to death but have stated that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had the power to starve him. I have asked various communists the question, Where did Pasternak get his food? but have never received a satisfactory reply.

Specific information is contained in the book “Moscow Under the Skin.” The author, Vero Roberti, was a journalist who served as a correspondent in Moscow for the Italian newspaper “Corriere della Sera.” The book was originally published in Italian. It was translated into English by Olwin Davies and the English translation has been published in Great Britain by Geoffrey Bles Limited, 52 Doughty Street, London, W.C. 1.

Roberti was in Moscow when the announcement of the award of the Nobel prize to Boris Pasternak was made. He managed to interview Pasternak on the day of the announcement, October 23, 1958, and several times thereafter until the poet’s death.

“On the evening of October 23, 1958, I telephoned to my newspaper a short interview I had with Boris Pasternak. Fear of the Censor had made my colleagues Nicolas Chatelain, Michel Tatu and myself describe our meeting with the poet in a matter-of-fact way. It was easy to guess that the award to Pasternak of the Nobel Prize for Literature would anger the Soviet leaders and the guardians of the so-called Soviet ‘realism.’ It was the first time that a major international literary award had been given to a Russian author resident in the Soviet Union.” Page 212.

“Nicholas Michel and I were the only ones who managed to reach Pasternak’s ‘dacha’ at Peredelkino. We had gone on the electric train; the other correspondents who had ventured in their cars along the Minsk road were turned back by the police before reaching the Peredelkino crossroads.

“Here is the dispatch I sent to my newspaper. The words in italics and in paranthesis are those that did not pass the Censor. I still have the original copies with the Censor’s stamp on them.” Page 213.

“Pasternak shakes our hands and invites us to sit down. He had kept us waiting because he had wanted to change. He apologises and says he has been for his daily walk. ‘There is something wrong with my right knee and the doctor has advised me to walk for at least an hour every day.’” Page 215.

“ ‘I haven’t received the official confirmation yet,’ he replied to a question of mine, (and I shall defer my decisions until the Soviet authorities let me know their intentions). I cannot tell you therefore whether I shall go to Stockholm.” Page 216.

Roberti again visited Pasternak on October 30. His report to his newspaper was totally censored by the Soviet authorities. However, he kept a copy and he reports Pasternak as saying:

“ ‘The Union of Soviet Writers has expelled me,’ he said, ‘and today they have sent three doctors to check on my health. They are waiting over there. Why? I just do not understand! Then after a pause he added: ‘Why did they cover me with mud from head to toe? It isn’t true that I’m a superfluous person, a poisonous creature, an emigrant in my own country, a petty philistine and a traitor. My goodness, such insults and lies. Now today they have sent three doctors to see me, but every one knows I suffer from a mild form of sinovitis. Why? I must go and see them now: please wait here for me.’”

“A horrible thought came to me and I asked Boris Leonidovich whether he wanted me to be present at the examination. But he replied: ‘Thank you, but I think it would be better if you waited here.’ I tried to insist and suddenly the poet realized what was in my mind. He turned pale and with a deep sigh, put a hand on my shoulder and said gently, ‘Thank you, thank you! I understand your concern but what can I do now? I am already dead!’

“After about twenty minutes he returned and exclaimed: ‘They found nothing wrong with my health!’” Page 222

His report of his final meeting is as follows:

“On March 15, 1960, I met Boris Pasternak for the last time. A common friend had told me that he would be pleased to see me. I went to Peredelkino on the electric train. It was very cold. The countryside was still covered with snow.

“Pasternak was a ghost of his former self. He was much thinner. There was no expression in the eyes of his pale emaciated face. He talked to me about his sadness and his anguish, ‘I have no strength left to work and I sit for hours without any thoughts entering my poor head. Perhaps I am paralysed and do not realize it yet. I cannot even reply to the letters from friends which are piled up on my table. . .

“ ‘I have been expelled from the Union of Soviet Writers so that I shall starve. No one published my poetry or my translations anymore, which was my daily bread. The first payments from my editor have been confiscated by order of the authorities. . .’

“Suddenly his eyes lit up and in a harsh voice he exclaimed: ‘They have taken away this money in the hope that I will go down on my knees and disown my novel and my poetry. But nothing will ever make me yield. . . I yield only to death!’

“Two days later the same friend, whose name I cannot reveal, came to see me at the Central Telegraph Office and told me that Boris Pasternak was ‘gol kak sokol’ (hungry as a hawk), extremely poor and had to borrow money to exist. ‘All his works have been ostracized. Boris Leonidovich is unaware that his brother Alexander helps him and seeks help for him from his friends. If he know this he would rather starve to death. He is also very ill!’” Pages 225-226.

The communist system of government is based on the power to starve.

## THE PUNISHMENT OF WRITERS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Journalists and authors played a leading role in promoting the liberalization of communist power in Czechoslovakia. They were responsible in no small degree for the attempt to create communism “with a human face.” The liberalized communist regime was destroyed by the tanks, guns and bayonets of the invading Soviet communist armies.

The new Czech communist rulers who derive their political power from the barrels of the Soviet guns are now punishing the writers for their temerity. The old Union of Czech Writers has been disbanded. It is being replaced by a new union. The old one had 500

members. The new union will have no more than 90-100. This means that 80 per cent of the Czech writers will be unable to have their works published.

This is reported by the free Czechoslovak press which is published by "Features and News from Behind the Iron Curtain," 4 Holland Road, London, W14 8AZ. The report tells of a discussion meeting of Czech writers in Trebic. One of the subjects discussed was the relationship between the Ministry of Culture and the Writers' Union. The official report states:

"Authors do not serve the ministry or any other authority, but the entire society, the working class. Therefore their relations with the Ministry symbolize their relation with society and the Party. The process of reconstruction of cultural values progresses among writers as in society as a whole: slowly and painfully. In the autumn conferences are expected to take place at which new Art Unions will be proposed. In the first phase of the establishment of a Union of Czech writers, one can reckon with 90-100 members." May 5, 1971.

A national spokesman, Vilem Zavada, declared:

"I do not know how many real writers exist who deserve to be called such, but if there are 100, that is the maximum. The old Union had 500 members – an inflated figure which did not correspond with reality. . ." May 5, 1971.

What will happen to the 400 writers who cannot have their works published? The economic consequences for them will be devastating. They will probably not be allowed to starve but will be compelled to accept menial jobs which provide a bare subsistence.

## THE INTERNMENT OF SOVIET DISSENTERS IN MENTAL HOSPITALS

Psychiatrists of Canada and Great Britain are deeply concerned over the Soviet practices of detaining opponents of the regime in mental hospitals. The following motion was passed by the board of directors of the Canadian Psychiatric Association, January 19, 1971:

"The Board of Directors of the Canadian Psychiatric Association accepts the report of the Section of Psychiatry, British Columbia Medical Association of December, 1970, regarding the alleged wrongful detention in mental hospitals in the U.S.S.R. of seemingly healthy individuals whose views and attitudes are in conflict with those of the regime.

"The Board of Directors recognizes that the information concerning instances of such practice included in the report is as 'hard' as can be expected short of first-hand investigation (which is most unlikely to be allowed).

"The Board of Directors urges the Canadian Medical Association to study the report, to support the resolutions and to press strongly through the following channels for further study and actions regarding such alleged practice in the U.S.S.R. or in any other country or countries where similar practices are alleged to take place.

- a. Medical Associations of other countries.
- b. International psychiatric associations.
- c. World Health Organization.

d. World Psychiatric Association.

A Working Group in the Internment of Dissenter in Mental Hospitals—63, Holbrook Road, Cambridge, England had produced a booklet entitled “The Internment of Soviet Dissenters in Mental Hospitals.” Extracts from this booklet are as follows:

“Inside the Soviet Union accounts of dissenters being confined to mental hospitals are given in the Chronicle of Current Events, a bi-monthly newsletter brought out by the emergent civil rights movement in the Soviet Union. It circulates unofficially in ‘samizdat’ (literally ‘self-publishing’), i.e. in typescript passing from hand to hand, and reaches the West regularly by various means.

“In January, 1953, after the notorious Tass communiqué concerning a ‘plot’ on the part of nine medical professors (mostly Jews) to poison party and government leaders, S.P. Pisarev, a party official, sent to Stalin, as general secretary of the CPSU, a report on the misdeeds of the security organs and stressed the need to verify, independently of them, the charges against the ‘poisoners.’ On the day of Stalin’s death Pisarev was arrested, and, after diagnosis by the Serbsky Institute of Forensic Psychiatry (which plays a central role in the diagnosis of those charged with political offences), he was confined for nearly two years in psychiatric hospitals. He was released on the personal intervention of the USSR Procurator-General after a copy of his 1953 report to Stalin had come into the hands of a secretary of the Central Committee of the party. At his own insistence, however, Pisarev was given a further diagnosis by the Gannushkin Scientific Research Institute for Psychiatry, necessitating another two months in hospital in order to have the diagnosis of ‘schizophrenia’ and ‘paranoid psychopath’ finally disproved.

“As a result of his experience in finding normal people, including eminent scholars, writers, and other intellectuals who had committed no crimes, confined indefinitely with the mentally sick, Pisarev once again wrote to the CPSU Central Committee. As a result, in 1955 a commission under A. I. Kuznetsov, a senior official of the Central Committee was appointed to investigate the whole practice. The commission carried out searching investigations at the Serbsky Institute and visited the two ‘special’ (prison) hospitals at Kazan, besides normal psychiatric hospitals also being used for this purpose. All the facts Pisarev had presented were corroborated. ‘Among the “mentally ill” sentenced to indefinite isolation were hundreds of healthy persons. The perversions of the truth in the diagnosis of the Serbsky Institute, especially by D. R. Lunts (at that time a senior lecturer) and others were systematically listed.’ (Pisarev’s letter to the Praesidium of the USSR Academy of Medical Sciences, 4 April, 1970)

“The Kazan and Leningrad institutions operated under the official description of ‘psychiatric prison hospitals,’ though no treatment was given for the really mentally ill patients. The commission reached the unanimous conclusion that there was a need for a radical reorganization in the field of psychiatric diagnosis, and that the prison hospitals should be removed unreservedly, from the sole control of the administrative-investigation organs and transferred completely to the supervision of the USSR Ministry of Health.

“Kuznetsov’s superior, (almost certainly V.M. Churayev), to whom the report was submitted, concealed it from the leaders of the Central Committee and finally succeeded in committing it to the archives. Kuznetsov and his colleagues on the commission were removed from the Central Committee apparatus.

“In the Serbsky Institute, though now nominally listed as administered by the Ministry of Health, there have been no real changes. On the contrary, D. R. Lunts, now Professor, had retained his post as director of all diagnoses connected with political cases, and is one of those responsible for training fresh personnel. Major-General Grigorenko, a political ‘Patient’ (1964-5, and again now) has written: ‘I myself on more than one occasion have seen Professor Lunts, the head of the department diagnosing me, arrive at work in the uniform of a K.G.B. (security police) colonel. True, he always came into the department in his white coat. I have also seen other doctors of this institute in KGB uniform.’

“Not only have the two oldest ‘special’ psychiatric hospitals outside the system of the Ministry of Health been retained, but additional new hospitals of similar type have appeared: at Sychyovka, Smolensk Province where ‘people are reduced to a condition of complete mental collapse.’ (Chronicle, June 1969) In 1965 one was opened at Chernyakhovsk, Kaliningrad Province, in a building which was formerly a German convict prison. In 1966 one was opened at Minsk; in 1968 in Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine.

“That the prison psychiatric hospitals are still directly under the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) and thus wide open to K.G.B. control was proved early in 1970 by No. 5 of the Ministry’s journal ‘Towards a New Life’: It announced the Ministry’s decision to replace the designation ‘warder’ by that of ‘controller’ in ‘investigation prisons, ordinary prisons, psychiatric hospitals of special type, educational labour colonies and the juvenile remand center of the Moscow Soviet.’

“All these “special” psychiatric hospitals have the following features in common: political prisoners, although of sound mind, are kept in the same wards as seriously disturbed psychiatric patients (who may have committed such crimes as murder, rape, thuggery); if they will not renounce their convictions they are subjected, on the pretext of treatment, to physical torture, to injections of large doses of “aminazine” and “sulfazine” which cause depressive shock reactions and serious physical disorders. Sulfazine causes the temperature to rise to 40 degrees C—104 degrees Fahrenheit—with weakness, rheumatism of the joints, headaches, pains in the buttocks where the injections are given. This condition lasts for a day or two after one dose. Aminazine is administered by intramuscular injection, in such a way that the injected aminazine is not absorbed but forms malignant tumors which have to be removed later by operation. Another form of punishment is the “roll-up,” described by Bukovsky and Fainberg, in which the patient is rolled from head to foot in wet canvas so tightly that it is difficult for him to breathe. As the canvas begins to dry it gets even tighter. However, a medical attendant is present while this is taking place and if the patient’s pulse weakens the canvas is eased. Or, as at Kazan, “patients are strapped into their beds for three days, sometimes more; and with this form of punishment the rules of sanitation are ignored: the patients are not allowed to go to the lavatory and bedpans are not provided.

“The regime is the same as for closed prisons, with one hour’s exercise a day. Sometimes before interrogation sodium aminate, a strong narcotic, is administered by injection. The staff consists of orderlies recruited from MVD forces (police), their uniforms concealed by white overalls, male nurses chosen from among the criminal prisoner-patients, also in white overalls, and the senior and junior medical personnel, many with officers’ shoulder-straps beneath their white overalls. The brick walls surrounding these prison hospitals are even more

impressive than those of other kinds of prison. The most terrifyingly arbitrary regime prevails at the Sychyovka and Chernyakhovsk hospitals, where the sick patients as well as the politicals are the victims of daily beatings and sadistic humiliations on the part of the supervisory personnel and the nurses, whose rights are absolutely unlimited. Here, in the spring of 1960 the patient Popov was beaten to death, though it was officially reported that he died of a 'brain haemorrhage.'

"If there is a clear danger to those around him or to himself from a mentally ill person, the health organs have the right to place him in a psychiatric hospital without the consent of the person who is ill or his relatives or guardians.

"Alternatively, the KGB or the Procuracy can at this stage start a criminal case and apply the second procedure, as follows: First a man commits an act which the KGB, say, considers a crime and which may for instance be participation in a demonstration, the circulation of a leaflet, or a speech at a debate: the man is arrested and interrogated. Then, if the KGB thinks he may have committed the crime in a state of legal non-accountability, or if it wants to frame him and thus avoid an open trial which might involve his spirited self-defense and also provoke demonstrations, he is sent for psychiatric diagnosis to, usually, the Serbsky Institute. Professor Lunts and his colleagues then consult with the KGB investigators as to what diagnosis would be politically most convenient and duly produce it. This usually asserts that the crime was committed in a state of legal non-accountability. Then a court which the defendant has no right to attend usually endorses without question the Institute's recommendation of indefinite compulsory treatment. The defense can do little but produce massive evidence to contradict the diagnosis and request a second, more objective, psychiatric diagnosis, which is almost always refused.

"Once inside, the patient-prisoner's chance of release are very uncertain. He may come across an honest doctor, who, with difficulty, secures his discharge. This process has been known to take as long as six years. . . Writing of his experiences on the occasion of his first incarceration, Grigorenko says: 'I was especially saddened by the tragic case of engineer Pyotr Alekseyevich Lysak. Because he had spoken at a student meeting against the expulsion for political reasons of a number of students, he had landed in a psychiatric hospital, and, at the time of my arrival, had already been there for seven years. Bitter anger at this wild injustice, at his ruined life, had permeated his being, and he would write complaints daily, which, naturally, never reached their destinations, but found their way into his hospital file and were used as an excuse for further "treatment". People who did not admit their illness are not usually discharged from psychiatric hospitals. I tried to drum this truth into his head. During one such conversation, I said in irritation: 'Your reasoning is so unreal that I'm beginning to doubt your normality.' He stopped all of a sudden, looked at me with an expression I shall remember to the day of my death, and asked in a barely audible voice and tone of bitter reproach: 'Do you really think that a man can spend seven years in here and still remain normal?'" Pages 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

## THE MIGHTY PEN

The book *You Can Trust the Communists (to be Communists)* continues to make a great impact when it is read. This is particularly true with young people and students as illustrated by the following extracts from letters recently received:

“I have just finished reading the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of your book “You Can Trust the Communists.” I sincerely wish to emphasize the great effect your book has had on me. I am a senior in high school and have had a hatred of communism since I can remember. I accidentally found your book in the Charleston Air Base Library while looking around for books on the rise and fall of the Third Reich.

“Your book is of great importance to the American people. I cannot understand how the Americans of today can take a careless attitude which has become somewhat of a trend in American life. Indeed I believe that America is in grave danger.

“Everyone (including me) is on an ecology kick today because they’re worried about the environmental creatures of the world becoming scarce. Well, I think that their eyes should be opened or the reign of free man upon this earth may become not only scarce but ‘extinct.’

“If this cancer-like growth is not stopped, then all of free man’s dreams will end up as a tragedy. Man himself will become enslaved to a nightmare, for which there is no ‘rise and shine’!

“At this time I have no idea of where you live or how to get in touch with you. Now, to tell you the truth, I don’t even know if you are still alive. If not, I hope that the person reading this has the capabilities and beliefs which have been so brilliantly expressed in your book.

“I love America Mr. Schwarz and I know you do. Please help give me the knowledge to keep her flame alive.” Duane R. Schattle, Goose Creek, South Carolina.

“Ten years ago I immigrated to the United States with my parents who had just recently escaped from their communist controlled homeland of Yugoslavia. They have had an opportunity to witness first hand the brutality and oppression of communism. After telling them of your book, which I have recently read, *You Can Trust the Communists (to be Communists)*, they were shocked at how similar the situation had been in their own country.

“In America today we seem to be undergoing the same pattern of subversion outlined in your book. Under the guise of fighting for peace and freedom, various groups (e.g. SDS, Black Panthers, People’s Peace Coalition) are actively supporting these communist aims. In my own school, America and its way of life is criticized and disowned. As a person who still has deep faith in America, I feel that I must take an active part in helping to turn this tide. Please sent me any information and advice on how I can help your cause. Also I am interested in any literature you may have and in your anti-communism ‘seminars’ which I have heard about.” Alexander Ambroz, New York, N.Y.

One teacher shows how to encourage the circulation of this book. He buys 10 copies and distributes them with this letter:

“I believe one of our best weapons against the spread of communism is a well-informed public. If you find this book as interesting and informative as I have, then why not send a copy to a friend. For only \$2.50 plus postage, you can purchase 10 copies of *You Can Trust the Communists (to be Communists)*. (10 copies or more—25 cents each.)

“Prepare a little note such as this one recommending they in turn purchase 10 books for their friends. In this way thousands of people could be better informed of the pitfalls of communism and it would only cost each of us a very small amount.” Ted Kampen, New Orleans, LA.

This is one way you can help the cause of freedom. Why delay? Do it today.