

PERSECUTED WRITERS ARE RECOGNIZED

36 writers from 16 countries receive funds from the estates of
Lillian Hellman and Dashiell Hammett

The Italian translator of *The Satanic Verses*, who was the victim of a knife attack last summer; a Peruvian journalist arrested during the recent coup; and numerous Burmese and Chinese writers imprisoned for their roles in their nations' pro-democracy movements are among the writers recognized this year by the Fund for Free Expression for their courage in the face of political persecution.

In 1989, at the request of the estates of the American writers Lillian Hellman and Dashiell Hammett, the Fund for Free Expression set up, and continues to administer, a special fund for writers of fiction or non-fiction, anywhere in the world, who are in financial need as a result of political persecution. The grants are made annually by a five-member selection committee consisting of members of the Fund for Free Expression, one of the six divisions of Human Rights Watch. The third round of grants has recently been awarded -- a total of over \$200,000 to 36 writers from 16 countries. They are:

ETTORE CAPRIOLO (Italy), the Italian translator of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*, was beaten and repeatedly stabbed during an assault in Milan on July 3, 1991 by an assailant who demanded to know Rushdie's whereabouts. Capriolo, 62, had been given police protection for several months during 1990 after receiving threats from Islamic fundamentalists. He translated the Rushdie novel for Mondadori, an Italian publishing house, in 1989. Iran's leaders have denied responsibility for the attack on Capriolo, but a British Muslim leader said: "These people who have translated cannot get away with it. That is the position. Even if it means death." The Japanese translator of *The Satanic Verses* was also the victim of a knife attack last summer, and died from his wounds. No one has yet been apprehended in either incident.

UI-GYUN CHANG (South Korea) is a poet and publisher who is paying the price for his critical thinking. In 1982 his publishing house was shut down after he published a book which criticized the government. During his stay in Japan in the early 1980's, (where he studied ancient Korean history at Kyoto University) he was involved with local Korean dissident groups and conducted research on North Korea -- about which only limited information is available in South Korea. In 1987, Chang was sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment under the National Security Law for allegedly trying to "infiltrate South Korean opposition parties and dissident groups from under instructions from North Korea" and of "passing information on South Korea to a North Korean agent in Japan." The National Security Law is often used to stifle opposition, and has been used to imprison some persons for up to fifty years. After an appeal in 1988, Chang's sentence was commuted to eight years. His writing is severely curtailed, and prison conditions have led to the deterioration of his health.

MARIA ELENA CRUZ VARELA (Cuba) was expelled from the National Union of Cuban Writers and Artists in 1991, just two years after receiving their poetry prize. In May 1991, she and a group of nine other Cuban artists and intellectuals had

delivered a declaration to the Cuban government and newspapers in Miami, calling for amnesty for political prisoners, direct legislative elections, and the end to various repressive legislation. They were subsequently denounced by the party newspaper, *Granma*, as Cuban traitors and CIA "lackeys." Since then, she has been attacked verbally and physically in her home. On November 19 her home was broken into, she was dragged down four flights of stairs, beaten and her writings were stuffed into her mouth. She was detained by police for one night and then released without charge. Her home was searched, her writings confiscated. Two days later she was arrested again and held incommunicado. On November 27, after a reportedly summary trial, she was convicted for disseminating "enemy propaganda" and "provoking a public scandal," and sentenced to two year's imprisonment.

ILKER DEMIR (Turkey), an editor and journalist, was arrested in April 1984 and sentenced to 48 years in prison (later commuted to the maximum 36-year sentence) on a variety of charges including insulting the Turkish authorities and making Communist propaganda. The charges were related to his editorship of *Ilke* and *Kitle* magazines between 1975 and 1977. The magazines were published by the Turkish Socialist Workers' Party (TSIP), and were legal until the TSIP was banned as a result of the 1980 military coup. During his pre-trial detention, Demir was held incommunicado and allegedly tortured. In April 1991 he was released when thousands of prisoners were freed following reforms of the Turkish penal code. He contracted tuberculosis in prison, and remains in poor health.

RAJKO DJURIC (Yugoslavia), a journalist, editor of the daily *Politika* and member of the opposition Democratic Party, was openly critical of the Milosevic regime in Serbia. Since 1989, Djuric has been president of the World Romani Union, and is president of the Romani Center of International PEN. Djuric is author of six books of poetry which have been translated into five languages, and five books on the culture and history of the Romani people, the subject in which he received his doctorate. In September 1991 he refused to attend an "information session" by the secretary of state for internal affairs. Soon afterward, Djuric, like many other dissidents, received a conscription notice into the Serbian army, violation of which would result in from five years' to life imprisonment. Djuric refused to enlist because of his concern for fellow Gypsies in Croatia, his pacifist beliefs and his opposition to the Serbian regime. The next month he appeared on television, criticizing the war and governmental policies. A few days later, an unidentified group broke in to his apartment, located in the center of Belgrade, in broad daylight. The house was ransacked, and money, jewelry, clothing and documents were taken. Fearing for his safety, Djuric left the country and is at present in exile.

MAX DU PREEZ (South Africa) started the first Afrikaans-language newspaper in South Africa to oppose apartheid, called the *Vrye Weekland (Independent Weekly)*. The paper is owned by its staff. Since its founding, du Preez has faced death threats and a bomb in his house, and has been the target of fines, defamation suits and proceedings under South Africa's Internal Security Act.

DUONG THU HUONG (Vietnam) was the first female writer present at the northern frontier battlefield in 1979 when China launched its attack on Vietnam. One of Vietnam's most popular writers, Duong Thu Huong has published novels and essays, and worked for years as an official screenwriter. Increasingly disillusioned with the Communist Party, in recent times Duong Thu Huong issued many appeals, some public, for democratic reforms and respect for human rights. In April 1991 she was arrested and charged with "illegally transferring reactionary documents abroad." The documents are thought to be her own critical opinions, written to Party leaders about policies to be discussed at the upcoming Seventh Party Congress. Following international publicity, she was released in November. She has been expelled from the national writers' union and some of her work has been banned.

GUSTAVO GORRITI (Peru) has been a columnist for Peru's leading news weekly, and has also been published in *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic Monthly* and *The New Republic*. Gorrity's writing has been focused on two of the most dangerous topics of journalism: the *Sendero Luminoso* guerrilla group and the drug trade. After President Fujimori dissolved the Peruvian Congress and Judiciary in April 1992, Gorrity was taken into police custody for 40 hours, and released after his detention attracted international concern. He was charged with possession of classified information dangerous to national security, but many believe the real reason for his detention is related to certain articles linking one of Fujimori's close aides to drug trafficking.

BORIS GREGORICH (Croatia) published articles on poetry and literary criticism, book and film reviews, commentaries and essays in many of the major literary magazines in Croatia and Yugoslavia. He has written four books, and won several literary prizes. Gregorich was denounced as a traitor to his country because he publicly criticized his fellow writers for their apparent inability as intellectuals to rise above politics and nationalist concerns and for rejecting several offers to join the

National Writers' Association and the Croatian Writers' Union. The "traitor" label made it dangerous for him to remain in Croatia, and Gregorich is now living in outside the country.

MOHAMED IBRAHIM HADRAWI (Somalia) is one of the country's best known poets and playwrights. A former lecturer at the National University, he is also one of the principal architects of the written Somali script introduced in the early seventies. Hadrawi a victim of repression under the former military regime of Mohamed Siad Barre (in power from 1969 to 1991). In the early seventies, when virtually no one dared to criticize the hard-line regime, His critical poetry was an important dissident voice. A collection of Hadrawi's poems in 1972 led to the first "warning." Later that year his new play was banned. In 1973 he was arrested at his home and taken to a tiny, remote village. For five and a half years he was kept there, living with a local official, forbidden access to pen or paper, and not allowed to communicate with others. Neither the charges against him nor the length of his punishment were ever specified. After three and a half years he was taken without advance notice to a meeting with the former president and told that he, Hadrawi, needed to be alone for a while and to reflect. In the eighties after political repression worsened, Hadrawi went to Ethiopia as a refugee, feeling sure of his arrest if he stayed. He continued to compose ballads and poetry there. At present he has returned to Northern Somalia and is playing an active role in the reconstruction of the war-ravaged region.

KAMRAN KHAN (Pakistan), chief correspondent for the Karachi-based *News* and a stringer for the *Washington Post* and London's *Sunday Times*, has a history of exposing military and government corruption. In a series of articles, he and other journalists reported on illegal activities of the Crime Investigation Agency, a police unit involved in extortion, torture, and kidnapping. Khan began to receive mysterious phone calls and was visited at his home after midnight by armed men. Several times in 1991, Chief Minister Sadiq Ali threatened him with arrest. Khan wrote to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's office asking for protection, and obtained assurances to that effect. Two days later he was stabbed in broad daylight directly outside his office. The attack went virtually without police investigation, despite promises of involvement by top government officials. Pakistan's newspapers held a one-day strike to protest violence against the press. Khan is currently in exile.

LI GUIREN (China), former editor-in-chief of a literary publishing house in China, was tried for "counter-revolutionary" propaganda and incitement for his attempt to publish a collection of writer Liu Binyan's most outspoken articles. Li received a sentence of five years' imprisonment; copies of the book, entitled "A Story About a Chinese Who Does Not Know How to Lie," were burned. Li had a history of speaking out against government repression. In 1957, while an undergraduate, he was labeled a "rightist" for his openly critical views, and was subsequently expelled from the university. On June 5, 1989, Li called together a meeting in which information about the Beijing massacre was conveyed, and workers were urged to strike in protest. In less than three weeks, he was dismissed from his job. He was arrested that July. Li is currently incarcerated and in poor health from conditions there.

LIU BINYAN (China) is one of China's most highly-regarded journalists. His work exposed Communist Party corruption and the institutional suppression of human rights. Liu was first persecuted for his views by the Communist Party in 1957. For the next twenty years he was divested of his professional status and forced to undergo "labor reform," during which he was compelled to do physical labor of many kinds. From 1978 through 1988, Liu served as special correspondent for the *People's Daily* newspaper. On two separate occasions he was purged from the Party. He has published over 17 books, and his writing has appeared in numerous magazines and newspapers, including *The New York Times*. Liu lives in exile in the United States. He has held a series of research positions and fellowships in various academic establishments including Harvard University and Trinity College, most recently at Princeton.

NGUYEN KIM TUAN (Vietnam) was a popular novelist, short story writer, poet and member of the Vietnamese PEN Center (until it was dismantled in 1975) in South Vietnam. He was arrested two months after the fall of President Nguyen van Thieu's government in 1975. Nguyen Kim Tuan was amongst hundreds of writers, artists, actors and musicians arrested after the Provisional Revolutionary Government launched a "purification campaign" against what it considered the decadent and reactionary South Vietnamese culture. In 1988 he was released and emigrated to the United States, where he continues to write. He remains partially crippled from being held in stocks.

ABRAHAM SERFATY (Morocco) was arrested in 1974 after having been in hiding since January 1972 when his friend and colleague, the poet Abdellatif Laabi, was arrested. The two men had co-produced *Souffles*, a radical literary and political

magazine critical of King Hassan II. Long an activist, Serfaty joined struggle against French colonialism in high school and became an active member of Communist Party in the 1940s. He was a founder of the left-wing political party "Front Progressiste." Despite rumors that he was tortured during detention, he gave a powerful speech at his trial criticizing the king. His case has received wide international attention. A son was arrested and sentenced to two years' imprisonment in 1984 for, among other things, smuggling a typewriter into his father's prison. In September 1991, after seventeen years in prison and just two weeks before the King's visit to the U.S., Serfaty was unexpectedly released and exiled to Paris.

MAGNO SOSA ROJAS (Peru) is a correspondent for *Si* magazine and *Agence France Press*, and director of a news radio program. Based in Ayacucho, one of Peru's most dangerous areas, Sosa is known for his professional integrity and human rights concerns. For four years he broke story after story of massacres, torture and drug trafficking, ignoring the beatings and death threats his reporting drew from the Peruvian army. In June 1991 a paramilitary group forced workers at a radio station to transmit death threats to Sosa and another journalist. In August 1991, he was arrested and charged with terrorism. The person who named him later said that he was tortured by the police until he made the accusation. During the time of his incarceration he was sick and hospitalized. He is now released and has resumed his dangerous work.

HARRY WU (China) was a university professor in China. He first came under suspicion and investigation by the Communist authorities in 1957, when he openly disagreed with the 1956 Soviet suppression of the Hungarian revolution. The investigation continued for the next three years. Beginning in 1960, Wu was sent to a labor camp, where he remained until his release in 1979. In 1985 he came to the United States, where he has engaged in researching and writing about China's labor reform system. Since 1987 he has held a research position at Stanford University's Hoover Institute.

ZHANG WEIGUO (China), a free-lance journalist, was Peking Bureau Chief of the World Economic Herald, a Shanghai-based economic newspaper in China, before his arrest. He was detained without charges and trial for twenty months between June 1989 and February 12, 1991, probably because of his writings and his participation in the 1989 pro-democracy movement. On July 30, 1991, he was again arrested, this time for talking to foreign journalists about the situation in China today. He is now released but unofficially "blacklisted" and is under constant surveillance by the security police.

In addition to the above-mentioned recipients there are others who, out of fear of retaliation against them or their family members, have requested anonymity. They are a Cambodian poet who lived through the Pol Pot era only by destroying all his manuscripts and evidence of his education; a Chinese critic and university lecturer who was arrested in June 1989 for taking part in the pro-democracy movement beaten in detention, and held for 18 months without charge or trial before being proclaimed guilty for spreading "counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation;" a Kenyan writer and university professor serving a prison sentence for "sedition" for allegedly discussing the overthrow of the government in a Nairobi bar; and fifteen Burmese writers, well-known and respected in their country, thirteen of whom have been imprisoned by the harsh military regime which punishes even subtle criticism with censorship or incarceration.

In addition to the annual grants announced each spring, the Fund also makes smaller emergency grants during the year, usually to writers who have an urgent need to leave their country.

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The Chair of the Fund for Free/ Expression is Roland Algrant; Vice Chairs, Aryeh Neier and Robert Wedgeworth; Executive Director, Gara LaMarche; Associate, Lydia Lobenthal. The members are Alice Arlen, Robert L. Bernstein, Tom A. Bernstein, Hortense Calisher, Geoffrey Cowan, Dorothy Cullman, Patricia Derian, Adrian DeWind, Irene Diamond, E.L. Doctorow, Norman Dorsen, Alan Finberg, Francis FitzGerald, Jack Greenberg, Vartan Gregorian, S. Miller Harris, Alice H. Henkin, Pam Hill, Joseph Hofheimer, Lawrence Hughes, Ellen Hume, Anne M. Johnson, Mark Kaplan, Stephen Kass, William Koshland, Judith F. Krug, Jeri Laber, Anthony Lewis, William Loverd, Wendy Luers, John Macrae, III, Michael Massing, Nancy Meiselas, Arthur Miller, The Rt. Rev. Paul Moore, Jr., Toni Morrison, Peter Osnos, Bruce Rabb, Geoffrey Cobb Ryan, John G. Ryden, Steven R. Shapiro,

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The committee of the Fund Board which makes the Hellman/Hammett grant selections is chaired by Peter Osnos and also includes E.L. Doctorow, Hortense Calisher, Lawrence Hughes and Michael Massing.

The Fund for Free Expression is a division of Human Rights Watch, which also includes Africa Watch, Americas Watch, Asia Watch, Helsinki Watch, Middle East Watch, and special projects on Prisoners' Rights and Women's Rights. The Chair is Robert L. Bernstein and the Vice Chair is Adrian W. DeWind. Aryeh Neier is Executive Director; Kenneth Roth, Deputy Director; Holly J. Burkhalter, Washington Director; Susan Osnos, Press Director.