

and of the fundamental rights of man. We independent journalists have the duty, despite this tightening of the screws, to fight against all attempts to restrict the use of the word; our moral duty is to continue reporting the reality of what takes place in Cuba. And not because it constitutes a position of the human being as pleasant and tolerant, but because free speech, the unrestricted free flow of information, where everything can be examined and critiqued unmercifully (even criticized unjustly) is the best vaccination there is against totalitarianism. After all, there is no other vaccination against totalitarianism than words

that come freely from the consciences and hearts of men without fear. The opposite would be simply intolerable.

## *Letter to Cuban dissidents*

**Open letter to the Cuban dissidents on the Occasion of the 10th anniversary of democratic revolution in Central and Eastern Europe.**

*Dear Martha Beatriz Roque, Felix Bonne,  
Rene Gomez Manzano, Vladimiro Roca,*

In these days, we are commemorating the tenth anniversary of the changes that brought the end of the totalitarian regimes in Central and Eastern Europe and launched the process of democratization in our part of the world.

The results of the past decades show that the path from a closed to an open society can be arduous. In spite of all the difficulties which have accompanied the transformation of our society, however, we have been constantly aware of the enormous gift that is freedom. We still keep in mind those fantastic moments, when we realized that communist dictatorships have truly come to an end and that we have lived to see something many of us did not dare to hope for. The events in which we were taking part were not a sort of deviation from relentless historical necessity, but a genuine revolution, fundamentally transforming our lives and bringing us a true liberation.

At this time, we also think of you and we believe that your longing for a free Cuba will also be fulfilled one day. It is really you – and not your jailers – who realize Marti's ideal in practice. It is you – and not them – who represent the best revolutionary

traditions of your country, and who – together with other courageous Cubans, dedicated to the cause of liberty, of inalienability of human rights and human dignity – are the guarantee of a better future. Please accept our admiration, our thanks and our assurance that we are with you in your difficult situation. If our transformation experiences and the lessons we learned can serve as an inspiration – or as good or bad examples – for Cuba, when the time comes, we are ready to help you, in a spirit of solidarity.

*With all good wishes and best regards,  
Your friends, former fellow dissidents of East-Central Europe,*

*Rudolf Battek, Czech Republic  
Marek Benda, Czech Republic  
Martin Benda, Czech Republic  
Larisa Bogorazova, Russia  
John Bok, Czech Republic  
Yelena Bonner, Russia  
Bogdan Borusewicz, Poland  
Jan Carnogursky, Slovakia  
Jiri Dienstbier, Czech Republic  
Wladyslaw Frasyuniuk, Poland  
Sergej Grigorianc, Russia  
Ivan M. Havel, Czech Republic  
Vaclav Havel, Czech Republic*

Michal Horacek, Czech Republic  
Zbigniew Janas, Poland  
Dzenek Jicinsky, Czech Republic  
Janos Kis, Hungary  
Michael Kocib, Czech Republic  
Sergej Kovaljov, Russia  
Ferenc Koszeg, Hungary  
Eda Kriscove, Czech Republic  
Jiri Kiran, Czech Republic  
Jacek Kuron, Poland  
Miroslav Kusy, Slovakia  
Vytautas Landsbergis, Lithuania  
Jan Langos, Slovakia  
Ladislav Lis, Czech Republic  
Jan Litynski, Poland  
Iadensz Mazuwiecki, Poland  
Adam Michnik, Poland  
Dana Nemcova, Czech Republic  
Petr Oslzly, Czech Republic  
Martin Palous, Czech Republic  
Radim Palous, Czech Republic

Alina Pierikowska, Poland  
Petr Pithart, Czech Republic  
Tomas Pstross, Czech Republic  
Venek Silhan, Czech Republic  
Martin Simeclor, Slovakia  
G. Miklos Tamas, Hungary  
Petr Uhl, Czech Republic  
Alexandr Vondra, Czech Republic  
Lech Walesa, Poland  
Jerzy Wierchowicz, Poland  
Henry Wojec, Poland

Authenticity of the signatures guaranteed by Martin Palous,  
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Czech Republic\*  
Nov. 15, 1999

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\* **Martin Palous** is also Professor of Political Science at Charles University and translated Hannah Arendt's »The Crisis in Culture« into Czech (Krise kultury. Mlada fronta, Praha, 1994)

## »The Origins of Totalitarianism« – debate

Elisabeth Young-Bruehl

# ***It Will Always Be The Pioneering Work***

**I often take up my copy of *The Origins of Totalitarianism* to read one or more of its sections, like revisiting a museum where there is a giant mural of the early Twentieth Century that you can never finish taking in. A Guernica. The same naive question rises up in me each time: How did one person write this? It is richer on most of its topics than shelves of other books.**

But I have also had three sustained encounters with it. The first, when I was twenty-five, was in a *New School* class that Hannah Arendt, my teacher, told me to go take with the words »it will be very practical for you.« Her old friend Hans Morgenthau had come to teach for a semester, and she viewed him as a practical man – that is, a man of praxis, a man of action. The action for which we all considered him a hero was that he had been the one member of President Lyndon Johnson's administration – on the National Security Council – to resign in protest over the Vietnam War.

Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, a psychoanalyst practicing in Philadelphia, is the author of *Hannah Arendt. For Love of the World* (1982) and also of, among other books, *Anna Freud: A Biography* (1988), *Creative Characters* (1990), *The Anatomy of prejudices* (1996) and *Subject to Biography: Psychoanalysis, Feminism and Writing Women's Lives* (1999), an essay collection that includes two essays about Hannah Arendt. See also her contribution in Newsletter No. 1: *Return to Germany*.

The man of action's syllabus for a course on Twentieth Century Politics was made up of works that he used like optical instruments. If you look at the world through this book, what do you see? Most were books no politician or political scientist in America read (although they were revered in Europe), like Karl Jaspers' *The Atombomb* and the *Future of Mankind* and *Reason and Anti-Reason in Our Time*. Morgenthau and Arendt shared a disdain – it was almost contempt – for the way politics was studied in America, and he offered the whole list and her book particularly as models for how political theory should be written. »You can fight over