

The real world, now in English.

There is a path to the world behind the news reports, where real people live in troubled places and emerging nations. There is a way to know and see first-hand the moment of revolt in Nicaragua, of black resistance in South Africa. To meet the citizens of contemporary Prague and Warsaw, the intellectuals of China, the people of Chile.

There is an alternative, then, to watching silent faces in TV footage, and trying to make sense of their expressions. An alternative to official communiqués, interpreters, and intermediaries.

The alternative is literature. Literature uncolonized by propaganda—alive, imaginative, powerful, intelligent. The works of mature artists chronicling their own worlds in ferment.

But in those troubled places, even literature is not often allowed to live. This sad fact is what prompted the great writer Julio Cortázar to say: "Every time a reader opens a book written in one of the countries where critical thinking and even mere imagination are seen as a crime, he should read it as if he were the recipient of one of those bottles which, as legend has it, used to be thrown into the sea in order to carry a message or a hope as far as possible."

If you are one who listens for such messages and shares such hopes, then you should know that others stand with you. Just this year, a remarkable not-for-profit alliance of writers, translators, and editors was formed as *Readers International* with two goals in view:

First, to assure gifted, committed writers the means of being heard—even when they have been banned, censored, silenced at home. Next, to publish these writers in the best English translations, so that their work is immediately accessible to you—reader, human rights advocate, citizen of an undeniably global community.

The members and advisors of RI include Dennis Brutus, Robert Fitzgerald, Gregory Rabassa, Nawal El Saadawi, Edward Said, and Josef Skvorecky. Together they ask: Can we begin to comprehend politics and societies outside America unless they take on human faces? Are not artists best able to let us see the terrors and tragedies, the joys and incidental beauties, of lives lived amidst the major world events of our time?

In founding this audacious, but essential, publishing alliance, RI depends absolutely on the support of individuals like yourself. By undertaking an annual subscription of \$36.00, you actually make possible a great deal of activity:

- You finance the English translation of exciting new works from outside the developed West.
- You fund their actual printing and binding in

sewn, hardcover English-language editions, both attractive and durable.

- You support the writers and their families, in exile and at home.

- You rescue important books from being silenced by publishing and publicizing them in the English-speaking world.

- You send a message of solidarity back to both the writers and their intended readers at home. RI's network of supporters will see that this message is delivered.

- And, you take a practical step toward opposing repressive governments that try to silence or limit good writing.

In return for your support, you receive each new book for 1984-85 as it is printed—a total of six, described below, at regular two-month intervals. And since the books will retail when available for a combined price of \$90.00, you can see that the strictly personal benefit of this \$36.00 subscription is appreciable.

Your first six books.

NICARAGUA: *To Bury Our Fathers* by Sergio Ramirez. Written in exile by the country's leading prose writer—now a prominent civilian member of the Sandinista government—this is a richly detailed portrait of his people. "Sophisticated, savage, lyrical, the novel is both a timeless epic of resistance and retribution," says Chilean writer Ariel Dorfman, "and an invaluable insight into the mind and myths of Central America that never get on the evening news" (ca. 300 pages, retail price \$17.50.)

CZECHOSLOVAKIA: *My Merry Mornings* by Ivan Klíma. The finest and wittiest stories to date by this popular Prague writer, who was officially silenced after 1968, but continues to circulate in typed, handbound clandestine "padlock editions." Highly regarded in Western Europe, Klíma is unknown here. (ca. 150 pages, retail price \$12.50.)

SOUTH AFRICA: *A Ride on the Whirlwind* by Sipho Sepamla. The recently unbanned novel by a prominent black poet that brings to life the 1976 Soweto uprisings—events that were a major push toward the partial government "reforms" now in the news. *Index on Censorship* called it "a powerful study of young revolutionaries and their ruthless opponents." Your subscription will help to re-issue the book inside South Africa. (ca. 250 pages, retail price \$17.50.)

PALESTINE: *Najran Below Zero* by Yahya Yakhluif. A tour de force, banned in Saudi Arabia, written by the current head of the Palestinian Writers' Union. The novel shows the dissenting role of the Palestinian intellectual inside the Arab world, here set during a civil war in the Saudi-Yemeni border regions. (ca. 110 pages, retail price \$12.50.)

CHINA: *A Cadre School Life: Six Chapters* by Yang Jiang. An unaffected, subtle, and finally devastating memoir of two years in re-education camps during China's Cultural Revolution. The author is an elderly scholar and translator; her husband, also imprisoned, is Qian Zhongshu—one of China's greatest living writers. Publication in China was possible only ten years later. The *Times Literary Supplement* called the book "outstanding... quite unlike anything else from 20th-century China" (ca. 100 pages, retail price \$12.50.)

CHILE: *I Dreamt the Snow Was Burning* by Antonio Skármeta. The prize-winning writer and film-maker wrote this novel of the last days of Allende's Chile from exile, soon after the military coup in Santiago. *Le Monde* considers it "one of the best pieces of committed literature to emerge from Latin America." Published in nearly a dozen European languages, the novel will at last be available in English through your support. (ca. 225 pages, retail price \$17.50.)

Won't you join RI now as a founding subscriber—and thereby return a message of hope to the writers and the people whose side they have taken in the struggle for justice and human rights? RI must plan print quantities based upon the number of founding subscribers who reply to this notice. Please know that your voice will count.

"Readers International is an exciting idea. Good books—and a good cause!"

A. Whitney Ellsworth
Publisher,
The New York Review of Books



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9 East 46th Street
New York, NY 10017



Yes, I am joining the publishing alliance of Readers International as a founding subscriber. I understand that my first annual subscription of \$36.00 plus \$1.00 a book for postage entitles me to receive my own copy of each of the six books for 1984-85 which I help to underwrite. Please send them at two-month intervals to the address below:

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*My check for \$42.00 payable to Readers International is enclosed.

Bill my _____
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DIVIDED PAYMENT PLAN: I enclose my check for \$25.00. Please send a bill for the remaining \$17.00 along with my first book. (Option not available by charge card.)

My additional tax-deductible contribution in support of the continuing work of Readers International is enclosed in the amount of \$_____.

*New York residents please add appropriate sales tax.