

# The CRCE Newsletter

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Reports on CRCE events will be featured in the next Newsletter as we should like to pay tribute to two remarkable people: Charles Janson, a trustee for many years who will be warmly remembered by our Russian colleagues for his hospitality on their visits to London, and Gramoz Pashko a member of our advisory board. Besides expressing our sympathy to both families, we extend condolences to CRCE Trustee, Alex Standish, a close friend of Gramoz and godfather to his son who also died in the helicopter crash. We are touched to see the mention of the CRCE in the Obituary.

Obituary in The Times, 28. vii, 06

## GRAMOZ PASHKO

Able economist who worked for measured reform and ethnic tolerance in Albania after the collapse of communism

AS THE waves of unrest crashed through Eastern Europe in 1989, one or two rocks looked for a short period as if they might remain standing. In Prague Gustav Husak's grey successors dithered but then disappeared; in the German Democratic Republic a few hotheads called, thankfully in vain, for repression à la Tiananmen Square; in Romania Ceausescu played precisely that card, and lost; only in Albania did the hard-line communists seem secure. There the Stalinist dictator Enver Hoxha had ruled from 1944 until his death in 1985, isolating his country from most external influences and building up a domestic security apparatus of formidable power. But even in Albania the tide could not be stopped.

The communist collapse in Albania came at the end of 1990. The ruling party had made a number of concessions to the growing demands for reform but each concession seemed to whet the appetite for more. In December students in the Enver Hoxha University in Tirana demonstrated, demanding further political relaxation and a change in the name of their university. A delegation of influential communist figures decided to negotiate with them. The result was a change in the name of the university and, more importantly, the legalisation of non-communist political parties. Albania's transition from totalitarianism had begun.

One of those who negotiated with the students was a teacher in the economics department, Gramoz Pashko. Born in 1955 he was the son of well-placed communists, his father serving as prosecutor in the trials that had neutralised some of Hoxha's opponents. Pashko studied at Tirana University



Pashko, right, with Sali Berisha, his rival for many years. By last year the pair had reconciled

as an economist, specialising in the problems afflicting the Western economies in the 1970s and 1980s. He received his BA in 1977, an MSc (Economics) in 1983, and a doctorate in 1989; his masters dissertation was entitled *Stagnation as a New Precedent of Low Growth with Inflation in the Western Economies in the 1970s-1980s*.

His youth, intelligence and academic background made him a natural choice to negotiate with the students in December 1990; in return, that experience convinced him that the reform of Albanian politics and society was not only

necessary but also feasible. Thereafter he involved himself fully in this process. He was one of the founding members of the new Democratic Party of Albania (DPA).

When a coalition consisting mainly of the DPA and the Socialist Party of Albania, the former communists, was formed in June 1991 he was appointed a deputy prime minister and minister for the economy. It was the high point of his political career. He was later to be appointed deputy prime minister and minister of education and science, but he did not become a major figure and exercised far more influence

when he served as an adviser on economic policy.

That Pashko did not become a more important figure was in part the consequence of his background, but it also had much to do with the bitter personal rivalries characteristic of Albanian politics, and not a little to do with bad luck.

As the son of entrenched servants of Hoxha, Pashko always had extra weight to carry, and that he did not get on with the other major DPA figure, Sali Berisha, was a huge impediment. Pashko's bad luck came first in December 1991 when he was visiting London and, without consulting him,

Berisha pulled the DPA out of the coalition, causing it to disintegrate. Pashko was furious and the following year Berisha, flushed with victory after his election as president, expelled Pashko and a number of associates from the DPA. Pashko formed a new party, the Democratic Alliance, and continued his bitter rivalry with Berisha.

Pashko was struck by bad luck again in 1997. While he was a Research Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars in Washington, Albania collapsed into anarchy and Pashko was not at hand to participate in the necessary political restructuring. He was, however, appointed economics adviser to the socialist Government formed in 1997. By 2005 Pashko had mended enough fences with Berisha to agree to rejoin the DPA and to take part in the Government should the party emerge victorious at the elections of that year. It did, but Pashko failed to secure a seat in parliament.

Pashko had complained in 1996 that the Albanians had not "yet understood the principles of civic society" but it could also be the case that he was not suited to the rough and tumble of party political life, or to the demands of electioneering.

In politics Pashko was a moderate. He came to believe in the necessity of economic reform and privatisation, but he wanted to bring this about in a controlled and relatively measured fashion; it was his belief in the need for moderation and compromise that had made him so angry when Berisha pulled the plug on the coalition with the socialists in 1991.

He was also a moderate in ethnic policies. Early in 1995, when there was serious tension between Albania and Greece,

he called publicly for a more flexible attitude by the Albanian Government towards the small Greek minority in Albania; this was not a popular cause. His consciousness of the need for ethnic tolerance was increased by the Kosovo emergency of 1998-99 when, as a senior adviser to the socialist Government, he took a major part in securing help from Nato and from the EU to cope with the huge number of refugees pouring into Albania.

If Pashko was not the natural party politician, he was an able academic economist. He published widely in Albanian, English and German, including valuable analyses of Albania's economic transition. He continued teaching and had been made a professor by the University of Tirana. His academic work took him not only to Washington, but also to Munich and to the University of Strathclyde, where he was a visiting professor. He was also a Senior Fellow at the US Institute for International Peace in Washington, and a member of the Advisory Council of the Centre for Research into Post-Communist Economies in London. In 2002 Pashko became a founder and rector of the New York University in Tirana.

Pashko relished hunting and the outdoor life. On July 16 he struck his head on a rock while diving off the coast of southern Albania. He went into a coma and was put on a helicopter to be taken to hospital in Italy. It crashed as it neared the Italian coast and all on board, including Pashko's 24-year-old son, Rubin, were killed.

Pashko is survived by his wife, Mimosa Rule, and their daughter.

**Gramoz Pashko, economist and politician, was born on February 11, 1955. He died on July 16, 2006, aged 51.**

# Charles Janson

*Foreign correspondent whose influential newsletters offered insights into African and Soviet politics*

CHARLES JANSON, who died on June 15 aged 88, was a foreign correspondent who founded two influential newsletters, one on Africa, the other on the Soviet Union; a poet; translator (mainly from Russian); musician and philanthropist.

As the husband for 60 years of Elizabeth, Countess of Sutherland, he played a large part in running one of Scotland's largest estates, including the vast turreted castle of Dunrobin, on the north-east coast. As a publisher and editor, his most notable achievements were the creation of *Africa Confidential* in 1960 and of *The Soviet Analyst* in 1972.

The former remains the authoritative source of news and analysis of African affairs; the latter, at first co-edited by Robert Conquest, relentlessly exposed the mendacity and vacuous ideology of the Soviet Union's rulers, winning plaudits from such dissidents as Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Andrei Sakharov and Vladimir Bukovsky.

Charles Noel Janson was born on Christmas Day 1917, to Wilfred Janson, a prominent City man whose family had become Lloyds underwriters in 1803. Young Charles was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, where music and languages were his forte.

Commissioned into the Welsh Guards at the approach of the Second World War, he was captured with much of the British Expeditionary Force in north-west France in 1940.

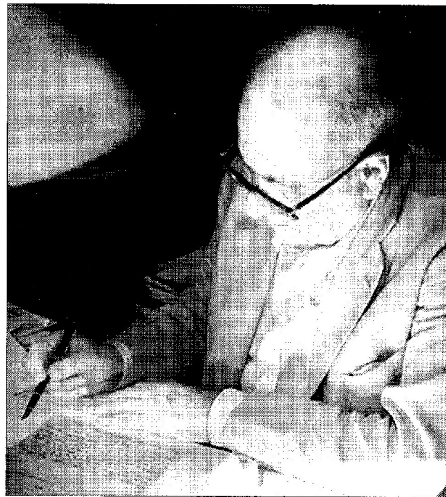
He spent the remaining five years of the war in prisons in Germany, mainly in Bavaria, where he learnt Russian from some *émigré* fellow prisoners, dug tunnels without himself escaping, and managed, bizarrely, to acquire a piano.

Soon after his release, he married, in 1946, Elizabeth Leveson-Gower, daughter of the late Lord Alistair Leveson-Gower and niece of the childless George (Geordie), fifth Duke of Sutherland. Had she been a boy, she would have become the sixth duke after her uncle's death in 1963. But she did inherit the Sutherland earldom, Scotland's oldest (dating from 1235), and her uncle's vast Sutherland estates, including Dunrobin, Britain's northernmost great castle, with its 189 rooms and commanding view across the Dornoch Firth.

Soon after his marriage, Janson became *The Economist's* correspondent in Paris, where he also wrote occasionally for *The Sunday Times*, answering to its then foreign manager, Ian Fleming.

Writing a weekly dispatch to London in longhand and sending it by post, he won a reputation as one of the most insightful observers of the Fourth Republic and the antics of its many short-lived prime ministers; Janson's French was so good that he was often assumed to be a native.

He befriended French intellectuals of the Atlanticist right – a rare breed at the time – such as Raymond



Janson: always wrote his dispatches from Paris in longhand

Aron and Alain Besançon. The Duke of Windsor was his wife's godfather; he polished his Russian in conversations with his stepfather-in-law, Egor von Osten Driesen, an *émigré* Russo-Baltic baron.

Near the end of his five-year stint for *The Economist*, Janson paid his first visit to Russia, staying for more than a month with Sir William Hayter at the embassy across the river from the Kremlin and sending a batch of dispatches predicting the difficulties of Khrushchev and Bulganin in the aftermath of Stalin's death.

He then made his first forays into Africa, partly

inspired by his life-long friend, Laurens van der Post, the writer and explorer. He visited Sudan, Congo, Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania, forging a close friendship with Michael (later Sir Michael) Wood, founder of a flying doctors' service which evolved into the Nairobi-based African Medical and Research Foundation.

The Woods were leading lights in the Capricorn Society, a movement that inspired Janson with its aim of creating multi-racial harmony and political partnership between blacks and whites. After further trips to Northern and

Southern Rhodesia (later Zambia and Zimbabwe) as well as South Africa, Janson realised that black nationalists, emboldened by Harold Macmillan's "wind of change", wanted unfettered power rather than partnership.

Backed by other British figures in the Capricorn Society, Janson started a newsletter entitled *Africa 1960*, hoping to "make people take Africa seriously". After changing its title yearly until *Africa 1967*, it was renamed *Africa Confidential*, retaining a similar format on blue paper until the present day.

Janson set its tone for sympathetic yet fearless reportage and analysis. He was quick to spot, for instance, at a time when most Africanists were still enthralled by him, that Ghana's charming leader, Kwame Nkrumah, would become a deluded despot, and that Tanzania's plausible leader, Julius Nyerere, then a friend of the Woods, would also bankrupt his country with his rigid collectivist Utopianism known as *ujamaa*. Janson left as editor in 1963.

*The Soviet Analyst* gained a similar reputation for exposing the machinations of Soviet rulers, airing the activities of dissidents who might otherwise have disappeared into oblivion.

It exposed a hitherto successful campaign by the Soviet disinformation network to blame Aids on an American biological warfare experiment – a canard that had been widely believed in

the Third World. It also argued forcefully, when Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in 1985 with the apparent intention of giving Soviet communism a human face, that the Soviet system was utterly unreformable. Mrs Thatcher read *The Soviet Analyst* attentively when preparing herself to "do business" with Gorbachev in 1986.

Janson was an ardent admirer of the dissident Soviet satirist Alexander Zinoviev, translating several of his works, such as *Homo Sovieticus*, and helping him when he fled into exile in 1978. Janson was much saddened when Zinoviev, after his return to Russia in 1999, made a remarkable *volte face*, becoming a nationalistic admirer of Stalin and Serbia's Slobodan Milosevic.

A kind-hearted and sensitive man, Janson was nostalgic for an era of honour and chivalry that he knew had long gone. "It has been a pig of a century," he wrote.

An accomplished player of the piano, harpsichord and clavichord, he was perhaps happiest listening to music in the House of Tongue, overlooking a sea loch on the north-west side of Sutherland, where he and his wife lived for many years, or at his retreat on Elba.

Charles Janson is survived by Lady Sutherland, a daughter and two sons, the elder of whom, Alistair, Lord Strathnaver, born in 1947, is heir to the Sutherland earldom. Another son predeceased him.

## Nota Bene

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