

Perfecto T. Martin

Panitikan At Kalayaan
Talakayang May Dalawang Yugto



Dokumento ito ang naganap na talakayan sa paksang "Panitikan at Kalayaan" na itinaguyod ng Galian sa Arte at Tula (GAT) noong 7 Setyembre 1980 sa Heritage Art Center. Ang transkripsiyong ito mula sa tape recorder ay maingat na isinaayos ni P.T. Martin para sa hindi nailathalang isyu ng Ugat, publikasyon ng GAT noong dekada 80. Para sa dagdag na impormasyon, sumulat sa perfecto.martin@gmail.com.

MGA TAGAPAGSALITA

ADRIAN CRISTOBAL: chairman ng Philippine Writers' Union, Social Security System, at Philippine Education Company; siya rin ang pangunahing tagapagsalita

BIENVENIDO LUMBERA: propesor sa literatura, manunulat, editor ng *Diliman Review*

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FRANCISCO S. TATAD, assemblyman, dating minister of public information, at manunulat

IBA PANG makata, manunulat, kuwentista, periodista, nobelista, pintor eskultor, estudyante, kolumnista, ahente, atbp.

PANAHAON: 7 Setyembre 1980, labing-apat na araw bago ipagdiwang ang "Araw ng Pasasalamat" ng mga Filipino sa madaling sabi, ang anibersaryo ng martalaw; alas-tres ng hapon, kainitan at oras ng pamamahinga ng mga taong sanlinggong kumakayod

TAGPUAN: Sa isang lumang bahay sa St. William Street, Cubao, Quezon City; dating tahanan ng mag-asawang Manuel at Lydia Arguilla; dating tanggapan ng Philippine Artists' Guild at istambayan ng mga manunulat sa Inglese; ngayo'y Heritage Art Center nina Odette Alcantara; tagpuan kung Linggo ng mga miyembro ng Galian sa Arte at Tula (GAT) na siyang pasimuno sa talakayang ito; istambayan din ngayon ng sarisaring nilalang-pintor eskultor, ilustrador, aktor, aktris, manunulat, chess player, at ng iba pang gustong makipagdaldalan kung Linggot ungd sa anumang bagay sa daigdig na ito

Idinaos ang talakayan sa bulwagan ng bahay, sa piling mga laaw ang nakasabit sa dingding na araw-gabing naghihintay ng bilili, o matiyagang nakikipagtitigan sa mahihilig sa sining pero butas ang bulsa, mga kritikong naghahanap ng maisusulat at maidadagdag sa kanilang koleksiyon, mga matronang naghahanap ng "abstract painting" at mga... karaniwang usisero-tusisera.

Sa maylabas, bago pumasok sa bulwagang pinagdusaan ng talakayan, may isang kapihan na ipinangalan sa isang pintor na buhay pa pero **MATA** as na ang presyo ng bawat dora. Walang gaanong ingay na naririnig mula sa maalikabok at nakatatarantang lansangan ng Cubao—sagkat rason loban at malayo sa gulo, usok, at busira ng mga sasakyan.

Magsisimulang mag-ayos ng mga silya ang mga kasapi ng GAT, kasabay ng pagdating ng mga kinumbida. Sa mga panahing tagapagsalita, unang dumating si Bien Lumbera, pagkaraan'y si Adrian **CRISTOBAL** at si Francisco Arcellana. (Dumating din si Francisco **TATAD** noong bumabasa na ang pangunahing tagapagsalita.) Habang tumatagal, nagdadating ang mas marami pang kinumbida—lahat silang nagpunta roon para makinig, magtanong, manduro magbuga ng sama ng loob, magyabang, makipagkumustahan sa mga kaibigang **MATA** gal nang hindi nakikita, makisyo so, maghanap ng sideline o maisusulat sa kolum, at kung minsan, mag-espiya. Lahat sila, lahat silang nakabalit a—bago pa man dumating ang araw na iyon—sa sira-saring "giyera-patani" ng taon (o ng nakaraang walong taon?).

Upang hig it na maunawaan ang talakayang naganap, hayaan ninyong isalaysay namin ang maraming bagay na nangyari, akala'y nangyari, pirapangyari, o ano pa man na maykinalaman sa pangyayari nong hapong iyon.

Sarisaring pangungusap—pintas, panunuya, papuri, pagpapatawa, pagkukumahog, pagsisisihan, pagtatawagan, pagbabalitaan, pagtuturuan, pagmumungkahi, pagtatanggihan, pananakot, pambubuyo, pang-aasar—ang naririnig, ipinarinig, inilos, kusang hinangad na marinig:

—Isang magasing kung Linggo lumalabas (pag hindi ipinapa-recall ang mga kopya): *Pumunta sa Heritage Art center sa Linggo—noong araw na iyon—kung walakayong mapaglilibangang ibang bagay.*

—Isang kaibigang kinumbida: *Pinag-uusapan pa ba ang 'Literature and Freedom' sa panahong ito?*

—Isang propesor na alaskador: *Give me one good reason why I should like to meet Adrian CRISTOBAL?*

—Isang tagapagtaguyod ng GAT: *Kumbidahin n'yo si Letty Magsanoc. Gusto n'ya yan. SP Lopez is dying to come.*

—Isang natatakot makipagtaloc: *Bakit si Adrian pa ang kinumbida ninyo?*

—Isang **MATA** ndang **MATA** pang ang bunganga: *Very timely 'yan!*

—*isang palabiro. Ano, sabi ni Kit ay busy siya? Are you kidding?*
—*isang mahilig sa boksing. Aba, tamang-tama, Adrian vs. Frankie, Writers' Union vs. Solidaridad, ehe, PE.N. pala! What about!*
—*isang mahilig manggagad: What about them?*

Siyanga pala, bago makalimutan, gusto naming ipaalam na talagang kinumbida upang mag-ing isang pangunahing tagapagsalita si Francisco Sison. Jose, ang RM Award for Literature ngayong taong ito. Hindi sa mahilig kami sa boksing pero nais ng mga kapural sa alakayang ito na magkasama-sama naman, kahit palabas lamang, ang mga pangunahing tagapagtaguyod ng panitikan sa panahong ito—kung hindi man, ang mga propesyonal na organisasyon sa panitikan sa Filipinas. Ngunit sa kasamaang-palad ay hindi nakatating si G. Sison-Jose sanhi-alam naming alam rin minyo-ng isang hindi maiwasang kadahilanan.

Pagdating ng takdang oras, napuno na ang bulwagan sa iba pang mga makikipagtalakayan, makikitang nakapupo ang maraming pangalang nalimbag na sa libro, diyaryo, magasin—mga Alberto Florentino, mga Andres **CRISTOBAL** Cruz, mga Pacifico Aprèto, mga Doreen Fernandez, mga Gilda Cordero Fernando, mga Mauro **AVENA**, mga **NESTOR MATA**, mga Arlene Babs, mga... Nandoon silang lahat, ka mga, *you name it and we had it.*

At nang handa na ang lahat, nasakani-kanilang posisyon na ang mga magasalit a, sinimulan ang “giyera-patani.” Ang talakayan ay hinati lamang sa dalaw ang hindi nakaantok na bahagi: ang una ay ang panayam ni Adrian **CRISTOBAL**, pangunahing tagapagsalita; ang kalawa ay ang pagbibigay ng iba pang tagapagsalita o panalitang kanilang obserbasyon sa tema at—ang pinakahihintay ng lahat—ang pagtatanong, oq tanong, at hindi pagtahal, sa mga panahing tagapagsalita o kung mamapatin minyo, ang pagpapalitan ng mga gintong kaisipan sa panahon ng tansong kaligiran.

Sana'y kapulutan ng magandang kaisipan ang sinabi ng mga tagapagsalita nang hapong iyon—taos man sa puso nila o hindi ang kanilang inilalahad. Sana'y mag-ing maingat ang lahat sa pagsusuri ng mabibigat na pangungusap na binitawan nang hapong iyon sa pagkatitka mga, sa ginitong mga pagtitipon, tulad din sa pang-aaw-aaw na ting buhay, mahirap kilalanin kung alin ang katataganan at alin ang kasinungalingan. Sana'y may manatiling buhay ang tunay na panitikan at kalayaan kahit man lamang sa puso at damdamin ng bawat isa sa atin.

PAUNAWA: Ang anumang pagkakatulad ng mga pangalan, petsa, lugar, at pangyayari sa talakayan ito sa mga tunay na tao, petsa, lugar, at pangyayari ay sinadya sa pagkatataguyod na nangyari. Pero pananagutan ng bawat tagapagsalita ang kanilang sinabi rito sa pagkatataguyod ng promotoryong talakayan ay nagtatala lamang—at patuloy na magtatala—ng anumang mahahalaga at makatuturang pangyayari sa ating panahon—kami sa Galian sa Arte at Tula, at ang aming masunurin, laging tapat, ngunit kung minsang naglulukong tape recorder.

ADRIAN CRISTOBAL: Ramblings on Literature and Freedom

One of the dimly recognized refinements of human torture, a slight affront to man's inhumanity to man, is the public lecture. Its growing popularity may be gleaned, as men of goodwill might put it, in the circumstances of our times, but it is, none the less, a curious masochism that I would only infrequently indulge in, having addressed myself incessantly to our subject many years ago long before martial law, as a seldom and reluctantly-published writer, without, I must confess, much success. But here I am again, trusting to the rificence of the times.

Now, I would assume that, as more or less serious people, you are not interested in whether I could still recite the catechism, or cite the Constitution and repeat the sonorous sentences of the *Areopagitica*, and conclude, inevitably, that the flowering of literature—indeed, of the creative imagination depends on the permissible liberty of time and place. There can be no quarrel that freedom is good in itself and that to curtail it is very bad indeed, especially for literature which makes gross, base men speak in the language of angels. There is, of course no guarantee that freedom will make us write better, but at least we can write without fear of the police. No one, in brief, can be against motherhood.

What makes us concern ourselves with the relationship between literature and freedom—and of course to the writer, the very act of writing itself is an act of liberation—is a certain urgency, which, at bottom, is very personal. If the intention now is merely to repeat the ritual of affirmation, then all that is needed to be said is, “Freedom, Yes!” to the sound of drums. Few writers were exercised about the issue before; now that many more are than it must be noted. And then we must agree on the one thing immediately: freedom will not make a writer happy, prosperous, or bright, or even make him write better—it will simply make him free. And for many writers the really agonizing issue is not freedom but *Roget's Thesaurus*.

In all of literary history there is one obvious point which is almost embarrassing to underscore publicly and that is: whatever may be the prevalent condition of the age the writer should be able to write—that is, survive long enough to write. This implies that literature survives and that writers sometimes do, sometimes do not. That is, perhaps, the distinction between immortality and mortality, which is the profound anxiety of many a writer.

On the other hand, one could, according to Paul Tabor, rewrite and reevaluate literary history according to whether a writer has or hasn't been in prison. He says:

The list of literary jailbirds is practically endless. Socrates shaped his final conception of the world in a death cell; Plato was not only imprisoned by Dionysios the Tyrant but sold as a slave in Egina; Aristotle 'did time' because of his alleged atheism; Mani, the founder of the Manichean faith; Boethius, founder of medieval Christian scholasticism, Machiavelli and Sir Thomas More, Cervantes and Sir Thomas Raleigh, Bacon and Grotius, Villon and Voltaire (twice the guest of the Bastille), Beaumarchais and Schiller, Beranger and Dostoevsky—the list is equally distinguished and practically endless. Prison has been the direct inspiration of some of the most striking and moving landmarks in literature—and continues to provide it only too frequently and enduringly.

But isn't prison the most brutal infringement of freedom for any man, let alone a writer? I do not think that Tabor is prescribing imprisonment as a path of literary excellence, and, indeed, there are not many writers who can hope to improve their style or deepen their insight under the most benign incarceration. Not too that *Don Quixote* did not, as the *Gulag Archipelago* does, portray prison conditions: it reads as if written by a Spanish Hidalgo enjoying the pleasures of the chase. But what prison gives the writer is suggested in the slang, "did time." Prison gives him time, a writer needs time, and under certain conditions, a stretch is equivalent to seclusion in a monastery. Time on your hands, leisure, if you want to call it that, is the writer's profound need, as Time is his natural tyrant. This simply and horribly means that time means not attending to the children, warding off creditors, not running from various forms of mindless dangers, not doing press releases and advertising copy—in short the writer has to be, in order to write, like a monk in *zazen*, sitting still, his mind drawn to himself, shaping reverent thoughts, feelings, sensations into significant form.

The artist Hernando Ocampo, himself a writer, once said, quite truly, that one must know one's tyrants and fight them. The Tabor passage also suggests that the only way a true writer can be suppressed is to kill him before he could write. Simply denying him pen and ink will not work so effectively. I have in mind another writer, a friend, the late Georgy Balozs-Horvath, who was placed in solitary confinement for three years. There, in his mind, he made translations

and wrote books, so that when he was released he simply wrote away as if from dictation. Do not object, please, that Horvath is an exception, that he was heroic. No, we dare not pass judgment in advance of any writer. We don't know what that fool will do at any given time.

There is a political note in Horvath which may have some relevance: upon release he was generously fired back by the authorities his communist party card; he refused it on the ground that he was the only communist left in Hungary and that the rest were nothing more than gangsters. Even as a communist, a writer is not a reliable party-man.

Which takes us to the unreliability of the writer, to why under the best of circumstances, he will always feel a kind of rejection, oppression, or "something like that." There is something about the writer which discomfits his tormentors. Society in the large has an instinctive distrust of writers; happily, society is a diversity of individuals, among whom the writer could find his friends, advocates and well-wishers; otherwise, he wouldn't survive at all. But society in the large—or let me put it this way, in the classic words of a politician: "the trouble with that writer (or reporter for sometimes reporters are also writers) is that he wouldn't stay bought." Good, bad, or indifferent, mediocre or excellent, a genuine writer is thoroughly unreliable. It does not mean that he is more or less corruptible than the next man, but somehow, when with some self-consciousness he writes seriously, not to earn a living, not to swerve his mysterious purpose. Of course, what he writes can be edited, or worse, burned, but it remains seared in his mind and you will have to stand and watch as it might come out again.

Oh, please, let no one jump up and smugly cite the hundreds of exceptions to Pastermak and Sdzhenit syn, the so-called enslaved and/or corrupted writers who pen poems to their patrons and regimes. And that if the regimes were otherwise they would be far more honorable to themselves and their calling. I am, quite frankly, rather cagey of this objection, for if it is not one form of coercion or corruption, it is another—consider the celebrated case of Ezra Pound—and, in any case, in any calling, heroes are few, although writers have a bit more than their share. As a matter of fact, a writer who survives has scaled Mt. Everest and climbed back. Call this courage, since that is the usual word, but I would call it, "possession," although there are not a few writers who are possessed by something else. But it will be sanctimonious, in any case, shortsighted and pompous even, to sneer at the contemporary literary services of totalitarian and dictatorial regimes, as a CBSers scrutiny will show that they come and go, and who knows that the reason they have gone is precisely the "unreliability" of the writer; that he would not stay bought and so were quietly removed from the chorus? I am not speaking of hacks and propagandists for they know what they are about and are not practitioners of Joyce's strategy of "silence, exile, cunning."

There is, of course, a dire consequence for national literature in periods of regimentation, the most recent example being Nazi Germany. With the Nazis in power the true fatherland of German literature was transferred from Berlin to Amsterdam, London, New York and Stockholm. Franz Werfel and Thomas Mann, Alfred Neumann and Leon Feuchtwanger, Arnold Zweig and Bertolt Brecht, continued their work in exile. As Tabori put it, "the moment the collective demanded not only lip-service but regular firings from the creative writer, his inspiration dried up and he became a hack or worse" Precisely, the writer is so frail a creature that he will not good-humoredly pay lip-service, but a regular firing is something else: however noble the cause, literature, and I mean, literature, is a poor servant.

Another thing worth noting in literary history is that the fire and best writing have been written during the most difficult times, particularly when writing is innovative and revolutionary. The difficulties may be economic, political, or social, or a general malaise. In a familiar vein, we need only to evoke the names D.H. Lawrence, Henry Miller, Steinbeck, and the father of them all, James Joyce, of whom we remember the shock waves of Anna Livia Plurabelle, which tempt me now out of perversity to quote from a letter to his wife to wit:

The smallest things give a great cockstand—a whorish movement of your mouth, a little brown stain on the seat of your white drawers... to feel your hot lecherous lips sucking away at me, to fuck between your two rosy-tipped bobbies, to come on your face and squirt it over your hot cheeks and eyes, to stick it up between the cheeks of your rump and bugger you.

The passage was published, with impunity, or immunity, only this year in the United States, and if you are shocked by it, then you are looking at the problem of literature and freedom in the very restricted political sense. With few exceptions, all societies have established laws against sexual expression in literature, putting up obscenity tests that cannot stand logical scrutiny. Interestingly enough, sexual and political repression seem to go hand-in-hand, but that too complicated subject is for another occasion. There are no easy times for the writer, indeed.

To pursue the matter, the "piping times of peace" do not, in any case, produce interesting literature, so that for the serious reader—which also includes the writer—the preferred works are now by the South American rather than the North American writers. In the case of the former, it is as if the writer is taking his life in his hands with every word, phrase, or sentence. Which is, I feel, in the rare times of courage the only way to write.

Now that we have recognized the reader, it should be clear that the relationship between literature and freedom is not exclusively the writer's affair: it embraces a larger universe, and it is no less than the human predicament. There are societies which punish readers or writers, burn books, and all that sort of crap. In this way

do the readers become participants of the literary act, and so the writer is loaded with a heavy responsibility for every time he utters his word, he exhorts men to their liberation, and, if unlucky, commends them no less than himself into the executioner's hands. We see then that freedom has the implacable face of absolute power. These words from Julio Cortázar may carry an odd familiarity:

... when the Chilean junta burned thousands of books in the streets of Santiago, they were burning much more than paper, much more than poems and novels; in a sinister way they burned the readers of these books and those for whom they had been written.

(Do you remember the book-burnings of pre-martial-law days in certain universities?)

But let us go back to Cortázar:

This precarious and anxious bridge between the Latin American reader and the writer, this evident hope of something beyond the mere literary, increases our bad conscience because today it is not enough to give the utmost of our potentialities as writers... In spite of those commissars of the intelligence who demand a "simple" literature for "simple people", the reader also expects from us other forms of communication. It would be easy to reply to this hope with a literary demagoguery, with the paternalism of one who claims to be the spiritual pastor of his village, but the readers who expect us to be something more than storytellers and poets are not passive readers, they don't subscribe to Readers' Digest, they are not docile consumers of this month's bestseller; even the most ignorant and modest among them ask for something more in literature. They look for books which can astonish them, take them far away from home, set up new orbits of thought or of sensibility, and they want the authors of these works if they are their countrymen, to keep close to them on the historical level; their wish is a wish for brotherhood.

We in the Philippines are, perhaps, on the threshold of such a condition, in which case the Filipino writer will be living in interesting times. "May you live in interesting times" maybe a Chinese curse but it is a literary blessing.

Let us hear finally from André Breton:

Every writer chooses the particular way in which to set free his self, which is his word. To a large extent it may be a free act of choice, but in many ways, obviously, his temperament, his inclinations, his experience, even his milieu may determine that choice. Once one has made the necessary provision for the personality and situation of the writer, however, the nature of his choice can really be influenced only by a consideration of the social and/or cultural climate in which he operates. In what may be vaguely termed an "open" society ("open" in terms of tradition, or sociopolitical structures, mores, or attitudes generally) practically all options are available to the writer. Whether he writes about the most private ache or the most public issue, and whether

he chooses lyrical poetry or the theatre of commitment, the choice remains essentially his own. In this particular sense his freedom appears well-nigh limitless. But it is interesting to note that, in a society which tolerates the writer to the extent of leaving him free to write whatever he chooses, writing often tends to become either a process of self-indulgence or a deliberate striving after effect, through a variety of gimmicks. It is a very understandable phenomenon: a writer writes to be read, to be heard: but if he is really free to write anything or everything, chances that people will take him very seriously or pay special attention to what he says, are rather slim.

On the other hand, the writer in a "closed" or repressive society finds himself in a totally different position. And since I find myself in such a situation, my comment arise specifically from this experience.

At first sight, the writer in such a closed society—let us say, for argument's sake, the USSR, or any of a variety of Asian, South American or African countries, including my own South Africa—finds himself in a most unenviable position. Not only does he have to operate within a strict system of censorship, but he may even find himself in grave physical danger should he dare to publish anything frowned upon by his society in general or his authorities in particular. Others tend to pity him as a captive of his situation. But there is a different notion of liberty operating in this case: that curious liberty which obtains when what a man wants to do coincides with what, not only morally but existentially, he ought to do. A Jew in the Warsaw ghetto during the Second World War was expected to revolt: in order to preserve not only his dignity but in fact his life he had no choice but to revolt—and being caught up in that particular situation as an individual his own personal priority, his own most ardent wish, would have been to revolt. The historical imperative and the individual urge coincided, determining a new and exhilarating experience in liberty. The same would apply to the suppressed Black man in South Africa. And it applies, too, to the writer who finds himself beleaguered in a state of oppression. When the conspiracy of lies surrounding me demands of me to silence the one word of truth given to me, that word becomes the one word I wish to utter above all others: and at the same time it is the word my metaphysical situation, my historical situation, and my own craft demand of me to utter.

It is the direct opposite of the notion of freedom often expressed—as most recently by a South African Cabinet Minister—in terms of the freedom allowed a fish: provide the stays in water, it is argued, he is perfectly free to swim as he pleases—but the moment he leaves the water dies. The essential flaw in this argument is, of course, very simple to detect: a man is not a fish. The fish cannot think about his condition; man can. And so I inevitably demand more for a man, and of a man, than for or of a fish. My liberty as a writer lies in not accepting the condition

of water imposed on me. There is even an important advantage attached to writing in a closed system.

In a society which tolerates and "contains" the writer and leaves him totally free to "do his own thing," I have tried to indicate above, his efficacy in truly communicating with his audience is impaired. But in a situation where the word of the writer is not tolerated, everything he says acquires the impact of a deed. Words are no longer merely gestures but, in the full Sartrean sense, acts of commitment.

In such a situation the writer may be acclaimed by some and crucified by others: but whatever happens he is not being ignored. This, in turn, imposes a heavy responsibility on his conscience. For if everything he says is going to make some impact on his environment, he has to weigh doubly every word he utters in order to make as sure as is humanly possible that his perception and his account of the world is as true as he is able to render it. Accepting that words are masks of truth, he has to choose those masks so carefully and skillfully, with such a keen balance of pride and humility, that they reveal at least as much as they inevitably conceal.

What I have just said must trouble you; it is, in fact, troubling me. What repression in order for literature of love? I hold quite sincerely that a writer must suffer to be worth anything at all—but I stand at the edge of doom: I will not want to suffer what I cannot endure. We live, on the other hand, in a kind of half-way road, and that is, possibly, our trouble as Filipino writers. But for the same reason that freedom is absolute power for the writer in times when words have the impact of a bullet between the eyes, I will restate to prescribe freedom here and repression there. Under such a condition, once a word is uttered, it can create an avalanche of which we would not like to be personally responsible.

There is also that other matter of life—of simple folk in a certain situation, so that literature ceases to be a parlor pastime of bored housewives with English Lit. degrees. What, then, to do when suddenly literature becomes a very serious thing, a matter of life and death?

As writers, we can only find the answer in loneliness, knowing that at that precise moment in time, no one can write, as no one can rule, innocently. [applause]

OPEN FORUM

FRANZ ARCELLANA It's very complex, very nice. Let's drink to that. *[laughter]* The first responsibility of the writer is to write well, in whatever regime he's going to operate. A long time ago when I was starting to read, I was very fond of an American writer... I'm talking about James T. Farrell. James T. Farrell was once asked what a young writer should do to be able to write. He said: Number one, keep away from women. *[laughter]* Number two, keep away from alcohol. *[mild laughter]*. Number three, keep away from politics. Now, may I retire?

MAURO AVENA: Is that all?

ARCELLANA: Yeah, to begin with. Bien, says something.

BIEN LUMBERA: I think the topic that Adrian [CRISTOBAL] is talking about this afternoon, is something that can be viewed from the point of view of the writer, of the reader— which includes critics and literary historians like me—and also of the audience. Each time the point of view shifts, there is a difference in the emphasis. For instance, I think Adrian expressed freedom and literature from the point of view of the writer. And indeed, one can see that it is the writer who creates his freedom because after all, freedom is an abstraction until you decide to test it, you decide to assert it. And once the writer has his then he begins to realize the boundaries within which he can operate as a writer. So, he might come up against the wall of conventional moralism, against the prison wall, he might come up against a wall set up by tradition by the previous writers. In such a situation, the writer who decides to continue to write will be constantly pushing against the wall that he finds himself confronted with.

Now, when we look at the matter from the point of view of the reader, I think he will want his freedom also a fact to be considered in evaluating what a writer has produced. For instance the reader might have observed and experienced oppression. As a reader who comes to literature with certain expectations, he very frequently demands that the writer responds to his expectations. That the writer will talk about the problems he has encountered in his profession or in his life. He might want the writer to help him find the exit from the confining situation in which he finds himself.

And finally, from the point of view of the literary historian, he would want to find out how a given situation, a given historical period, affected the performance of the writer but as a craftsman and as a man who has something to say about the human condition. When the literary historian deals with a literary work therefore, he is thinking not of his personal concerns but of the concerns of society at large as these operate on the performance of the writer.

From the point of view of the writer, I suppose, he assumes that freedom is a good condition to the performance of the writer. He feels that all the conditions should be conducive to the production of a particular literary work. This obligates him to become aware of the conditions that operate on him as a writer. If the writer assumes that—as a writer—there are no laws that would bind him to a particular line of thinking to a particular set of beliefs, then he is likely not to get anywhere. Above all, it is important that he be aware of the walls, as I said earlier, that he is going to come up against one time or another. And only by becoming aware of these walls will he know how he can operate as fully and with as much integrity as he can without having to bash his head against the wall. I am talking therefore of the conditions in a particular society that the writer will reckon with each time he writes a poem or a short story. There are writers whom we know who are not even aware that there are conditions that constrain his performance as a writer. I think Adrian is correct in pointing out that under any given system, there are always restrictions that the writer will have to recognize. He might choose to go against these restrictions to his own perdition or he may choose to surrender to these second conditions and allow the conditions to shape him without any struggle on his part. I'm thinking, however, of a writer who knows the given conditions in his social setting and continues to perform as a writer. With the given limitations, he will be able to find out how he will be able to go around restrictions—if he has to—how he will be able to survive in spite of all restrictions that might put him out of existence. I think I have pontificated long enough here.

KIT TATAD: I think the lecture deserved to be written. The subject—Literature and Freedom—was, I believe, formulated by this very young crowd with the hope that his group will be able to relate his subject to the real conditions in the external world. It's the first time that I have been given the opportunity to take part in a discussion of this nature, very much the same subject, but the trouble is when one stays on the level of abstract ideas, some—*[someone said: Louder!]*—I'm very soft-spoken and I'm suffering from a crotch. What I'm saying... the trouble is when one stays on the level of abstract ideas, some are in the crowd usually stand up and say you've gone to a wake but you're not saying anything about the death. Now, I think that to have a more fruitful discussion of this subject, we can relate freedom and literature to the existing conditions of the writer in Philippine society today. I am not an expert on freedom or on literature *[laughter]* I'm an authority on nothing except my own personal experience and my own personal experience is rather limited. My inclination or my limited training has been on literature but I do not dare proclaim myself as an active writer. The last few years I write some political pieces—forgettable ones—*[laughter]* and I will probably be writing equally forgettable political pieces in the future. As I said, I'm not an authority on either subject but I'm very much alive to complaints, observations and other remarks that have been made in the last few years concerning the freedom of the writer in our society.

I believe that there are several levels on which we can deal with this subject. Somebody says that the Filipino writer is not free today. That is a categorical statement which we often hear. Then one goes on saying that eighty years ago the outlets for literary publications were closed down. That's an illustration or proof that freedom has been restricted. The *Free Press* is no longer there, the *Graphic* is no longer there, the *Women's Magazine* is no longer there, so many other publications are no longer there. And this to some writers, is resounding proof that freedom has been curtailed. But getting away from this physical evidence and trying to confront the issue of freedom for the writers in of a status of the Filipino writer trying to write today, I think it is a very real situation which you find here that you have writers and writers whose only complaint is that they are unable to write because they are not free.

I'd like to make a small point by saying that to me, a writer is one who writes. A writer is not someone who has written abstractly or one who will write in the future but I think the writer is one who writes regardless of the condition. I will agree with Bien Lumbera here that a writer creates his own freedom. He is not the product of a society that is free. I think he produces literature in spite of less than ideal conditions in society and this is what Chairman CRISTOBAL has earlier been saying. That one does not write innocently or without risks. It takes what we will provisionally call some courage to be able to assert oneself while conditions are far from ideal. But I think that the writer—in order to discharge his responsibility to literature to himself and to his readers—must test every condition that exists. Even in the situation where the society is completely or absolutely free—in the sense that the bill of rights are well-enforced, in the sense that you need not fear that a sergeant or a corporal will give you a knock on the door after you've written a piece which seems controversial—I think the writer still has to take certain risks. The very fact that one espouses an idea or seeks to introduce a proposition that would alter the hierarchy of propositions in that given society is, I think, a risk.

ADRIAN CRISTOBAL: Well, there's the case of Larry Flynt, the publisher of *Hustler*, who was shot and crippled for life. You know, if it's not the government which will kill you, it will be the Church, it will be some maniac, some fanatic. If you're going to write and you say, "Let me see, I'll write this but will I be free and if somebody reads this, will he not be angry?", you better work in a factory where you can find ideal conditions for work. You work with San Miguel [Corporation] or with Herdis Group and they will give you all the material rewards due to a professional worker. But the only guarantee when a writer writes is there is even no guarantee that he is a writer when he is writing... There is no guarantee. Some writers are better off as some things else. Writing is a kind of human perversity. You have to be crazy to be a writer. If you are going to be rational about it, get some very quiet profession like an accountant or a professor of English. [laughter] But you see, it can be both.

AVENA: What Mr. Adrian Cristobal has just said is an extension of a well-written, beautifully-phrased paper which he delivered today, which I think is a perfect apology for a writer as a self-repressed individual. I just want to ask if you are a man or a fish in the context of what you have just said about writing.

CRISTOBAL: I said we do not accept the condition of the water. I mean, if you are going to write and find out all the conditions so that you will not bang your head against the wall, then you're a fish. If that's the way you're going to write. If you want to find out all the guarantees, all the conditions so that you'll be free, comfortable, prosperous as a writer, then you're not doing any writing. You're probably doing a column or a—[laughter]

AVENA: I'm doing two columns right now. And I—[laughter]—I would like to go back to what we are discussing. You are aware or everyone has been made aware that the writer must take the risk in any regime.

CRISTOBAL: Exactly.

AVENA: Yes, but it seems to be quite hypocritical of somebody like you to keep on risk-taking on the part of the writer when in fact there are writers like you who sit in powers which oppress the writers, restrict his freedom.

CRISTOBAL: Maybe even before you learn to write, I was taking risks. Up to now the military considers me a communist because of what I have written when you were not yet writing.

AVENA: But I don't think you are a communist.

CRISTOBAL: [inaudible]

ARCELLANA: Mauro, Mauro, the traditional question is not "Are you a man or a fish?" but "Are you a man or a mouse?" Well, I am a mouse.

MODERATOR: Chairman CZ mentioned about the painful kind of torture in the public lecture but of tentimes, moderating an open forum is also a torture. So please, if—

CRISTOBAL: Wait, I want to make an exception. This is Mauro Avena.

AVENA: Yes.

CRISTOBAL: After what you've written, have you been arrested?

AVENA: No.

CRISTOBAL : So you're free

AVENA : I'm free

CRISTOBAL : But you're complaining that you're free [laughter]

AVENA : I'm not complaining. I'm taking a risk.

CRISTOBAL : The fact that you're still here —

AVENA : I'm taking risk against people like you —

CRISTOBAL : Why, what have I done to you?

AVENA : People like you who sit in government —

CRISTOBAL : What, what have I done to you?

AVENA : What have you done to the PEN Conference?

CRISTOBAL : What have I done to the PEN Conference?

AVENA : I don't know. You tell me.

NESTOR MATA : This is not exactly a question, Mr. Chairman. I listened to your lecture with interest.

CRISTOBAL : No, I stated the columnist's freedom, too

MATA : Yes, it's not because you mentioned column-writing. [laughter] As I said, I listened to your lecture with interest. But I was amused by your quotation. I think you quoted Tabara.

CRISTOBAL : Yes.

MATA : Tabara is better known as a pornographer. [laughter]

CRISTOBAL : That is not literature [laughter]

MATA : But he is better known as a pornographer.

CRISTOBAL : I don't know. Only two of his works were pornography.

MATA : But this is the question I wanted to ask you. I read somewhere — I think it was a remark made by a professor of English as you put it — it was Franz who said

it when he was asked his question in an interview and his answer was: while there are writers referring of course to Filipino writers, who are trying not to be silenced and there are those who are silenced. The question, Adrian, is: Do you agree with Professor Arcellana?

CRISTOBAL : Those who are trying to be silenced and those who are silenced?

MATA : Those who are trying not to be silenced and those who are silenced

CRISTOBAL : I always agree with Franz Arcellana. [laughter]

ARCELLANA : I should like to put the allusion in its proper context. It's something that I said in *Patmos Magazine*. I said in that interview that the writers derive a lot of inspiration from this quotation from S.P. Lopez who says "I'd rather be silenced than be silent." That's what he said.

CRISTOBAL : In other words, he'd rather die than stop speaking, because the only way to stop a writer is to kill him.

MATA : In the same context, in your [Arcellana's] reply to the question, you said that even Mrs. [Carmen Guerrero] Nikipil is trying not to be silenced. What exactly did you mean by that?

ARCELLANA : Well, she's writing. [laughter] Chitang is writing and she's writing very well.

CRISTOBAL : Let us not ponder on the illusion that when a writer is silent, something terrible has happened to him. For all you know, he's just fooling around. And he gives many reasons why he's no longer writing. There's no excuse for not writing except the excuse you give to yourself.

MATA : Referring to the remarks of Professor Lumbea, I quite agree with him that the writer must create his own freedom. And he must write within that freedom he makes for himself.

ARCELLANA : Mr. Mata, not just the writer. Every person must make his own freedom.

CRISTOBAL : Assemblyman Tatad said something which I would like to elaborate on. This creating your own freedom. With the writer, it is something else. It's trying to write well.

DORY ROBLES : Ninoy Aquino — [loud laughter] If I write something about Ninoy Aquino — a short story, a novel, or what — may I know if I will make him a hero or an anti-hero? [laughter]

CRISTOBAL : It depends on what you want. Where do you want to publish the novel? Anong tawag? Gagawin ba siyang bayani o bandido?

ROBLES : Bida o kontabida?

CRISTOBAL : Piliin mo. Saan mo ipapalimbag ang libro? Kung sa Amerika, gagawin mong hero. Kung dito, kontabida. *[laughter]* Simple 'yon. Anong palagay mo kung ano talaga siya?

ROBLES : Kung gagawin ko siyang hero, then I'll be against the policy of the government on subversion.

CRISTOBAL : Pero wala pang presidential decree na nagsasabing bandido si Ninoy.

ROBLES : Kung gagawin ko naman siyang kontabida, hindi naman manalangin sa anumang timpalak sapagkat ang pipiliin ng mga judges ay mga subversive entities lamang. *[wild laughter]*

CRISTOBAL : Gawin mong dalawa: hero at anti-hero. Mas moderno 'yon.

ROBLES : Sapagkat sakaransan ko, ang pipiliin ng mga editor at hurado ay mga subversive materials. *[laughter]* Gagawin kong hero at anti-hero. Hindi ang isinusulatay black and white. It must be black and it must be white.

CRISTOBAL : Gawin mo, black si Ninoy sa South Africa... *[laughter]* Alam ninyo, kaya maraming hurado ang pipiliin ng tinatawag mong subversive plays, hindi dahil subversive kaya pinili 'yon kundi dahil mas maganda ang pagkasulat. Nagkataon lang na tinatawag na "subversive." Alin ang pipiliin mo: iyong disubversive na pangit ang pagkasulat o'yong maganda ang pagkasulat na ang akala mo ay subversive? Kung tunay na manunulat ka, pipiliin mo muna 'yong literary value. Kung maganda ang pagkasulat, ano pa man ang sira-sabi niya, 'yan ang pipiliin mo.

VIRGILIO VITUG : Dr. Lumbera mentioned that it is the writer who creates his own freedom. And considering the situation to 25 days as specified by Assemblyman Tatal, there are physical manifestations of the restraints on writing. Now, my question is addressed to Chairman Cristobal. Can the writer truly express his freedom when he is directly under the employ of the government? Doesn't this somehow contradict... let's say, when you expose a certain kind of freedom in writing *[inaudible]* government a certain policy of the government. Doesn't the writer preempt his right to criticize, expose certain government anomalies when he is under its direct employ?

CRISTOBAL : Alright. You are telling me that if you are a writer, you cannot write anything else except politics, which I think is false. But you can. First, you can write what you want and not publish. You still write it. You can use an open name. Or you can go ahead and publish with *Who Magazine*. *[laughter]* As to whether your superior might—for example you are a chief clerk or writing for the Bureau of Broadcast like Al Cuenca—I assure you that if you write of a literary magazine it is obscure enough your superior won't even hear about it let alone understand what you're writing. Do not dramatize the matter of freedom. Our restrictions here are nothing compared to the restrictions to the South American writers. Look at Cortazar, look at Marquez... these people know what they write, they don't know when they will be shot at. Our problem with Filipino writers—I've been saying this even before martial law—is this: write one or two short stories, we're already writers, we're famous, we're acclaimed, we're read in schools, and we really took no risk. There has been no revolution for the writers to engage in. There's not even a street fight. How many of you have lived in Tondo? I would say if you're like Andy *[Andres Cristobal Cruz]* or Pic *[Pacífico Aprieto]* here who have lived in Tondo during the Japanese times for three years, where you lived with constant terror then you will know how it is to live as men. When you fight the government, do not expect it to tap you at the back. It will fight back. Make your choice. Don't be air conditioned revolutionaries.

CONRADO DE QUIROS : It's the problem of "Literature and Freedom" has two dimensions. The first one has to do with the problem of liberty and freedom. Nobody can postulate that every writer has freedom in the fundamental sense. Under certain conditions, we are not entirely possessed of the liberties one asks of liberal governments. Basically, when one writes, one makes a commitment, as one of the members of the panel pointed out. It is patently absurd to picture an order as repressive and then subsequently complain that one is being repressed. When one writes and pictures that particular order as repressive, one expects in fact to be repressed. But the fundamental freedom is that when one writes, one has to make that commitment, one has to take the responsibility for that.

The second one has to do with the exact meaning of freedom. When one says that a writer has a fundamental freedom, what does one mean? I think it is also an illusion to suppose that the writer is entirely free when he begins to write. Free in the sense that he can choose any subject he wants. That can be done by any writer. One can write about insects, about trees or about politics. When the whole problem of writing is simply to be able to produce then what we have is an assortment of writing but one would not have a literature. In my view, the creation of literature—or if one wishes, a rational literature—should be organized along certain lines. How the organization is to be done will depend on the criteria one uses. And this I think is where the problem lies.

CRISTOBAL : No one is going to applaud that? [laughter, a few applause]

AL MENDOZA: I have two questions for Assemblyman Tatal. Assemblyman **TATAD** mentioned about forgettable political pieces that he wrote. Now, my two questions are: What are the titles of these pieces? [laughter] The second one is: Why do you call them forgettable political pieces? [laughter again]

TATAD: Some friends of mine put together a collection of lectures, *Prospects of the Filipino*. Forgettable because... well, I'd like to forget about them. [laughter]

SOMEONE: Forgivable? [laughter]

CRISTOBAL : May I point out, Mr. Moderator, that when I was invited to lecture and when the panelists were invited to discuss the problems of literature and freedom, it was for a real discussion, not a trial. [laughter]

MODERATOR : Any question that will not try them?

AVENA : This is not an indictment of the Chairman of the SSS and the Writers' Union. I just want to comment that the subject, "Literature and Freedom", is rather broad. And it is good that Assemblyman—I forgot even his name [laughter], I was only kidding—Assemblyman Tatal directed the question to what is happening in the country now. When this subject comes up, the one thing that comes to your mind is that it will be related to our society because freedom is not just or does not only have personal connotation but a social one. When you relate the question of freedom and literature it will naturally draw in context writing in the Philippines in which writers exist. What I really want to say is this: If the writer takes the view that Mr. Cristobal has just taken—

CRISTOBAL : Wait a minute, what is my view? You have to tell me first.

AVENA : Your view is that as I said, alright, I'm not stating it but my question is that it is an apology for the writer to write or not to write within the context of the repressive regime—

CRISTOBAL : No, no, that's not what I said. My lecture has several points. I cited to you the number of great works which were written in prison. This is an illustration, to my mind, that imprisonment is not necessarily a restriction of the writer's freedom. That he is able to write even in prison. Second, do not accuse me of not applying my observations to the present context. I just used a different context. As a writer you should know that. But there are conditions in which to write is really to take your life in your own hands. I don't know if you agree with me but I think this is the only way to write

AVENA : Quite well taken, as I've said. Anyway, my point is that if the writer isolates himself from the context of his time, I feel that the writer is doing a disservice not only to himself as a writer but also to his fellow human being living in the context of his time.

CRISTOBAL : Yes, I agree with you, yes.

AVENA : So that if the writer would take the position that his value as a writer resides only in himself, in his ability, in his ability to write within a very limited context to conduct his self-expression, then that writer will be guilty of isolating himself from the rest of the people in this society. In other words, if the writer will be an ivory tower dweller or a mouse or a fish he would necessarily be espousing values, causes that do not bear on the problems of his society, on the realities of his society. If the writer will be an ivory tower dweller, he will write atop a tree, he will forget that there are writers who have been imprisoned and tortured, and other revolutionaries who have been imprisoned and tortured. He will forget that the greater poverty of the masses of society has not been risen to much less passed up with, by the government. He will forget a number of realities that diminish the value of human beings in this country.

CRISTOBAL : Wait a minute. You are right of course because that is the convention of the time. The committed writer—

ARCELLANA : Look, Adrian, it's wrong.

CRISTOBAL : No, no, wait a minute. You [Avena] are right from that point of view. But where will you place Hans Christian Andersen? Where will you place the writers of fairy tales? What do you do with them? Because if you do away with them in the universe of literature, you are as much of an ass as any government that you hate. There's a place for these people.

AVENA : I think they're writers.

CRISTOBAL : Why do you say they're blind? They may not be blind. They may know who is suffering but that's not where their inclination lies. They may want something else

AVENA : But writers who would write about the realities of their present situation are the ones being repressed

CRISTOBAL : What will you tell the fairy tale writers to do?

ARCELLANA : Since I have proclaimed myself a mouse, I feel myself allured to
[laughter] May I say something? Well, my quarrel with this thing... I've always
insisted, I've always said, Mauro that relevance is not necessarily reality. Now, I'd
like to think I'm engaged with reality, I'd like to think that. So, you'd like to think
that I'm an ivory towerist—

CRISTOBAL : Or a mouse...

ARCELLANA : Or a mouse. Well, it's alright if a mouse I'm a self-proclaimed
mouse. It's really all a matter of a difference in opinion. So you didn't want to
keep me from writing or discourage me from writing or call me names, you're
not going to do that.

AVENA : You call yourself that.

ARCELLANA : Right, right.

AVENA : I just want to ask you: why is relevance not reality?

ARCELLANA : It isn't reality.

AVENA : Why?

ARCELLANA : You don't have to ask me why! Ha! Ha! Ha!

AVENA : Ask you why?

ARCELLANA : Look, Mauro, if you don't know it, you'll never know it. [laughter]

AMADOR BALA : I think I want to direct one question to all writers, Filipino
writers. What should be the basic commitment of a Filipino writer in our
contemporary, present situation?

ARCELLANA : I want to answer first. You must write well.

BALA : But what is to write well?

ARCELLANA : Oh, come on. If you don't know it, you'll never know it. [laughter]

LUMBERA : One reason why we've been going around in circles is that comments
do not speak to mean. We've been talking as if—as I've pointed out in my brief
comment—one can't think of the topic in relation to the writer and in relation to
the reader. Now, the question has been asked: What should the basic commitment
of a Filipino writer be? To whom should he be committed? I think he should be
committed to his reader. Unlike Franz, I would say that what is important above

all is that the writer relates himself to his reader. Once he relates himself to his
reader, he's going to write about what concerns his reader. Now, this is something
the consideration of which is extraliterary. It has nothing to do with craft. It has
something to do with a man performing a task and he is doing it for people.
Now, once you commit yourself to people, you begin to ask the question: What
am I going to write about? Am I going to write about things that interest the
people? Or things that concern them deeply? The subject matter then can be
classified from trivial to profundities, whichever. The writer should know the
audience that he is writing for. That audience—with its concern, with its fear,
with its lack of freedom, with its hunger—will tell the writer what he should be
writing about? We've been talking about the writer and I assume that he is a
writer that he knows his craft. So it's no longer a question of writing well. It's a
question of writing about things that matter. [applause]

TATAD : I think the question is related to the idea of individual perfection. I don't
know if it is valid. It's a very big word which can mean a lot of things—

ARCELLANA : That's right, that's writing well.

TATAD : There are those who believe that writing is an act of intelligence. There
are others who believe it is an act of imagination. I think the field of writing is
large enough to accommodate either or both. Whichever it be, whether to write
well or to write big, I believe, as an individual, that man is still perfectible and a
writer is no different from the ordinary individual and writing is a vehicle in his
search for his own perfection.

CRISTOBAL : I am torn between the artistic self-indulgence of Franz
Arcellana—

ARCELLANA : It isn't self-indulgence, Adrian.

CRISTOBAL : And the manufacturing-marketing approach of Bien Lumbera. I
mean... I don't know. Why don't you ask yourself the question? Where should
the writer be committed to? To an asylum, maybe... Writing is an evolution of
your sensibility, of your intelligence. But not everybody would evolve that way.
So if you ask me what's been the best... Go ahead, you want to write because
you're crazy enough to want to write. And you didn't know whether you're going
to say god, heaven, or hell and you found out later that you wanted to do more.
So you cannot prescribe to what ideal or to what thing the writer should be
committed to. It's a personal choice.

ANDRES CRISTOBAL CRUZ : I tatanong ko ito kay Bien. Sabi ni Bien kang iraray
may tatlong level yang diskusyon, 'yang tema. Maaaring tingnan sa punto ng
writer, ng literary historian, at ng mambabasa. Ano naman 'yang tungkol sa isang
writer reading another writer? Sa palagay ko'y yan ang nangyayari ngayon.

LUMBERA: Palagay ko kapag manunulat din ang bumabasa sa akda ng kapwa manunulat, ang hahanapin niya siyempre ay 'yong kahusayan sa pagkakasulat dahil tinatantiya niya kung mahusay ba itong kapwaniya manunulat. Dahil bilang isang manunulat, meron siyang mga pamamaraan, mga pamantayang nabuo na sa pamamagitan ng praktis. Kaya hahanapin niya ito doon sa manunulat na kanyang babasahin. At waso lamang na kapag nagusap silang dalawa, ang pag-usapan nila ay iyong craft of writing dahil kapwa sila practitioners of writing. At iyon sa palagay nila kapwa ang mahalaga. Kayagusto nilang matutuhan kung paano pa nila mapahuhusay ang pagsusulat. Ngayon, kung mambabasa ang makakausap ng writer, atanong sa kanya: Ano ba ang sirabi mo sa akin? Ano ba ang sirasabi mo? Kapag itinanong 'yon, nangangahulugan lamang na hindi nakatiting sa mambabasa ang sirasabi ng manunulat. Ngayon, iyong criticay para ring writer. Kaya nga binanggit ni Hemingway, sa isang context pa, na "the critic is the worm that crawls on the body of literature"

ARCELLANA: The lice... mouse... [laughter]

LUMBERA: "The lice that crawls..." Narito ang isang manunulat na naniniwala na ang kanyang ginagawa ay naayon sa kanyang panuntunan bilang isang manunulat. At nandito naman ang isang tao na nagsasabi sa kanyang "Hindi ganyan, ito ang sulatin mo, ganito ang pagsulat!" Kaya parang lumalabas na iyong criticay parang isang parasite na pumapasok lang dahil nagkaroon nga ng isang akdang isinulat. Pero meron ding papel ang critic. Dahil kung panay lang manunulat ang nag-usap tungkol sa kanilang mga akda, ang nangyayari'y siyaan okay ay purihan. Ang critic, kung tapat siya sa kanyang gawain bilang critic, ay gagamit ng mga pamantayang labas sa personal na kagustuhan o personal na praktis ng isang manunulat. Ngayon, siyempre, madalang ang mahusay na critic—

CRISTOBAL: Wala

LUMBERA: At dahil ganito ang nangyayari, nagkaroon-lalo na sa hanay ng mga manunulat-*ng* mababang pagtingin sa critic. Hindi natin masisisi ang mga manunulat dahil sila ang nagpapraktis talaga! Yong mga critic, karaniway hindi sila nagpapraktis. Natututo lang sila kung paano ang pagsusulat, at ginagamit nila 'yong kanilang pamantayan para mahusahan ang isang manunulat.

CRISTOBAL: Mula nang ipinask ang literature sa university, nagkagulo-gulo. Ang ganda-gandang basahin ni Shakespeare pero pag pinag-aralan mo na sa university, ayaw mo nang basahin. Kung bakit masyado nilang pinahihirap Sirasabi nilang kaya ka nagbabasa, tinitingnan mo ang hanay ng mga salita. Titingnan mo ang porma. E ang ordinaryong reader ay nagbabasa dahil maganda ang istorya. Natuwa siya sa sarili niya, nalungkot siya, nalibugan siya. Hindi niya iniisip kung alin ang mga simbolismo, kung alin ang nakita niya roon. Ngayon, nagkaroon ng professionalization, nagiging professional na ang literature. Nagkaroon na ng critic. Me nagtuturo na. Hanapbuhay yan. Kaya nagkaroon ng lateral

organization. Eto ang produktong nagkaroon na ng management expert sa labaw niyan. Di ko minamasama 'yan. Iyan ang takbo ng panahon e. Ngunit alalahanin natin na literature is more fundamental than what the critic sees in the work. I don't think that Shakespeare was counting the number of foot images in *Troilus and Cressida*. Pero kung di ko nabasa ang criticism, di ko malalaman 'yon. Kung ano ang tunay na kulay ni Othello. Hindi pala itim na itim. Mula to si Othello. Me nakitang isang sentence doon, mula to si Othello. Kung sa bagay, gawain ko noong araw iyon noong wala in akong hanapbuhay. There is something a little bit dubious about overreading the work of art.

LUMBERA: Oo tara 'yan. Ako man ay naniniwala na may mga kritikong sa halip na makatulong sa manunulat at mambabasa ay lalo lamang ginugulo ang pagsusulat. Pero dapat din nating linawin na posibleng nagkaroon ng ibang dejective ang critic. Kung tayo ra gustong linawin ng isang critic ang isang akda para sa mga mambabasa, kailangang mag-ing madaling maunawaan ng mambabasa ang kanyang pamamaraan at tumulong siya sa pagpapal ng mambabasa sa isang akda. Kapag ang criticay dumakora sa tulad ng sirabi mo—nagbibilang na ng mga images, metaphors— at ang tingin pinag-uukulan ng pansin ay ayong mga bagay-bagay na interesante lamang para sa isang manunulat o kapwaniya kritiko hindi nga siya nakatutulong sa pagpapal ng panitikan.

ALBERTO FLORENTINO: May nagsabi sa akin na ang mga writer daw sa group ay ang second government—

ARCELLANA: Third. Si Sidzenit shyn, sirabi 'yon.

FLORENTINO: The writer exists only if he exists against the government or establishment. Well, may nag-i-establish ng theory na dito raw sa ating gobyerno ngayon ay meron daw 193 writers. Is it something we should be proud of, I mean, for almost half of the writers skipto the other camp. Ang natitira lamang on the other camp are writers who are not writing.

CRISTOBAL: Alam mo ang maganda sa gobyerno, walakang masyadong trabaho. Magakatulad ko [laughter]

LILIA QUINDOZA SANTIAGO: I think we are now going into a consensus. I think there is a consensus among the panelists that the writer is free—as far as they can write, get open and... The problem arises when we examine the way in which this freedom is exercised. For instance, a writer like many of us here who are in the employ of government exercises half freedom to write memorandum [laughter] and others also who exercise freedom by writing for the underground papers. I think the problem again arises when we examine the nature of writing. Because I think that to a certain extent, writing is for self-expression. But I have reservations regarding that observation. Because once you start publishing, once

you have your work published the act of writing already becomes a social act and you have a social responsibility to those people who read what you write. In other words, when I write about insects and snails and dogs, probably my readers will admire what I write about dogs.

CRISTOBAL : Wait a minute, there are those who want to read about snails and dogs.

SANTIAGO : That's right. But the question now is : how far can I carry my social responsibility as a writer?

CRISTOBAL : That's the quantitative approach. Kasi, you cannot write for everybody. Impossible! You cannot write for all time. You can write for your time and maybe if it survives, it will be for all time. But you cannot say "I'll write for the entire humanity!" It's impossible! We speak different languages for one thing. Translations are not easy to come by. And you cannot say you write for the entire Filipino people. You cannot. You cannot do that. There is no power in literature that can give you a formula by which you could write for the entire Filipino people. You write for the readers who need you. Most of the time, you just write and then you find out that there is a certain breed of readers who like you. Then if you like them, you begin writing for them.

ARCELLANA : In any case, Adrian, literature is never written from the formula.

CRISTOBAL : There is no formula. Accident, yan e. The meeting of the writer and the reader is like St. Paul in Damascus. You read to all. Meepiphany, yan. You like the reader, the reader likes you. Then you have a community. That is your universe.

SANTIAGO : I agree that a writer cannot write for all times and for all. However, we accept also that there is a difference in the consciousness of a writer so that when I was born in the 1950s perhaps and grew up in the 1970s or through the 80s, I am aware of three conditions existing in the social milieu. And I think that my consciousness should prod me to write about things within that span of time.

CRISTOBAL : Alright. Okay. So what's bugging you?

SANTIAGO : What's bugging me is the fact that given those conditions, given the situation in our society—from the 50s to the 70s—of which I am a part and in the 1980s I still write about dogs and insects. I think that should be tantamount to being a traitor to my time.

CRISTOBAL : No. The fact is that you don't want to. You don't want to do that, do you?

SANTIAGO : No.. that's it.

CRISTOBAL : So what's the problem? If you think you don't want to do it, don't do it!

CERES ALABADO : I write children's literature. I want to ask a question regarding writers of children's literature. Halimbaw ang 'yong mga sinulat nina Hans Andersen, hindi mo mailalagay sa tinitukoy ni Mr. Avena dahil sa mga fairy tales 'yon at mga fantasy. Ngunit maaaring ikobang tanungin sa inyo kung hindi maaaring maisama 'yon doon sa pagkatag ibang fairy tales ka mukhang kay Andersen ay mayroong mga mahahalagang kahulugan, may relevance' ka nga, sa present condition? For example, *The Emperor's New Clothes*.

CRISTOBAL : So kung sinulat ni Hans Andersen ang mga 'yon in the relevant language of our times, makukulang siya sa mga stories niya.

ALABADO : Kaya nga, kahit ra fairy tales of fantasy. Ang siguro lang na walang relevance o kaya hindi maaaring isama sa tinitukoy ni Mr. Avena ay ka mukhang halimbaw ang mga kuwentong pambata—maski ra nakatatanda na tungkol sa Forbes Parko sa Bel-Air na ipapabasa sa mga bata sa Tondo. Iyon, 'ka nga, ay talagang fantastic.

CRISTOBAL : Ang defect ng formulation ng strictly social relevance ang epektong nonistat hinaharap nila ang kalaban nang salpakan. He doesn't take account of satire. Ang satire kunwari ay ita ang pinag-uusapan pero meron kang tinitulig sa sa harap mo. And that is the content of fairy tales.

ALABADO : That's it. Andersen belongs to that—

CRISTOBAL : That is the wonder filthing about repressive society— it tests your satirical power. [laughter] Kung wala niyan, kung lahat ra sabi mo, walang kuwenta sa writer' yan. Kailangang makalarang ka. But if you don't know satire kawawakang writer.

ALABADO : You can write about insects, bees.. and still be political.

ARCELLANA : Exactly.

AVENA : Ang problema sa fairy tales, pag nagsulat ka nang nagsulat tungkol sa mga tuta, hindi lalabas. [laughter]

CRISTOBAL : Ang problema sa mga fairy tales na sumulat, hindi maintindihan.

ALABADO : Kahit hindi maintindihan, lalabas 'yon.

CRISTOBAL : Pag hindi maintindihan. Ang hirap sa 'yo, gusto mo, maintindihan ka para matanghal ka. Hindi ganon ang paglaban.

SOMEONE : I think one reason for our difficulty in defining the term "freedom" is because there is a feeling of distrust on the writers before who used to write freely and who have now become administration apologists. [laughter] Our mentors—

CRISTOBAL : Before you go on, have you read anything under my byline that apologizes for the government?

SOMEONE : I'm not referring to you. [laughter]

CRISTOBAL : No, no. Apologists are everywhere. You can apologize for a cause which you think is right. You do that too. That's why my point is that literature is a poor servant. If you are serving a cause through literature, you are no damn writer, you are a propagandist. You should serve only the ends of literature.

SOMEONE : There is also no denying that there are some writers now— 39

CRISTOBAL : That is their choice. They become propagandists.

SOMEONE : Yeah, freedom is there. It involves what you choose as a writer. But the question is, you know, you look at a person, you look at a writer, who used to write unfettered and then all of a sudden, you see there is a shift in feeling and ideology and in principle perhaps so would we ask ourselves: whatever happened to our mentors? Where should we go? Where should we stand?

CRISTOBAL : You mean writers are also heroes? Have you not written at anytime against your will or against your principle? Can you say that honestly to me? If you are writing for a private corporation, do you write freely? It's only when you write your own story that you're free.

SOMEONE : That's the point, ah, Mr. Chairman. I think some writers have become more as public relations of firms for private companies and the government.

CRISTOBAL : Yes!!! So it is an honorable calling. [laughter]

SOMEONE : That's it! That's it! While we used to see them before you know, writing and saying something differently, now they—

CRISTOBAL : They are not going to change their minds after ten years?

SOMEONE : I don't know. I think—

CRISTOBAL : The tragedy of the writer is that he gets married [laughter] Now, somebody there is writing revolutionary poems. Can he write against Menz?

SOMEONE : I don't know but I know some writers who have no access to— [tape off]

CRISTOBAL : But under a free society, if you are writing for a publication, for an editor, you are not writing as freely as you think you are. The way to do it is to have your own printing press.

SOL MENDOZA : May iba akong tatanungin. Tungkol naman sa wika at ang kaugrangan nito sa "Literatura at Kalayaan." Siguro naman, alam nating lahat na halo-halo tayorito. May Filipino writer. Kayo ay isang English writer, marami rin dito ang Filipino writer. Ang tanong ko: Sa palagayko, ang literatura natin ngayon ay hindi ganap na malaya dahil sa ang pamahalaan o ang mga nasa poder ay kumakandili sa English language. Inisip ko na marahil, kung kakandiliin ng pamahalaan ang pagsusulat sa Filipino, ito ay magiging isang subersibong bagay dahil ito ay may maintindihan ng maraming tao, ng mahihirap na tao, na maaaring maging dahilan ng maraming bagay. Balagaykorin—

CRISTOBAL : Mali ka. Mali ang basamo.

MENDOZA : Teka, hindi pa 'kotapos. Ito ay isang subersibong bagay pa rin sa inyo dahil kung lalaganap ang pagsusulat sa Filipino, at matatabunan ang pagsusulat sa Ingles, wala na kayo. Ano ang palagay ninyo dito sa—

ARCELLANA : That's not true either.

CRISTOBAL : Hindi. Walang comparison ang gobyerno. Nakita mo 'yong awards ng CCP—may Tagalog, may Ilokano, may Pampango, may Ingles-hindi puro Ingles. Hiratiyan. Hindi mo maaaring inalalis ang Filipino. At kung kami ay wala na matagal na naging alam na wala na kami. At kayo naman ngayon. [laughter]

MENDOZA : Hindi nga. Mas maraming bagay pa rin ngayon, ang tira tangkilikay pagsusulat sa Ingles. Katulad ninyo.

CRISTOBAL : Hindi! Hindi tayo oo'yan. Hindi tira tangkilikay *panitikan*, hindi lang pati Ingles o Tagalog.

MENDOZA : Bakit hindi? Sino ang babasa ng mga sinulat mo kung walang tatangkilik sa iyo?

CRISTOBAL : Problema mo na 'yon. Gusto mong maging writere.

MENDOZA : I tiratanong ko sa iyo, sagutin mo.

CRISTOBAL : Bakit ko sa sagutin 'yon para sa 'yo?

MENDOZA : Okey' yang para sa akin, okey lang.

CRISTOBAL : I have my own solution. Sabi mo'y walang kuwenta ang Ingles, mawawala na? O siges, pasensiya.

MENDOZA : Magpasensiyahan tayo.

CRISTOBAL : Pero di kami makikipaglaban na magaling ang Ingles sa Tagalog.

CONRADO DE QUIROS : I would just like to present a perspective within which I hope to situate the many problems today. I am assuming in the first place that the purpose of writing is the creation of a literature—a literature which the community can subscribe to. On this assumption, I'm saying that the writer does not proceed from *tabula rasa* that is to say, he is not at the time of writing purely free from the sources influencing him. Basically, many of our writers today come from the class we describe as petit bourgeois. And these writers have been raised from the school system which are the purveyors of the culture which are alienated. We all know of the concept of colonial mentality and this is the culture which pervades today in the Philippines. Because of this alienated culture, I think the writer must take a conscious effort to liberate himself as well as his readers in order to create a true community of writing, a literature. How this conscious effort should be taken, I think, is the problem. One may write explicit political tracts or one may not. In either case, one may also be exercising his conscious effort to attack colonial culture. I was thinking in particular of the comments related to fairy tales. When one attacks his colonial culture, one may do this in terms of purely political tracts or in other writings such as fairy tales. But never the less, this is something fundamentally different from writing about the sampaguitas or acacia trees, rather than fairy tales. So the point is that a conscious effort has to be taken.

FLORENTINO : I have a manuscript entitled *Literature and the Freedom* by a writer who wouldn't speak here this afternoon. Well, I told him we're ready to publish him and he said he refused to submit it to the Print Media Council because that is a form of censorship. So I told him that President Marcos in an extemporaneous speech has exempted works of literature and that his need not be submitted for an imprimatur of the Council and must instead be submitted to the Writers' Union of the Philippines for certification that this is a work of literature. But he refused to even write a letter to the Writers' Union because

even this act of writing is a form of censorship or subservience. How free are we to write—maybe we are free to write—but how free are we to publish? Since martial law, some writers have been writing furiously and putting them under drawers, waiting for better times. Now we have to make distinction between those who write and those who publish. So, alright, I'll get them published. Is this a political act as writing and keeping them in drawers? How free are we to publish?

CRISTOBAL : The policy of the Print Media Council is that you should submit the manuscript to them, is that so? Alright now. We're editor and this form of censorship by making the Writers' Union responsible, by formal certification. I grant this is a form of censorship in the sense that we will have to decide whether this is a work of art or not. If in the case of S.P. [Lopez], I suppose because of tradition and reverence for age, it will be automatically labelled as literature. But as I said, it's his personal feeling. I can understand why he thinks this is a form of censorship. From his point of view, yes, I agree with him. But from my point of view, it's better for the manuscript to come through me than to the Print Media Council.

TATAD : When I was Minister of Information, there was a time when I was chairman of the Mass Media Council. It was a time when there was actual censorship, meaning to say, we were passing upon copies before they got printed. Now, after the Mass Media Council, we have the Media Advisory Council and then this Print Media Council. The Print Media Council is supposed to be the implementation of liberalized policy. In my time, Renato Constantino came to me because he wanted to publish a book. I said: I do not want to read your book. I think you should go right ahead and publish it. Still Renato was hesitant to go right ahead without a note from me so I issued him a note saying I have no objection to publish it. What I'm saying at that time is that it does not look very good for a literary work to carry lengthy introduction saying "Passed upon and approved by the Print Media Council." So even then, the policy was to let these things go—scientific journals, literary works.

FLORENTINO : As it is now, the book is not being published because any publisher would want an imprimatur—he does not want to take the risk as a publisher. Of course, S.P. is willing to take risk but not the publisher.

CRISTOBAL : But you are

FLORENTINO : No. No. I'm not the publisher.

CRISTOBAL : A simple note saying "O.K., go ahead." It should suffice. But I really think that S.P. is dramatizing this. If he is dramatizing it, he can go ahead and publish.

PATRICIA MELENDRES-CRUZ: Yes, but even a simple imprimatur will not necessarily absolve—

CRISTOBAL: No, there will be no imprimatur. But why do you want to write something that will be approved by the

MELENDRES-CRUZ: That's exactly what I'm trying to say. That even with his certification from the Print Media Council or from any government agency will not be a guarantee of the risk the writer is going to take eventually. So that he may or may not choose to submit the manuscript.

CRISTOBAL: Yes, that's right.

MELENDRES-CRUZ: If it is published, then he'll be passed judgment upon.

ANDRES CRISTOBAL CRUZ: Siyuro, katulad din ng kaso ng isang presidente ng isang university. Well, nagkataan na ako ang direktor ng Bureau of Standards for Mass Media. Itoy ay kilalang pangulo ng isang kilalang university. Emeron siyang tawel, magi-speech siya. Ipinadala ba naman sa akin ang salit'y bigyan ko ng imprimatur. Tirawagan ko at sirabi kong kayo naman ay Filipino. Siyuro'y nasa hustong gulang naman tayo. Edi sabihin mo ang gusto mong sabihin at pangutanan mo ang gusto mong sabihin. Edi isinoli ko'yung manuscript. Alas, magalit! Dahil hindi raw ako marunong mag-comply sa ipinatatupad. Edi interpretasyon niyan... asa interpretasyon natin kung ano ang gusto mong gawin. Pero ang mas mahalaga, sabi ko sa kanya, huwag kang magalit sa akin. Magalit an mo ang sarili mo dahil hindi ka makawala sa paniniwala na kailangan mo ang akinyang approval. Nakalis din siya at magalit siya. Ewan ko lang kung maganda 'yong kanyang ano, dahil sa pagkakataon ko, hindi naman napaka... nangyayari na ang 'yong isinulat.

ARCELLANA: Itola 'yung Dillingham Lecture

CRUZ: Ha? Itoy ay pangulo ng isang kilalang unibersidad.

SOMEONE: Huwag na nating sabihin..

MODERATOR: One last question.

ARCELLANA: Last, one last question.

CRISTOBAL: They have ran out of beer.

MODERATOR: No, we have more beer.

RODOLFO DESUASIDO: After listening to Mr. Cristobal's lecture I had the

impression that he was trying to justify repression since he mentioned that great masterpieces were written under extremely hard conditions. So by its own logic, repression is a good incentive for writers to be able to write great works of literature [laughter]

CRISTOBAL: I'm not justifying it. By means, good, yes. But I'm not saying we must be repressed. What I'm saying is good, yes.

DESUASIDO: Repression is always justifiable.. since—

CRISTOBAL: No, I'm not justifying it. I have told you about a condition. Now, tama, you said you had the impression that I'm justifying it. It is only an impression because you were not listening to my speech. I said that I hesitate to prescribe this but this is the way it is. I said I am not prescribing because this is an individual choice of a writer. It doesn't mean that you cannot produce masterpieces if you are in an open society. How many masterpieces have been produced in the United States? It's an open society. But if you are here—*nandito ka na*, you feel repressed, do the best you can. *Ayaw mo rito, pumunta ka sa Amerika, kumuha ka ng green card, doon ka magsulat, dahil open society' yan.* Kung ayaw mong closed society rito, if you feel you are repressed, you have two choices: you write as best as you can or you fight.

DESUASIDO: So what do you—

CRISTOBAL: Huwag kang hihingi sa akin ng advice [laughter]

DESUASIDO: Then what is it?

CRISTOBAL: It's a policy guidance. It's not an advice. Kung ganito o ganon. Kung ano ang gusto mong gawin. Alam mo kung saan ka pupunta.

DESUASIDO: I think the writers should know by now that they should know better than holding lectures like this because—

CRISTOBAL: Tama! Tama rin' yon. Well, if you come to this lecture expecting the gospel to be the truth, ano ang gagawin natin, huwag ka nang magpunta sa ganong lecture. Dahil no one can live your life for you. If at any moment in your young, mature life, asaka sa ibang tao, habambuhay mo, asaka na lang. The writer's craft is a lonely one—walang farms, walang formula. You hang or you survive by yourself.

ARCELLANA: One good thing about a thing like this is you get to see very nice pictures. Just look around you [referring to the paintings on the walls of the gallery].

CRISTOBAL : Ang problema mo, problema rin ng anak ko. I brought my daughter with me. Sabi rin niya sa akin after reading my speech: "Papa, wala ka namang resolution. Hindi mo ni-resolve ang question." How dare I? I cannot resolve this for many writers of many different temperaments. Kung magagawa ko'yan e di maga-Agpa na akd

ARCELLANA : And besides, Adrian, you could do it, you could lecture

CRISTOBAL : Oo, I would lecture again. *[himself laughing]*

ROBLES : This is in connection with your novel writing contest last year. May I know why the Board of Judges failed to select the winning entry?

CRISTOBAL : E naghahanap kami ng nobela e ang mga dumating pamphlets, short stories, mga... walang nobelang... hindi na magandang nobela-nobela nang ang hinahanap namin, wala. So next year, ang prize P150,000 na in the hope na merong nobelang darating sa amin.

ROBLES : Susmar yosep! Ibig n'yong sabihin, ang mga manunulat na napakarami dito sa Metro Manila'y di nakakaintindi kung what is a novel? *[laughter]*

CRISTOBAL ! Yung mga nagbigay. Kung nagbigay ka -

ROBLES : Yung nag-submit ng isang short story for a novel contest, that's incredible! *[more laughter]*

CRISTOBAL : Meron bang nobelang anim na pahina?

SOMEONE : Baka out line, gis.

CRISTOBAL : Well, maybe mali ako, maybe sarevolutionary novel Di ko lang maintindihan dahil anim na pahina e.

VITUG : Doc sa artikulo ni Chairman Cristobal sa *Panorama*, sabi niya na ang nagyari doon sa writers sa 70s ay parang the writers today. Nagbigay siya ng maraming halimbawa ng mga writer na napunta sa iba't ibang larangan. Halimbawa, may nagpunta sa periodismo, 'yong iba'y nag-ing PR. Sakaniyak ayang pagsulat ng artikulong 'yon, na saliksik kaya niya kung bakit 'yong mga writer na 'yon ay huminto sa pagsusulat ng creative writing at pumunta sa ibang larangan? Is it merely a question of survival ot alagang-

CRISTOBAL : Hindi kakikita e. Background namin, fictionists, no? *[laughter]* Paano kakikita? How many short stories can you publish a month? E you cannot write every month. Or if you can write every month, hindi ka naman ipa-publish ng magazine every month. Ano'ng bigay? P300, P150. P300 a month, me pamilya

ka, paano 'yon? Ha? So it's simple economics. Ngayon, ang writer papasok sa alam niyang trabaho. Hindi ka puwedeng magabogab, mag-doktor... so pupunta ka doon sa linya mo. Mag-sulat ka ng advertising copy, press releases, features sa gobyerno, wala ka, wala kang magagawa. Pagdating ng para sa iyo, wala kang panahon. Panahon talaga ang wala ka. Ang ibal na writer, sabi nga ni Baudelaire, maging manager kang isang casa-casa de puta. Nandoon, nakaupo ka lang maghapon, everybody calls you "Mister", walakang mayadong trabaho, nakakasulat ka. Pero kung maghahanap buhay ka bilang manunulat, purong creative na manunulat talagang mapipilitan kang maghanap ng ibang hanapbuhay. At doon mag-uumpisa ang mga problema mo bilang isang manunulat- panahon, pressure sa iyo ng opisina. Masuwerte ka kung pag Sabado'y makakasulat ka. Kung ikaw naman ay sinusuwerte dahil sa kagalingan mo, kagitingan mo, o ano pa, nagkaroon ka ng maliit na books or *[laughter]* nag-ing English professor ka - pero maraming problema ang English professor dahil kung marami ang teaching load mo, walakaring panahon. So, kuwan lang 'yan, it's really economics.

MELENDRES-CRUZ : Kung ira, sirabi ra ang freedom ay ra sa individual and the individual extends to the image -

CRISTOBAL : I did not say it.

MELENDRES-CRUZ : A, ra sa interpretasyon 'yan. Na ang individual could extend the image of one's own freedom. So it becomes then an obligation on the part of the individual to assert and fight for that particular freedom. Kung lahat ay o may ganitong pananagutan, so could I ask the Assemblyman with us: As an Assemblyman, has the existing IEP [Interim Batasang Pambansa] in a way extended the limits of our freedom if this freedom is indeed circumscribed? Has there been an attempt to extend the limits of our freedom?

TATAD : What do you mean by "our freedom"?

MELENDRES-CRUZ : The social freedoms, the individual freedoms guaranteed by our Constitution. I would like to take a particular case where in the Education Bill of 1980 seems to curtail rather than extend the very minimal freedom we are already enjoying.

TATAD : Well, the Assembly will be known for its acts, not on the pronouncements of its individual members. So with respect to the action of the Assembly on this particular bill, Education Act of 1980, it is too early to make any judgment because it's still under debate. What is very bothersome is that the Minister of Education is intent on pushing this through and people like me are trying to make sure that if it passes the Batasan, it is at least an acceptable bill. Many of us there, a good number of us there do not see the need for this bill. We are not so sure that education will be made better with this bill. What I can say at this stage is that this bill will not go through unopposed and if we are defeated, it's only because

there is a preponderant majority. But it is far from the rub that some people would like others to believe. [pause]

I have one question to Chairman Cristobal. I want to ask him to elaborate on his earlier statement that marriage is the downfall of a writer. [laughter]

CRISTOBAL : It would not be so bad if you don't intend to have children. But of course, we can hope that the children will write better than you, an extension of your mortality.

ARCELLANA : Immortality.

CRISTOBAL : Mortality. I think it's time. The great enemy is time. It's best for the writer really to be imprisoned for ten years but be provided with an IBM typewriter and paper...

CRISTOBAL CRUZ : Pakiusap! Maaari ka, Assemblyman, na dahil sa P.D. [Presidential Decree] 'yung tungkol sa PCPM, maaari kang tumayo ang ibang miyembro ng Assembly at sabihing "Ang Itinatara'y, huwag n'yong isalaring sa PCPM!" o kaya, wala nang PCPM, PCPM!

TATAD : Actually, merong panukalang batas, Andy, na humihingi ng ma-abolish ra 'yung PCPM mismo. Mangyari, kung pipag-uusapan natin ang censorship, ano, sira sabi nating walang censorship, dahil hindi naman tinitingnan ang kopya bago malathala / no? Pero ang tayo, ang censorship ay nararoon. Not everyone can publish. You cannot run a newspaper even if you have the money before you can publish a newspaper, you have to secure it through this body.

CRISTOBAL : Tara 'yan. Because the issue in, and, in John Newton's time was the licensing of the printing press. Don nagkagulo 'yung license mismo, pag me lisensiyaka that means you are not free

ARCELLANA : Did you know that the President [Ferdinand Marcos] exempted all the literary works from the PCPM when he met with the writers last September? He told us.

SOMEONE : That's all verbal.

ARCELLANA : He solved it. All literary works for approval from PCPM.

MELENDRES-CRUZ : But it has to be published. And it is in the publication where the publisher has to get a permit.

ARCELLANA : The publisher must be told that his thing is exempt.

SOMEONE : He won't believe you.

CRISTOBAL : Bakit 'yong *The Ravens*, walang permit 'yon. Me subversive poem paroon.

MELENDRES-CRUZ : Espano, e the Chairman Cristobal is the—

CRISTOBAL : Ba, hindi—

CRISTOBAL CRUZ : Ang editor ang managad. Kung mayroon nang tularoong subversive e sasagutin ko

TATAD : Kaya ba napilay ang editor? [laughter; Tatad was referring to Andres Cristobal Cruz's arm sling]

CRISTOBAL CRUZ : It's an ideological fracture

CRISTOBAL : Saka ang paglaban sa kalupitan ay hindi lang 'yong paglaban na merong kanyon o bunguan. Kaya I was referring to satire. Maraming klaseng paglaban. Nasatalino na ng manunulat 'yon. Kung alam mo lang gamitin ay palat sira, mag-aral ka ng stileto

TATAD : Kung minsan naman, mas madaling palundagin ang kalaban kung sasabit ka sa kanya. [laughter]

MODERATOR : In behalf of the Galian sa Arte at Tula and all those who are here today, we would like to thank the panelists for the insights they gave us on the problems of literature and freedom. [applause]

Wakas