PAGE TWO

IN YOUR WORDS

Obama focuses attention on Xi

It's not surprising that he'd pay more attention to the leadership than the populace since it's the leadership that's in firm control of China and all its military and economic power for the foreseeable future. So far, they've managed to avoid a late-Soviet-style collapse, and they have no intention of opening up to the point of risking one.

L.W., *MOUNTAIN VIEW, CALIF.*

America's actions prove that when calling for restraint and civil rights what they mean is you can do anything you want to your citizens as long you play ball with our economic empire.

LISBON ANTIGUA, PORTUGAL

Guccifer's ill-fated hacking spree

It's notable that even with billions of dollars in technology the N.S.A. couldn't catch an already known hacker (the Romanians found him) who had little technology, money, training or resources.

MICHAEL OLENICK, *PARIS*

I'm much more concerned about paranoid sociopaths violating my privacy or thieves stealing from me than I am about the government spying on me.

SUZIE SIEGEL, *TAMPA, FLA.*

The Internet still suffers from a technology that assumes everyone is honest and will treat everyone else honorably — a technology that made at least a little sense before our bank accounts and personal lives became connected to the entire world. We all need a more secure system. Our Social Security numbers (or national identity numbers in other countries) can no longer be depended upon to correctly identify us and not someone else. It's uncommonly easy for someone who is up to no good to look up our mother's maiden name, or where we went to high school.

MURPH, *EASTERN CONNECTICUT*

See what readers are talking about and leave your own comments at nyt.com

IN OUR PAGES

International Herald Tribune

1914 King Opens 'Khaki' Parliament

LONDON History was made to-day [Nov. 11] when King George opened the "Khaki Parliament." Although shorn of some of its wonted splendor on account of the war and the fact that so many members of the Royal household are serving with the colors, the scene to-day in the House of Lords was an impressive one, the pomp and circumstance of the State procession tinged with melancholy by the half-mourning which was worn as a sign of the nation's bereavement for those who have fallen fighting. The Royal progress through the streets, lined with khaki-clad troops, was made to the accompaniment of the cheers of crowds.

1964 Monnet Meets With de Gaulle

PARIS Jean Monnet, chief proponent of a "United States of Europe," met today with its chief opponent, President Charles de Gaulle, to discuss the current crisis in the Common Market. Coming during a confrontation between France and West Germany over agriculture, the meeting stirred much speculation. Upon leaving the Elysée Palace, Mr. Monnet told reporters: "I don't think the Franco-German difficulties are insoluble. A solution could be found in Brussels." Then he added with a laugh: "I repeat that what I'm saying does not reflect the conversation I've just had with Gen. de Gaulle."

Find a retrospective of news from 1887 to 2013 at iht-retrospective.blogs.nytimes.com

In Paris, a photo spectacle

MO YI/GALERIE PARIS-BEIJING

Mo Yi, "Prisoner, No.1," 1997

CITY OF IMAGES The 18th edition of Paris Photo — the annual gathering of some of the world's best photography under one roof for one long weekend — opens Thursday at the Grand Palais with work from 143 galleries representing 35 countries. The art ranges from sharp social commentary, like Mo Yi's "Prisoner," left, to artfully rendered journalism, like Jérôme Sessini's "Kiev," below.

JÉRÔME SESSINI/MAGNUM GALLERY

Jérôme Sessini, "Kiev, Ukraine," 2014

MANUEL VILARIÑO/CARLOS CARVALHO ARTE CONTEMPORÂNEA

Manuel Vilariño, "Al Despertar," 2011

TODD HIDO/A GALERIE PARTICULIÈRE/GALERIE FOUCHER-BIKAISE

Todd Hido, "#10474," 2013

PHILIPPE GULONIE/MYOP/EDITIONS FILIGRANES

Philippe Gulonie, "Bourgas, Bulgarie," 2004

BOOKISH Paris Photo is also a showcase for publishers and book dealers. Above, from left, Manuel Vilariño's "Al Despertar," 2011, from his book "Ruinas al Despertar"; a portrait by Todd Hido, author of several books of photography; and a photo from Philippe Gulonie's new book, "Swimming in the Black Sea."

True power lies in hands of military

Adam Nossiter

LETTER FROM AFRICA

CONAKRY, GUINEA The fall of the Burkina Faso strongman Blaise Compaoré on Oct. 31 has raised hopes that other African leaders will reconsider their own power grabs, but there's little to suggest that what happened there will be repeated elsewhere.

There is a long list of African leaders who have not just fiddled with their country's constitutions to prolong their time in office, but have abused their positions to enrich themselves and their entourages and trample on the basic rights of their citizens.

It was those types of abuses that prompted thousands to take to the streets of the Burkina capital, Ouagadougou, two weeks ago, just as they had done in the past. This time, however, Mr. Compaoré was forced out.

But Burkina Faso seems unlikely to become a model for the many other African countries where citizens are oppressed by unjust rule, for reasons that the unfolding events in Ouagadougou are making clear.

The uprising in Burkina Faso has morphed into a military takeover.

The army didn't step in when citizens set fire to the Parliament building. It didn't intervene on behalf of the onetime officer who had seized power on its behalf 27 years before. Now, perhaps inevitably, it is the army that is in control in Burkina Faso, and its leaders are already showing a taste for the high life that comes with running an African state.

The principal officer in charge, the American-trained Lt. Col. Isaac Yacouba Zida, has made it clear that he does not want to step down anytime soon. He has little use for the newly censorious African Union, which sanctioned Mr. Compaoré's autocratic rule for years. The popular uprising has morphed into a military takeover — which is what it may have been all along, given the army's failure to stand by Mr. Compaoré.

It is a lesson repeated over and over on a continent where institutions are weak and the men with the guns are the ultimate arbiters. It was the military that brokered civilian rule in Guinea and Niger in the past four years. As long as the man at the top is in the military's good graces, he has nothing to fear. But should he cross military leaders or fail to keep them happy, his days will be numbered.

Certainly, there is discontent with injustice and corruption all over the continent — in Nigeria, for instance, where there have been brief flashes of mass mobilization over the past several years. But the president there, Goodluck Jonathan, has been careful not to antagonize the military. There is no condemnation for corruption or large-scale human rights abuses in the north, where the military is supposed to be waging a counterinsurgency campaign against Boko Haram.

The Nigerian military's huge budget, which allows high-ranking officers to live comfortably, goes unchallenged. And its abuses are far beyond the reach of the law in Nigeria.

Similarly, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, President Joseph Kabila hardly utters a word about his army's crimes in the east. He and his supporters are moving to change the country's Constitution to allow him another term; if there are demonstrations against such a move, his security forces will almost certainly crack down with impunity.

When Mr. Compaoré said last year that "a street demonstration has never blocked the creation of a law" — in this case, a law that would have allowed him to stay in power — he may have been unknowingly prophetic, at least partly. The demonstrations led to his ouster, but it also brought in a military officer, an echo of his own brusque coup-born ascension from the middle ranks in 1987.

As for leaders who might voluntarily step down in the face of popular pressure, even before the army's intentions are known — don't count on it. There is barely any precedent for this on the continent.

As political scientists have pointed out, there is little percentage, financially, in being in the opposition in Africa. On the contrary, anyone truly in the opposition cuts himself off from the biggest cash cow on offer: the African state. The richness of that potential booty is the very reason Mr. Compaoré and his peers, over and over, seek to extend their tenures in perpetuity.

EMAIL: *pagetwo@nytimes.com*

Jerry Tallmer, theater critic who created the Obies, dies at 93

BY DOUGLAS MARTIN

Jerry Tallmer, who brought professionalism and a personalized approach to arts coverage to The Village Voice in its earliest days, and who dreamed up its award for Off Broadway theater, the Obie, died on Sunday in Manhattan. He was 93.

OBITUARY

His death was confirmed by his daughter, Abby Tallmer.

The Village Voice would become the model for scores of alternative weeklies, but at its founding in 1955, its midwives thought mainly of giving expression to the sizzling postwar Greenwich Village scene. The barrooms and coffee houses buzzed with the urgent discourse of painters defining Abstract Expressionism, and of writers kindling the language of an odd, provocative new generation, the so-called Beats. The ghost of the recently departed Eugene O'Neill loomed large.

Mr. Tallmer recruited writers like Nat Hentoff and Andrew Sarris, who would both be mainstays of The Voice for many years, as well as the cartoonist Jules Feiffer. But his most visible contribution was putting new focus on the percolating downtown theater scene, in churches, lofts and makeshift theaters, with reviews he wrote or assigned for The Voice. By the third issue, Mr. Tallmer had an idea: an awards show to celebrate this new theater, and in the process draw attention to The Voice as sponsor.

He tentatively named the prizes the Village Voice Theater Awards, but decided that lacked pizzazz. So were born the Obie Awards, or Obies, a name derived from the first letters of the words Off Broadway and meant to mirror the Emmy and the Tony.

Obies were boosts to the early careers of actors like Al Pacino, Dustin Hoffman and Meryl Streep; writers like Samuel Beckett, Jean Genet and Sam Shepard; and directors like Harold Prince and Alan Arkin. Mr. Tallmer ran the Obies from 1956 to 1962.

"When The Voice decided to embrace Off Broadway, the paper put the new theater movement on display for the first time," Kevin Michael McAuliffe wrote in "The Great American Newspaper," his 1978 book about The Voice.

The Village Voice was the brainstorm of the World War II veterans Edwin Fancher and Dan Wolf, both students on the G.I. Bill at the New School, the epicenter of the Village's crackling intellectual life. All they needed was money. Mr. Wolf sought out his friend Norman Mailer, who contributed $5,000.

Mr. Fancher, who had started working as a psychologist, was publisher. Mr. Wolf, who had worked as a writer for The Columbia Encyclopedia, became editor. Mr. Mailer was officially a silent partner, although never particularly silent.

It dawned on publisher and editor that they needed somebody who knew something about newspapers — how to lay one out, write headlines, get ads and so on. Mr. Fancher contacted Mr. Tallmer, a mutual friend. His first question to Mr. Fancher was whether there was any money in the new venture. No, he was told. Not interested, he replied.

But Mr. Tallmer couldn't help wandering by the second-floor apartment at 22 Greenwich Avenue, where The Voice was assembling an office. There were three or four ancient typewriters from a pawnshop and a few desks.

GEN BRIGGS/THE VILLAGE VOICE

Jerry Tallmer largely ran The Village Voice during the paper's difficult first years.

"I knew I was home," he said in an interview for "Mailer: His Life and Times" (1985), by Peter Manso. "It was so ratty and beat up."

Soon he was putting in marathon hours for no pay, then working as associate editor for $25 a week.

Mr. Tallmer hired writers, including Gilbert Seldes, one of the nation's best-known cultural critics. He edited copy and proofread down to the last comma of the smallest classified ad.

Jerry Tallmer was born in Manhattan on Dec. 9, 1920, and got his high school degree from the Lincoln School of Teachers College, Columbia University, in 1938. He enlisted in the Army a few days after Pearl Harbor and was a radio-radar man in the Army Air Forces in the Caribbean and Western Pacific. He saw the atomic mushroom cloud over Nagasaki and later said he "didn't like it then or now." He graduated in 1946 from Dartmouth, where he edited the student newspaper.

Mr. Tallmer resigned from The Voice in 1962. He was making $100 a week with no benefits, and his wife had just had twins. The New York Post offered more money and full benefits. Mr. Tallmer became a drama critic there.

In doing so, Mr. McAuliffe wrote, Mr. Tallmer "made the mistake of his life." He missed The Voice's financial turnaround, which began almost immediately after he left, and he never had the influence at The Post that he had wielded at The Voice.

Daniel E. Slotnik contributed reporting.

Printed in ATHENS | BALI | BANGKOK | BEIRUT | BELGRUM | BIRATNAGAR | DHAKA | DOHA | DUBAI | FRANKFURT | GALLARGUES | HONG KONG | ISLAMABAD | ISTANBUL | JAKARTA | KARACHI | KATHMANDU | KUALA LUMPUR | LAHORE | LONDON | MADRID | MALTA | MANILA | MILAN
RABAT | REPALGUNJ | OSAKA | PARIS | SEOUL | SINGAPORE | SYDNEY | TAIPEI | TEL AVIV | TOKYO | U.S. | YANGON
Subscription Inquiries: Europe 00 800 44 48 78 27 (toll-free); Other countries +33 1 41 43 93 61; E-mail nytsubs@nytimes.com; Fax +33 1 41 43 92 10 • Advertising Inquiries: +33 1 41 43 93 55; Fax +33 1 41 43 92 12