

Ousted Tarsis Assails Reds in D.C. Speech

5/11/42
By Stephen S. Rosenfeld
Washington Post Staff Writer

Valery Tarsis passionately assailed communism in a National Press Club speech yesterday and left most of his audience wondering why the Soviet government had let him

go abroad to spout such damning stuff. Two things, however, were clear about this improbable anti-Soviet author who last February, while in London on a temporary visa, was stripped of his Soviet citizenship "for actions discrediting a Soviet citizen."

One was his showmanship: He is stumpy, florid, cunning and a ham like Nikita Khrushchev ("Ukrainian boor," he called Khrushchev in accented English). His intense self-conviction at first amused, then sobered and caught the full Press Club house.

It was clear, too, that with his own delighted assent, he has been swept up for anti-Communist exploitation by a smoothly working professional apparatus.

Constantin Boldyreff, American director of an anti-Soviet emigre group (NTS), claiming underground resources back in Russia, is handling Tarsis. NTS had recruited Gerald Brooke, the young Englishman convicted in Moscow last year.

Boldyreff got the New York lecture bureau which books former New Frontiersmen Arthur Schlesinger and Roger Hillsman to set up Tarsis's two-month U. S. lecture tour.

The American publisher of "Ward 7," an account of his incarceration for political reasons in a mental asylum, timed a new paper back edition to the tour.

Eugene Lyons, a Reader's Digest senior editor who re-

See TARSIS, A22, Col. 2

TARSIS—From A1

Tarsis Blasts Communism In Talk Here

cently wrote a flattering article about NTS, sat at the head table with Tarsis.

Press releases on Tarsis were abundant. The text of his speech was widely distributed. Although he apparently did not know Robert Emmet from Adam, he laid a well-publicized wreath at the Irish patriot's statue here.

The 60-year-old Tarsis talked about "soul," "God," the good of traditional Russia and the evil of the "Communist hangmen" who have—only temporarily, he believes—captured his beloved land.

His view of the anti-Communist opposition in the Soviet Union confirmed the most wishful thoughts of the most adreud Western Crusaders against communism.

Describing his refusal while in Russia to use a pen name for his anti-Soviet works smuggled out and published abroad, he said, "It was important for me to show that not all Soviet writers are servile cowards."

He was asked why he was allowed to leave Russia. Boldyreff answered for him: he could not be tried because he had been pronounced demented and Soviet law prevents trying a demented person; he could not be put back in an asylum because Western newsmen had told the world he was sane; so he was sent abroad, the move timed to blunt the criticism aroused in the West by the Moscow trial of writers Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel.

This answer seemed to wrap things up a little too neatly for most of Tarsis's listeners. Most of the town's followers of Soviet affairs are frankly puzzled.