

that, if all we work for goes back to the same people who had exploited us over the centuries?

**Fidelio:** Do you have any thoughts that you would like conveyed to the readership of *Fidelio* that we've not covered up until this point?

**Dr. Awoonor:** I would like to address what I consider the post-Gulf War and the post-Cold War period: We are seeing some ingredients of that so-called New World Order, as being no different from the old world order. In fact, we are seeing other things coming up—when we had the Soviet empire, at least there was what one commentator called a balance of terror, and so therefore, arrogance of power was slightly more muted. We are seeing, as one person used the word, a unipolar world, in which there is only one power and its way of doing things, its way of perceiving reality, its ideology. They talk as if communism is the only ideology that we have. Capitalism is also an ideology; and that capitalist ideology is based on concepts of democracy, liberal democracy which is individualism, and its attendant greed-machine, based on the so-called free market, which is another word for “get the best of your friend, sharp dealing, cut all the corners,” which also reveals a lack of compassion for our common humankind.

And we are saying: if that is the world that we are constructing, then we are in for trouble. And I want to say that we in the developing countries, who form the majority of the human population of this planet; we who are the ones who are poor, malnourished, without education, without adequate shelter; who are the ones who are ill with diseases both old and new, who lack clinics and hospitals: we are supposed to earn our way in this marketplace, which, even though it is called free, we know is not free.

We are going to be insisting—we are going to be here, we are going to be making as much noise as we can make, and nobody can lecture us—we will put our needs on the agenda, and we will insist that the world look at these needs.



Cavor Šifrar

Maestro Pavle Dešpalj

## Croatian Conductor Pavle Dešpalj

*Pavle Dešpalj was born in the 1930's into a musical family. After completing his formal education in Zagreb at the Musical Academy under professor Šulak, he conducted several chamber and symphony orchestras in Zagreb and Belgrade. In 1967 he came to the United States, where he became the permanent conductor and artistic director of the Florida Symphony Orchestra and of the opera in Orlando, Florida. Later he became permanent guest conductor of the Chicago Festival in Grand Park, and in 1975, at the invitation of Leontyne Price, he conducted the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Returning to Zagreb in 1980, Dešpalj became chief conductor of the Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra, whose principal conductor emeritus he is today.*

*This interview was conducted for Fidelio by Hartmut Cramer on January 7, 1992.*

**Fidelio:** Finally, some important political forces have recognized Croatia. What do you think is the most important thing to be done right now?

**Dešpalj:** The main thing is recognition. We were trying to get it for quite some while. Our greatest allies are Chancellor Kohl of Germany and his Foreign Minister Genscher, and the Pope in Rome, of course. These three friends of ours have always lifted up our spirits.

**Fidelio:** You know that classical art, especially music, has played a very crucial role in the various revolutions of the last years; beginning in China, where the students played Beethoven's and Schiller's "Ode to Joy," then all over Eastern Europe. Did you do similar things in Croatia?

**Dešpalj:** Yes, we did. To think of Beethoven's Ninth is a very proper thing to do in such a situation, and Zagreb's Philharmonic Orchestra performed this great symphony right at the beginning of last season. But we also played Beethoven's Eroica under my direction in the city of Osijek.

**Fidelio:** What other music did you

## FILMS

# JFK: An Indictment of America's 'Secret Government'

perform in your concerts?

**Dešpalj:** My sister, my brother, and I, the three of us, played the double concerto by Brahms for violin, cello and orchestra, and then I conducted Dvorak's Ninth Symphony ("From the New World"). In Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia we performed Mozart's great C-minor Mass, and with that we gave a benefit concert in Ljubljana for Zagreb. That was the first time I performed this work, and I immediately and completely fell in love with it. It is such great music: consider just the beginning—it's fantastic—and when I think about the *Et incarnatus est*, I have a hard time suppressing my tears, it is such a divine music.

On Christmas day I conducted parts of this Mass as part of the pontifical mass in our cathedral in Zagreb, which our Cardinal Kuharic held. You know, before that, we very seldom played in church, and it was unheard of to participate in the religious ceremony; since we have had democracy in Croatia, we started to perform music in church even for the ceremonial services.

**Fidelio:** Please explain this more. The communists didn't let you perform music in churches?

**Dešpalj:** You see, during the communist regime we did occasionally give concerts in churches, but without the religious connotations. We were not allowed to perform music during the mass; that was forbidden.

Now, this has changed. Now, religion is again a free choice; everybody who wants to can go to church. Before, it was not completely forbidden to go to church, but those people who dared to do that were considered to be very strange, abnormal, and suspicious by the political authorities.

**Fidelio:** What cultural message does your orchestra want to give to the people of other countries?

**Dešpalj:** We would like to show that we deeply care about culture, that we are part of the world's culture and that we belong to western civilization and strongly believe in its moral values.

**P**resident Kennedy has been shot!" That terrifying report, broadcast around the world on Nov. 22, 1963, still rings in the ears of many today. Young and old of all countries sat in front of their radios and television sets in a state of shock. What had happened? Why had it happened? It had only been in June of that fateful year, that John F. Kennedy had visited Berlin, to deliver his now-famous declaration, two years after the building of the Berlin Wall, in order to guarantee the security of the divided city: "*Ich bin ein Berliner!*"

The movie *JFK*, began to unleash a huge controversy even before it started showing in movie theaters. The basic thesis of its director, Oliver Stone, is that Kennedy's assassination was a coup d'état by the CIA/FBI and parts of the military-industrial complex, and that the cover-up perpetrated by the Warren Commission was merely one more step in the formation of a "parallel government" in Washington and a turning of the United States toward fascism. This thesis has struck a raw nerve in the U.S. population and within the Establishment.



June 6, 1963: President Kennedy speaks at the Berlin Wall: "*Ich bin ein Berliner!*"

John F. Kennedy Library