

Daniel Anderson

Reading History

When the president is overthrown and the parliament dissolved,
When cabinet ministers are jailed, it will occur to them,
Though briefly so, to gather their assets in a great haste
And leave. When fool and laureate are hanged, the daughters raped,
When all that was forbidden once, the carnage and the lust,
Becomes the order of the day, they will adjust.
How strangely, then, their happiness will seem remote;
They will relinquish livestock, the lands and the good view,
Those mild pastures, the forests and the clear trout streams.
They will no longer calculate the rate of their returns,
Summer by the lake, or stroke the dog's soft jaw at dusk.
Nor will they take their drinks at six—the cools tonics with lime.
They will remember how one sunny day in June
The constable addressed a crowded briefing room
To reassure the press the bloody crackdown would resume.
That all belongs to a different time, a different dream,
For the royalist supporters of the previous regime.