Today Counts Show Episode 134

Anika: My grandmother who was bedridden always prayed on her bed and she always said that God hear us no matter where we are. And she believed that it was not necessary to go to church. Of course, she couldn't because she was physically bedridden. But I think it was her way of saying to people under the communism, don't worry about going to church. God will hear you no matter where you are. And they cannot go to your bed. They cannot go to your kitchen. So you can pray there if that's what you want to do. And I think that's how a lot of religion did survive by people basically being devoted to their God out of sight.

Before we jump into today's episode, we'd like to recognize all those who make this podcast possible. The Today Counts Show is supported by the generous donors of the Lead Today Community. Also, be sure to subscribe and follow the Today Counts Show on whatever platform you watch or listen. All right, let's get back to the podcast.

Jim Piper: Hello, everyone and welcome back to the Today Counts show. I'm your host Jim Piper. Today my guest is Anika Pavel. I think I said that right.

Anika Pavel: Right.

Jim Piper: Yes, and this is going to be a fascinating interview. She grew up in Czechoslovakia and came over to England. And her whole world kind of came apart. And so we're going to be talking about that. It's pretty exciting stuff. Scary stuff and exciting stuff. And she became a well-known model. We'll talk about that. She was an actress. She's an author and just a fascinating story of how you go from living in Czechoslovakia to today in Massachusetts. But going over to England. We're here to talk about her new book, which I want to encourage you to take a look at. What is the name of your book, Anika?

Anika Pavel: It's called *An Encounter with the Future*.

Jim Piper: *Encounter with the Future*. And it's really kind of a not just a autobiography, but it's also a memoir of sorts where you are learning different things in life that we'll talk about as well. But let's go back to your beginnings. Czechoslovakia, talk to us about that prior to you getting up and moving to England. What was life like for you in Czechoslovakia?

Anika Pavel: Well, when you are a child, the life is not much different to anywhere else in the world because most children, and I was one of them, are protected by the parents. The parents will make sure that the children are warm and have everything they need. So it wasn't until I was a teenager that I realized that they there was something amiss. You don't miss television if you've never seen it or you never knew that it existed. But when you are a teenager, you hear different stories and we were not far from Vienna and so we would get smuggled magazines and we learn about life abroad and then it became a different story. Also, my mother always encouraged me to read about other countries and learn about other countries which developed in me to desire, the desire to travel. And so it was then that I, you, know, people of my age became aware that we did not have a freedom.

Jim Piper: And that was prior to Russia's invasion, is that right?

Anika Pavel: Right. If you recall, the world was divided between East and West. There was the wall, the Iron Curtain.

Jim Piper: Yeah, tear down that wall, right? Yeah.

Anika Pavel: Tear down that wall indeed. And so the world was divided. And so, we were not allowed to go anywhere in the West. Of course, that's all we all wanted to do is to go and travel in the West. But it's also, you know, we were taught books and you couldn't go and visit. so that made a lot of young people unhappy. And little by little, the newer generation was working towards a more freer life. And so Alexander Dubcek was getting into power and he was introducing socialism with a human face. And so he introduced freedom of speech, freedom to travel. And that was about that time that I was able to get a visa to come to England for three months, which then got extended for longer.

Jim Piper: Yes, so you were about 18 years old then, right? When you went over to England. Was there very many others that you knew of around your age that was able to to leave your homeland and go in other places?

Anika Pavel: You know, I was kind of like the favorite child. I came to England in 1967 in November and Dubček really didn't came fully in a power until January. So by that spring, a lot of young people came to England. Like in June, July, it was like I could walk in London and bump into Slovak everywhere, Czechoslovak anywhere because we were able to do it. This, of course, did not sit well with people in Moscow. And in August, they invaded Czechoslovakia, and that was the bloody end to the freedom that we had.

Jim Piper: Yeah. So why England? Why England versus other places? Why was that the-- It sounds like you're saying that was kind like the gate was open for England.

Anika Pavel: Why England? Jane Eyre, the Beatles, Liverpool Football Club. That's what I grew up with.

Jim Piper: Okay. Okay. I'm understanding now. All right. So that was the place to be for young young life exciting life. And you got out there. Okay. Well, before we dive into what you were doing over there and what happened later, can we talk a little bit about what your homeland was like prior to Russia's invasion. Then, even though I know you weren't living there, certainly you had friends and family living there. So at least secondhand, you knew the difference between the two. What were some of the major differences that the people that you loved were experiencing?

Anika Pavel: Well, there was a elation. People felt free. There was a freedom of speech. People didn't have to whisper when they were talking about politics. And the major, major difference was that people could travel. That was, at the time, the biggest thing, because when you live in a country where everybody is looking after themselves, people manage. There used to be a joke. They said, “He who doesn't steal from the government steals from his family.”

Jim Piper: Wow.

Anika Pavel: And so, you know, so everybody was able to get what they needed. So what we didn't have was freedom of speech and freedom to travel. Those were the two most important things for us.

Jim Piper: So break that saying down. He who doesn't steal from the government steals from his family. How would one gain assets from the government? How would that–

Anika Pavel: For example, if you were working as a builder and you needed bricks or wood for building your house, you just take it. If you were a waitress, you brought some food at home. If you were working in a shop, you bring some clothes home. None of it was on a big scale. Nobody was stealing to start their own business. everybody just did enough to protect their family.

Jim Piper: Mm-hmm. It's like the hungry boy walking through the market steals an apple.

Anika Pavel: Exactly, that's what it was. Exactly.

Jim Piper: Okay, gotcha, gotcha.

Anika Pavel: It wasn't that people were all thieves. People just, you know, steal to feed the family.

Jim Piper: Okay, and so then after the invasion and the takeover, what were the major contrasts that your folks, your people went through?

Anika Pavel: Well, first of all, no more traveling, no more freedom of speech. The newspapers people use for whatever, but not for-- Everybody got a newspapers and they turned it straight away to the back page where there was sports. Nobody read the front page. And so it was a joke. They should put sports in the front page and people will read the front page.

Jim Piper: Okay, well, see. That's important information that helps me understand. So how would owning a business in an occupied Czechoslovakia look different than previous to being occupied by Russia?

Anika Pavel: nobody owned a business. Nobody owned a business. That was not allowed.

Jim Piper: Okay, so you don't own it.

Anika Pavel: Nobody was allowed to do business.

Jim Piper: Everybody works for the government then in one way, or another.

Anika Pavel: Exactly. Absolutely.

Jim Piper: Okay. So I noticed that you use the term socialism, right, earlier.

Anika Pavel: Right.

Jim Piper: So, you know, when you're ignorant, like I am, when you're ignorant of experiencing what your family has experienced living over there under that kind of domain, that kind of smothering power, when you think of the word communism and you think of the word socialism, how are they similar and how are they different from your perspective? I'm not asking for an academic definition, but from your perspective, how does communism and socialism, how are they similar? How are they different versus capitalism?

Anika Pavel: Well, the difference between socialism and communism is practically none. When we were young and we were Czechoslovakia was Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, that meant that everybody was equal, everybody made the same money, everybody vote for the government, everybody had the same holiday all made by the government, everybody shop

sold same clothes. So there really isn't much difference. People like to think that there is a difference, but there really isn't. Of course, the difference between--

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Jim Piper: Okay, well, I think that's pretty powerful coming from you. So does it concern you as an American, right? You consider yourself an American?

Anika Pavel: Yes.

Jim Piper: Okay, as an American who obviously has loyalties also in other places, which makes sense, right? There's nothing wrong with that. My family came from Cornwall, England, so I never lived–

Anika Pavel: Nice place.

Jim Piper: Yeah, I never lived there, of course, but they make great pasties.

Anika Pavel: Cornish pastries, there's nothing better.

Jim Piper: That's right. And we had some really good ones up towards Mackinac Island in Michigan when we went on vacation, found some pretty authentic pasties up there. For those that are listening, if you don't know what a pasty is, it's kind of hard to explain. Some might say it's like a meat pie, but I think that falls short. It's just really hard to explain. But anyway, so does it trouble you as an American when you see some of the young people in the universities and even some of the young people in politics in America, they are carrying a socialistic agenda as if those are the answers to the problems that we have? Is this a different socialism that they're trying to preach, or is it rooted in the same thing from your perspective?

Anika Pavel: It's definitely different. I think those people unfortunately doesn't have a clue what socialism is. It's totally different. I have so many people who talks about, you know, they're socialists and I'm like, "What are you talking about? No way." I think people just do not understand how the sameness, the difference between socialism. I think that where it comes

from, it's that under socialism, everybody get a health care, but so does everyone in England and so does everyone in Canada. And nowadays, so does everyone in America. And that is a good thing. And that's about it.

I mean, socialism, I mean, I will be the first one to say it wasn't 100 % bad. It was also good. Women got a pretty good time maternity leave, which was fully paid and nobody could give away their job. It was guaranteed that you can come back. The way they encouraged to have children because after war there was, you know, there was a lot of people killed after the war and lot of people didn't have enough children. So for example, for each child that a woman had, she got three years. So if the retirement age was 65 and you had three children, so you could retire nine years earlier on a full pay. So I'm not sure that still exists, but it did when I was living there.

Jim Piper: Yeah, so it sounds like what you're saying, and then we'll move on to your life in England, I think would be a next great place to start. So it sounds like what you're saying in so many words, and slap me virtually if I'm wrong, is that you see that there are some kinds of standardizations that are good for people that probably only the government can do effectively versus capitalism probably can't bring some of those standardizations from coast to coast. You like the free market idea of democracy or really a republic, to be frank. But you do believe that there are some things that only the government can do. I mean, part of that's obvious, like our military. That can't be broken up simply by states. That's gotta be something that-- So is that a fair thing to say about your--?

Anika Pavel: Yeah, I do think that there are certain networks that need to have.

Jim Piper: And so you're you're in England and obviously you're in England to get out of where you were before. That was probably the main goal. But as as you get there, how did your life unfold and what happened then?

Anika Pavel: Well, actually I went to England to-- I always wanted to be a writer. I wanted to be a journalist. And so I went to England to speak, to learn to speak English fast.

Jim Piper: Well, at least that kind of English.

Anika Pavel: Oh, that kind of English. Very proper. Then, you know, then Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia. So my journalistic hope went out of the window. And then basically life has forced me to deal with the situation as it was. And I was lucky that I have won a competition to be a model. And so that kind of launched me. It was a very sort of offhand. I didn't go to London to be a model. I really didn't quite know where I was going. I was kind of lost. And so out of luck, I just sent my photographs to this competition. And then I became a model.

And then I thought, okay, I kind of liked it. Because I was alone, I didn't have anyone to help me. And my family depended on me. My mother was fighting cancer. So I worked in a restaurant. I took a job even as a cashier. And so supported myself the best I could. And little by little, I brought myself up to to be a model and get onto television and I could make money. But I pretty much always worked as a waitress and to just to make sure that I could take care of myself because modeling and acting can be very fickle. You can be making a lot of money one month and the next month, not much or almost none at all.

Jim Piper: Yeah, it sounds very similar to the Hollywood experience of a lot of kids who are mostly doing the serving tables because of the decent cash that comes from it while they're pursuing their dreams of modeling and, it's often and, right, modeling and acting that come together.

Anika Pavel: Modeling kind of goes-- I mean, waitressing thing kind of almost goes hand in hand with acting and modeling.

Jim Piper: That's a good point. The best actors make better tips. That's probably very, very true. Yeah, and then we were talking earlier that you were one of the models, actresses on the spy movie, *The Spy Who Loved Me*, where many people, of course, have heard of that movie and if not have watched that movie.

Anika Pavel: Yes.

Jim Piper: So when did the writing-- You were waitressing, you were modeling, you were seeking out acting jobs, but I think before we got on the air, before we got on the recording, you told me that a lot of your camera work turned out to- ended up being a lot of commercials. Is that right? What kind of work?

Anika Pavel: Yes, I do have 100 TV commercials.

Jim Piper: And what kind of commercials did you star in?

Anika Pavel: Well, for example, I was the very first-- It's a very funny story. Remember the toothpaste used to be pale pink, pale blue, and white. So when the radical Closeup commercial with a clear red toothpaste came up, I was the first model in Europe who did a toothpaste commercial for a toothpaste that was not pink, blue, or white.

Jim Piper: Okay.

Anika Pavel: And you know who did that same, not same commercial, but who was the first model for the Closeup commercial in US? Tom Selleck.

Jim Piper: Tom Selleck.

Anika Pavel: He became rather more famous than I did.

Jim Piper: Yeah, he did pretty well, didn't he?

Anika Pavel: Did very well. The toothpaste. Didn't do quite as well for me.

Jim Piper: Now, just a sidebar, now you live in Massachusetts, are you a sports fan? Or is your husband a sports fan?

Anika Pavel: I remained a devoted Liverpool soccer fan.

Jim Piper: I think is really good for you. Very good. Okay. So you never really took to baseball or football or anything like that here in the States.

Anika Pavel: No, you if you have two sons and a husband, you know, in this house, Red Sox and Patriots and Celtics and Bruins, at least I can name them all.

Jim Piper: Yeah, that's good. Okay. Well, I'm a Michigan fan, Detroit fan. So, okay, I get it. All right. All right. Well, that's good.

Anika Pavel: You won't get an argument from me.

Jim Piper: So, yeah, well, Boston and Detroit, they don't like each other too well in sports world. So, I'm sure your husband and your sons would have something to say about that.

Ad: Let's take a brief break from the podcast to let you know that our very own Jim Piper has released a brand new book called Story: The Art of Learning From Your Past. Everyone has a past but not everyone learns from it. Jim unpacks lessons in this book that help leaders and learners understand the potential our past has to impact our present and future. Be sure to grab your copy of the book Story where books are sold. All right, let's get back to the podcast.

Jim Piper: So, the commercials then turned out really well for you. Now, there's another part of your story though that you're going to cover in your book. So while you're out there pursuing your own thing, you meet somebody who ended up becoming your husband.

Anika Pavel: Right.

Jim Piper: Tell us about that.

Anika Pavel: Well, it was a funny meeting. We did not like each other. We were introduced by a friend and she called me up and said, "I'll find you a husband." And I said, "Oh, God, no." So she was born on the 29th of February. And so she celebrated, she was a leap year girl and she only celebrated her birthday on 29th of February. So I was locked in, I knew I had to come. So I had to meet him. And so we really disliked each other genuinely at the beginning. I think I was to be blamed because I was pretty obnoxious. I don't even know why. I think I was angry with her and I couldn't be angry with her. So I was angry at him. But then we became friends and we used to watch together *Two's Company*. I don't know if you ever known that show. It was about–

Jim Piper: Oh, sure.

Anika Pavel: Yeah, it was about an American writer and a British butler. And it was very funny. So it brought us together and we, you know, then when we fell in love, we got married very quickly. And here we are all those years later.

Jim Piper: And he was over in England on business, but he was from Boston, right?

Anika Pavel: He's from Boston. No, no, he's an international tax lawyer. And so he came in the summertime just before he finished, graduated from law school. He went to England and fell in love with London. And he found himself a job to work for American company to advise US citizens living abroad on tax.

Jim Piper: I see, I see, wow. And so you guys got married, did you stay in England or what happened next?

Anika Pavel: Well, we stayed long enough to have our first child and then we went to Hong Kong where my second child was born. And then we went to Boston for a year. Then we went to Monte Carlo for a year. And then we came to New Jersey where my daughter was born and she's never forgiven me. She said, "My brother's born in London and in Hong Kong and I have to tell people I was born in New Jersey."

Jim Piper: New Jersey.

Anika Pavel: "And you came from Monte Carlo, you couldn't wait."

Jim Piper: Yeah, does she root for the Jets out of loyalty or not?

Anika Pavel: Right, right.

Jim Piper: Yeah, okay. Well, now when you moved to all those places, was that because of your husband's work or what was--?

Anika Pavel: Yes.

Jim Piper: Okay, I see.

Anika Pavel: Yes, it was mostly for him. Although I still managed to work in Hong Kong because I went to Hong Kong before to do TV commercials for British companies and so I was there twice before and so I knew modeling agencies there so I worked there as well and I did little work in Boston but not that much. I did one for Filene's Basement.

Jim Piper: Are you a bit of a romantic? Is that what kind of drew you to modeling and to acting and to writing? How would you describe yourself?

Anika Pavel: That's interesting. I have never thought of myself as romantic.

Jim Piper: An idealist, right? At least an idealist.

Anika Pavel: Idealist and a dreamer.

Jim Piper: And a dreamer, okay, okay. Maybe the–

Anika Pavel: I was a dreamer. If I can dream it, I can do it.

Jim Piper: Okay, all right. So I want to talk about your writing because you said that because of all that happened in your world at the time, your pursuit of writing went kapuf, right? I think that's how you said it.

Anika Pavel: Yes. You know, when you learn a new language, you kind of lose a little bit of your own. And at some point I couldn't really write in English and I couldn't write in Slovak. So I was in the limbo for a long time until my English got good enough.

Jim Piper: Trying to figure out your new voice, I guess, in a way. In fact, you know, your accent seems pretty strong from your childhood. So living in England, Boston, Hong Kong, Monte Carlo, those things didn't seem to affect your accent too much, but maybe the words in your head.

Anika Pavel: Yes, I think the words in my head and my knowledge of English language improved. But I tell you why probably my accent is so thick. I am tone deaf. Yes, completely tone deaf. I'm not deaf-deaf, but I am tone deaf. And so I think I was wondering often why has my English not- my spoken English hasn't improved. I only started to hear when my kids start mimicking me. They are great mimics. And I'm like, "I don't sound like that." And they go, "Yes, you do."

Jim Piper: Well, before I met you, was wondering what would a woman sound like a cross between being raised in the European area of Czechoslovakia and Boston? And then you get in the call with me and I'm going, I'm not hearing any East Coast in you, that's for sure. I'm not hearing any British either. That's it. So what does tone deaf mean? Does that mean like you can't really hear the pitches, the nuances?

Anika Pavel: Yeah, I can't hear it. In one of my essays I write about, and this is a true story, my father loved violin and so did my mother. And so my father decided that I should take violin lessons. So I did. And so within about six months, the teacher said, "She cannot be in my class. She's just terrible." So my father goes, "Oh, communists, of course, the communists would do that." So he finds a private teacher. And so for a year, I practiced, I was trying very, very hard. And then the next year, my father would go to the teacher and he says, "Okay, so can we book it again next year?" So the teacher says, "You know, your daughter has a rhythm. She can hear the music. She just cannot reproduce it." He said, "I cannot take your money anymore." And that was it. I just, you know, he couldn't take my father's money because he knew that I cannot reproduce it. I can hear it. I love music. I can't tell you how much I love music.

Jim Piper: Yeah, me too.

Anika Pavel: And I can't tell you how many elocution lessons I have taken, but I just don't hit it. It gets lost.

Jim Piper: Anika, I have a similar story. My grandfather was an exceptional musician and he went to one of my recitals on the organ. And in his funny way, he came in and I played it flawlessly in the sense of the notes, you know, and the timing and all of that. But it lacked the musician's heart, right? It lacked that. And he tapped me on the shoulder and he said, "Jimmy, you're a really good baseball player."

Anika Pavel: Very good. I like that.

Jim Piper: And yeah, and so that actually didn't hurt my feelings because I did love baseball and I hated organ practice. And so that that was my exit out of that out of that whole scene. Well, let's talk about so how did writing then get back because the book that we're talking about today isn't your first isn't your first book, right?

Anika Pavel: No, I actually started to write, I got a dog from shelter in Mississippi and he was very, very cute. And I started to imagine how was his journey and why would somebody give him up? And I started to write these stories and then I started to put them together and I would send them to my children. And then people said, "You know what, these are pretty good." And so, "My son said to me, you know, you always wanted to write, why don't you write?" And so he

said, "But you should go to school." So I went to school writing for children because I was writing children's book. And then the teacher after about four five lessons said to me, have you noticed that whenever I give you assignment and you can choose the age group you want to pick to write your story for? You always pick the oldest, 16 to 18." And she said, "I think you should go, you should switch and go to a class for essay writing for adults." And that's how I started to write. And so I took a two-year course and that's where it all started to, those essays started to develop.

Jim Piper: Well, great. And this book that you have published sounds very interesting to me because as I get older, the more and more I'm interested in history, I'm interested in perspectives that come from-- I mean, I was born in San Diego, California to a father who's in the Navy. I mean, I'm an American, American, American, which I'm proud of, but obviously as I get older and as I travel around the world and enjoy that, I learned that boy, there's a lot of things to learn in this world. What are some of the- just give us a short example of some lessons that you end up talking about in your new book that you have learned in your life journey.

Anika Pavel: Well, I think some of the essays are not really about me. I set out when I said, when I started to write or rather putting the essays into the book, I wanted to be a history for my children. I originally wanted to write it for my children, my grandchildren. So a lot of it is about a history of Czechoslovakia and Europe and going all the way back, and about my family, some of whom came to America, some of whom became successful, some of whom were less successful. Then I wrote some stories about my particular predicament that happened in August, and then what life had to throw at me. And so I always fought with optimism and I always believed that tomorrow will be better than today. During the hardest time when I felt really desperate, I always thought about next day and I started to plan what I was going to do next day. Even if I knew I couldn't achieve it, it didn't matter. It took me away from where I was.

Jim Piper: That's how you coped, yeah.

Anika Pavel: That was my coping mechanism. But invariably, believe it or not, a lot of the imagined stuff has happened. I made it happen. I made it happen because I wanted it. My imaginations was never so out of sight. You know, I wasn't dreaming to go to the moon. I was dreaming about getting an apartment, buying a car. You know, for somebody like me, where nobody had cars, to buy a car is like-- It was an incredible achievement. So that's how I was always coping with it.

Jim Piper: That's really good. Life is a paradox, isn't it? There are certainly some things that are just out of our control and we truly are victims of some sort. And then yet there are so many things that we can accomplish that we didn't think that we could or others didn't think that we could. And trying to navigate that paradox has a lot to do with whether people find joy in life and excitement in life or whether know, depression and defeat take over. That's fascinating. Now, did you have any siblings?

Anika Pavel: I have two older brothers.

Jim Piper: Mm-hmm. And did you ever see your parents again?

Anika Pavel: I did see my parents. The communists only let one person out of the family to travel. And so they let my father come and he came and one morning, I went to get him up for breakfast and I found him dead. He died of heart attack.

Jim Piper: In England?

Anika Pavel: In England, yeah.

Jim Piper: Oh, my.

Anika Pavel: So that was very difficult. And so we had to arrange for him to be cremated and take him home. And what made it even more difficult was because what happened, the communists said, we'll give you one visa. And my mother said, "You go, you are healthy. I'm sick. I don't want to travel on her happiest day of life." And now I had to go and tell my mother that her healthy husband was dead. That was very had.

Jim Piper: Wow. Do you write about that in your book?

Anika Pavel: Yes.

Jim Piper: Boy, I am so sorry. That is a shaping-- I just finished a book myself entitled Story, which is lessons that we can learn from our past. And I'm sure you unpack that and unfold that. I did not know that. That's a powerful event. Man. Now where do your brothers live today? Are they alive and well?

Anika Pavel: Well, my younger brother never left Czechoslovakia.

Jim Piper: Wow, okay.

Anika Pavel: And so, and he died five years ago, too young. And then my second brother actually escaped Czechoslovakia and his story is also in a book. He came to London and he worked for the BBC and that's what people relied on at home. We did not listen to the paper or read the paper or listen to radio. Nobody believed it. So people listen to BBC World Service, Voice of America, and that's where they got their story. And so my brother worked for BBC and one night he was hit by a car and it was Mr. KGB who didn't like him, telling the truth.

Jim Piper: Wow.

Anika Pavel: But he survived, he survived and I told him, "Don't go back." And he said to me, "That's exactly what they want." And he went back and worked at the BBC. And then when I moved to America, then he came to America and he worked for Voice of America.

Jim Piper: And he's alive today?

Anika Pavel: He's still alive, he retired.

Jim Piper: Okay, okay, good. Well, and do you get to talk to him much? Do you see him much?

Anika Pavel: Yeah, we talked to each other. He still lives in McLean, Virginia. So yeah, he's very much a part of my children's family. Their favorite uncle.

Jim Piper: Anika, I've got two more questions for you. One is, I'm a person of faith and I can't imagine living in a world that did not give me the freedom to learn about it, pursue it, practice it. Yet, your family is familiar with that, right? What are your thoughts about freedom of religion?

Anika Pavel: Well, I think it was really stupid of the communists to try and squash the religion. The town where I was born was called a Slovak Rome. It was a town of 30,000 people and had 11 churches, two synagogues and, and 11 Catholic churches, two synagogues and one Lutheran church. So it was very strong. And the more they tried to forbid people going to church, they used to have spies. They did, some people did lose their jobs or it hindered their progress. So it was incredibly stupid, but it was very, very real about it.

I was affected. My grandmother who was bedridden always prayed on her bed and she always said that God hear us no matter where we are. And she believed that it was not necessary to go to church. Of course, she couldn't because she was physically bedridden. But I think it was her way of saying to people under the communism, don't worry about going to church. God will hear you no matter where you are. And they cannot go to your bed. They cannot go to your kitchen. So you can pray there if that's what you want to do. And I think that's how a lot of religion did survive by people basically being devoted to their God out of sight.

Jim Piper: Anika, give us the name of your book again and then give us a short summary of how you would describe it and why folks might want to consider to buy it and read it.

Anika Pavel: Okay, the name of the book is *Encounter with the Future*. And I think in today's busy world, it's a great book because it's a collection of essays. So if you don't have time to get into a book that you cannot put down, it's not gonna keep you up at night. But you'll find an essay that will lift you up, essay that will make you smile, essay that will make you cry. Whatever mood you are in, you can find it there and you learn about tiny little country and you learn about different life and there will be some surprises.

Jim Piper: Anika, you sold at least one book today. I'm a voracious reader and I've got books all over the place and I'm always having to thin out my library. But I am going to purchase your

book and it was a privilege to meet you, to learn a little bit more about you and I just pray blessings on you and I pray that your book does really well and helps people.

Anika Pavel: Thank you very much. It means a lot to me.