



PEN CANADA 2003 04 ANNUAL REPORT

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Letters *of* THANKS



PEN Canada is committed to defending freedom of opinion and the peaceable expression of such opinion, as guaranteed by Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It campaigns on behalf of writers around the world persecuted for the expression of their thoughts. In Canada, it supports the right to freedom of expression as enshrined in Section 2 (b) of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. PEN Canada is a centre of International PEN, the world wide writers' association founded in England in 1921.

CONTENTS

Foreword	1
President's Report	2
Executive Director's Report	12
Writers in Prison Committee Report	22
National Affairs Committee Report	30
Honorary Members	38
Honorary Members Released	54
Members & Supporters	57

Foreword

Knowing the facts about imprisoned writers' cases is one thing. Hearing from them in their own words is quite another, particularly because words are the ostensible basis upon which those writers we support have been condemned.

PEN Canada receives letters of thanks that are to be shared with its members: letters that humble and move us with their optimism and gratitude. They are sent from prisons or countries of exile; they are handwritten or typewritten, and faxed, mailed or smuggled our way.

Here we bring you a selection of those letters: documents that personalize and make tangible the connection between our efforts and the lives of those we support.

President's Report

BY HAROON SIDDIQUI

PEN Canada works hard to maintain its visibility and reputation as a highly respected organization both at home and abroad. Some of our current work, especially on exiles, is raising even greater awareness of our work and drawing increased international attention. But, like any successful organization, we must constantly assess our strengths and weaknesses. Like most NGOs, we have too much to do with too few resources. An overworked few have been carrying a disproportionate load.

So what are we doing about it?

We are not spending the money we do not have. As you will see from our financial statements, we have slashed expenses this year.

The board has set priorities for both the prosaic and the poetic aspects of our work: 1) strengthening administrative and financial wherewithal; and 2) concentrating on our central work concerning freedom of expression issues, writers in prison and international obligations, especially in PEN Canada's capacity as Chair of International PEN's Writer in Exile Network.

Several initiatives are underway or have been completed. New partnerships are being forged, leveraging the PEN name to enhance our agenda at little or no monetary cost to the organization.

Fundraising

The annual fundraiser has been resurrected. Instead of a stand-alone event, we are partnering with the International Festival of Authors in Toronto. The proposed ComedyWriter event—Thursday, Oct. 21, 2004, at the Winter Garden Theatre—will serve as the opening gala of the 2004 Festival. A committee chaired by Chantal Payette is working to land top American and Canadian talent.

We are developing a long-range plan for corporate and personal sponsorships and donations. Drafting that plan are: Bruce MacDougall, Chair of Special Events; David Silcox, Vice-President/Treasurer; David Israelson, Chair of Corporate Sponsorships; Isobel Harry, Executive Director; Caitlin Smith, Administrator; others and myself.

We are in discussions with singer Raffi for a possible PEN Canada benefit concert highlighting the expression of children, as well as with the University of Toronto's Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library for a patrons' reception at the opening of their banned books exhibit in the new year.

Margaret Atwood is writing to PEN members and her circle of friends with an appeal for funds. We hope you respond generously. I also urge you to write to your own circle of friends. We need to enlarge our pool of members and supporters.

Thanks to Louise Dennys, the folks at Random House Canada initiated and organized a fundraising publishers vs. writers hockey game. We hope to make the PEN Canada Great Literary Faceoff an annual event. Director Karen Connelly is planning a theatre fundraiser with the troupe One Yellow Rabbit, in Calgary next spring.

National Affairs

For an account of the Stephen Williams and Juliet O'Neill cases, plus other issues, please see Director Chris Waddell's report. I do want to note here that on the basis of a PEN Canada appeal, the International PEN Foundation's Emergency Fund contributed CDN\$1,650 to his cause.

Writers in Prison

This painstaking work, which wins us international accolades, continues to be led by Director Alan Cumyn of Ottawa. Please see his separate report.

PEN Canada ran a highly successful worldwide campaign against the impunity enjoyed by those institutions persecuting writers. Funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs, the year-long project concluded with the publication of a trilingual book for all PEN centres and a bilingual report on PEN's findings.

On past president Reza Baraheni's initiative, the American chapter of PEN has awarded US\$10,000 to jailed Iranian writer Nasser Zarafshan, one of our five Honorary Members in that country.

Exile Work

This is emerging as the new frontier for PEN, as persecuted writers flee their lands and arrive in Europe or make their way to North America.

As Chair of International PEN's Writers in Exile Network, Canada has two obligations: co-ordinate and advance the work of various PEN centres and set an example by finding placements in Canada for exiled writers already here.

To that end, the PEN board's Writers in Exile Committee, co-chaired by refugee advocate Sister Mary Jo Leddy and myself, has been working on three fronts:

1. Thanks to a Trillium Foundation grant, we have held readings by exiled writers across Ontario. This has been highly successful. Please see Isobel Harry's report for more information on the Readers & Writers program.
2. We held a unique conference in Ottawa called "Building a Writers in Exile Network," in partnership with PEN Québec, with the aim of aligning our work with those of European and American PEN centres. (All paid for by three levels of the Spanish government and others, such as the International Development Research Centre and the Canadian Commission for UNESCO.) Catalan, German, Norwegian and American PEN centre delegates were there,

along with 75 Canadians from institutions in a position to help us find placements for exiled writers.

Thanks to John Ralston Saul and Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham who opened the conference and hosted it at the Pearson Building, we attracted delegates from 10 universities, three community colleges, three federal ministries, five federal and three Ontario cultural institutions, three publishing houses and several NGOs.

"I can't imagine such a conference taking place at the State Department," said delegate Esther Allen of PEN American Center, New York.

Our work was also lauded at the biennial meeting of International PEN's Writers in Prison Committee, held in Barcelona in May and attended by Alan Cumyn and Isobel Harry (with all expenses paid for by Forum 2004).

3. The work of placing exiled writers in Canadian institutions was underway well before it got a boost from the Ottawa conference, with several institutions offering to explore partnerships.

We already have working partnerships with the University of Toronto, York University, Banff Centre for the Arts, George Brown College and Acadia University. Many more are in the offing.

Afghan writer Saboor Siasang, who lives in Saskatoon, was chosen by the Banff Centre as the first recipient of the newly created Writers in Exile Network placement. Siasang partook in an intensive four-week writing residency at Banff last October and the Centre is doubling its commitment to helping exiled writers this year.

Mexican writer and child advocate Benjamín Santamaría Ochoa, who came to Canada two years ago, has had residencies at Trent University and George Brown College, and is on his way to a year-long placement at Acadia University, starting this July.

Ethiopian journalist Tesfaye Kumsa has been admitted to York University for an M.A. in Culture and Communications, and the University has waived his tuition fee. On PEN Canada's nomination, he was also recently awarded

a us\$5,000 Hellman-Hammett grant by Human Rights Watch.

One of the challenges for the coming year is to advance this work across Canada, and then roll out this Canadian model for the use of PEN centres abroad.

Anthology

As an offshoot of the Writers in Exile Committee's work, Maggie Helwig has obtained an agreement in principle from the Banff Centre Press for the publication of an anthology of exilic writing in 2005.

Outreach/Partnerships

We have new partnerships with *The Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Star* for advertising our activities.

The *Star* has also become our partner, along with the Toronto Reference Library, for our annual Freedom to Read Week event.

We continue to partner with the Royal Conservatory of Music for their annual Daniel Pearl Memorial Concert.

We joined the University of Toronto and Mohandes, the Toronto-based Canadian Association of Iranian Engineers and Architects, in co-hosting Nobel Laureate Shirin Ebadi at a public forum on human rights followed by a reception at Massey College in May. Both events were oversubscribed. Neither cost us a cent and both helped to broaden our supporter base.

To further enlarge our constituency, we are collaborating with the Writers' Forum, an Indo-Pakistani Urdu literary community. The Forum, whose members chat on-line in English, has cross-listed PEN Canada on their website and its Toronto members are starting to attend our events.

A Writers in Exile Club has been functioning for three months. An initiative of poet Saghi Ghahraman of the Exile Committee, it provides a social and literary forum for new arrivals.

We are collaborating with the family of the late Paul Kidd in the creation of an annual PEN Canada/Paul Kidd Courage Prize to be given at our

ComedyWriter event in the fall to a Canadian journalist, writer or photo-journalist who has displayed exceptional courage in the fight for freedom of expression. The nominees can also be citizens (living or dead) from other countries working for a Canadian news organization. Deadline for nominations is August 1, 2004. More information will be posted on the PEN Canada website shortly.

International Activities

1. International PEN Annual Congress. The last assembly, held in Mexico, had the benefit of having the largest Canadian contingent ever. In addition to two delegates from PEN Québec, we had John Ralston Saul, Michael Ondaatje, Nino Ricci, aboriginal writers Drew Hayden Taylor from Ontario and Michael Kusugak from Nunavut, Reza Baraheni, Alan Cumyn, Isobel Harry and myself in attendance—at no cost to PEN Canada, thanks to grants and subsidies.

2. Afghan PEN. When John Ralston Saul was in Kabul, he met the members of the newly established Afghan PEN Centre. They need computers and some desktop publishing capability. Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa and the City of Toronto have both offered to donate used equipment.

3. Slovak PEN. When Gustáv Murín, President of Slovak PEN, was here in April, he expressed the need for books for his centre. We are discussing ways to send books by Canadian authors to Slovak PEN.

Conclusion

None of the above would have been possible without the dedication and tireless efforts of Isobel Harry, our Executive Director. Her passion, experience and contacts are invaluable. On behalf of the Board of Directors, Isobel, a sincere thanks.



Koigi wa Wamwere

KENYA

Author Koigi wa Wamwere is one of Kenya's best-known political prisoners. Wa Wamwere is a former member of Parliament and head of the National Democratic Human Rights Organization. He was detained by the late President Jomo Kenyatta's government, then released on an amnesty declared by President Daniel arap Moi when he came to power in 1978, only to be detained later by Moi. In September 1990, wa Wamwere was abducted by Kenyan security agents while in exile in Uganda, and brought back to Kenya. He spent two and a half years in custody.

Wa Wamwere was detained in September 1993 while trying to investigate allegations that the government had fomented ethnic tensions in the Rift Valley area in the lead-up to the country's multi-party elections in 1992. He was charged with entering a security area and being in possession of allegedly seditious publications. Those documents included material from the National Democratic Human Rights Organization and the pamphlet "The Wailing Molo." (Molo was wa Wamwere's political constituency.)

Following what was generally viewed as an unfair trial, wa Wamwere was sentenced in October 1995 to four years in prison and six strokes of the cane. In 1997, the government withdrew the charges against wa Wamwere and he was subsequently freed.



Faraj Sarkoohi

IRAN

Faraj Sarkoohi, writer and former editor of the cultural journal *Adineb*, has been one of the most prominent figures in the clash between intellectuals and the Iranian regime over freedom of speech. He was detained for eight years during the Shah's rule and, following the 1979 revolution, continued to call for greater press freedom. He was among the signatories of a celebrated 1994 statement signed by over a hundred writers in Iran calling for an end to censorship. In November 1996, Sarkoohi disappeared for 47 days, during which time the Iranian authorities tortured him. He was jailed in January 1997, then convicted of slandering Iran and sentenced to a year in prison during a closed trial in September 1997. He was released in January 1998, after much work by PEN centres worldwide.

“During the tyranny of the Islamic Republic, I was condemned to be executed three times,” Sarkoohi said. “My real crimes were that, for 11 years, I was chief editor of a social and literary magazine, I criticized censorship and fought against it, I signed and published several texts against censorship, I strove for press freedom [and] I published a whole range of opinions.”

In 1999, after three decades of writing against censorship and in favour of democracy, Sarkoohi was expelled from Iran. He now lives in exile in Germany.



Executive Director's Annual Report

BY ISOBEL HARRY

The most rewarding part of my job as Executive Director is making the connections that allow PEN Canada to help the people we need to help. The past year provided many occasions to broaden our vast net of contacts and affiliations, as well as several inspirational meetings that served to remind us of our real purpose at PEN.

Brigadier General José Francisco Gallardo

Last fall, we were privileged to meet once again with our Honorary Member Brigadier General José Francisco Gallardo at the International PEN 'Americas Congress' in Mexico City. PEN members will remember how long and hard we all worked to free him from a 28-year prison sentence he received for having published an excerpt from his Master's thesis on the need for an ombudsman in the Mexican military.

Finally, in February 2002, after an extraordinary campaign that saw International PEN summoned as an expert witness before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in Costa Rica, a hearing was cancelled two weeks before it was to take place because the General was suddenly released after eight years in prison. The General and his family were special guests at the Congress, where, in an emotional address on the dais surrounded by boxes containing 30,000 letters from PEN members and other supporters, he thanked all of PEN for his freedom. These moving encounters with Honorary Members put the 'human' into the rights work to which we are all committed.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Political meetings are part of PEN Canada's campaign arsenal. Our annual consultations with the Department of Foreign Affairs took place in February, when we expressed our concerns about China, Cuba and Haiti. But the policy seminar organized by the Canada-Tibet Committee with His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Ottawa was no doubt the most remarkable occasion to which we were invited. To understand the political situation of Tibet from the point of view of its most famous exile was a privilege. His Holiness urged PEN Canada to continue its work on behalf of our Honorary Members, the five Tibetan monks—the Drepung Monastery Group—each sentenced to 17-19 years in prison for translating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into Tibetan. He emphasized the importance of compassion in all our work and declared that PEN's focus on individual cases was a very valuable way of reminding the world of the real people charged with violations against the right to freedom of expression.

As a result of a question posed to PEN Canada by His Holiness about his concerns regarding a Canadian film documentary on Tibet, we joined forces with Amnesty International and sent a letter to the National Film Board (NFB). At issue for His Holiness and for the two organizations was the safety of the Tibetans expressing their opinions in the film *Tibet: What Remains of Us*, and watching video footage of a message by the Dalai Lama. Possession of any images of the Dalai Lama is a political crime in Tibet, and PEN has had reports of reprisals on Tibetans for this and other 'crimes' of freedom of expression and religion. As a result of PEN Canada and Amnesty's letter, the NFB posted security guards at film showings in Toronto and audience members were searched before entering the screenings in order to prevent viewers from recording the film. The filmmakers pledged to carry on with the security measures at all other screenings and were considering taking measures to conceal the faces of the Tibetans filmed. However, serious questions remain. We will continue to monitor this situation.

Salman Rushdie, Aaron Berhane, Cheik Kone and Other Writers in Exile

At the recent Writers in Prison Committee biennial conference in Barcelona, where I delivered reports on our Ottawa conference “Building a Writers in Exile Network,” and on PEN Canada’s work as Chair of the International PEN Writers in Exile Network, we were honoured by the presence of several exiled writers, who gave testimonials of their experiences of being helped by PEN.

The best-known of these is Salman Rushdie, who, in his keynote address, reminded us that we must always bear in mind when doing PEN’s work that “books survive, writers do not.” Journalist Aaron Berhane spoke of his harrowing escape from Eritrea and of the assistance given by International PEN in his re-settlement in Canada, where he has just finished a one-year fellowship as Journalist at Risk at Massey College in Toronto. Cheik Kone, a 28-year-old journalist from the Ivory Coast recently freed from an Australian refugee detention camp, was refused a visa to enter Spain to attend the conference. Thanks to the protests of the attending centres, a formal apology was issued by the Spanish government. Kone fled the Ivory Coast in 2000, fearing for his life after writing newspaper articles that were critical of the government. He was detained at Port Hedland for nearly three years. After an international campaign by PEN he was released last year and granted permanent residency in Australia.

This area of PEN’s work is growing very quickly and all PEN Canada members should feel proud that this centre is spearheading many successful initiatives to help exiled writers in this country.

Outreach

Throughout the year, there are many opportunities to meet with members and supporters, such as at the Eden Mills Literary Festival, Word on the Street, the International Festival of Authors (where PEN Canada has an Empty Chair representing a writer who cannot attend for reasons of persecution or imprisonment), and the annual PEN Canada Freedom to Read Week event. Many members volunteer at these events, performing important functions such as

collecting signatures for our petitions or soliciting new members.

International PEN’s Day of the Imprisoned Writer (November 15) ideally should be an occasion when PEN Canada members across the country meet each other to gather signatures for an Honorary Member of their choosing. Just let us know of your interest and we will send you information on how to get started.

Readers & Writers

This year, as a result of our new Trillium Foundation-funded program, Readers & Writers, we have come into contact with a large new constituency of exiled writers. Coordinator Margaret Christakos imaginatively led this program for the first year, developing a reading series that took exiled writers and PEN writer members into academic and other institutions all over southern Ontario: to Trent and Windsor Universities, the Agnes Etherington Art Centre in Kingston, the Toronto Reference Library, the city of Parry Sound and finally, to Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa last March.

As part of the program, the first chapbook in a series of correspondences between a writer in exile and a writer established in Canada was published and launched. Titled *Open the Door*, this little book of letters between the writers Goran Simic and Ann Ireland is a gem of understated poignancy that, incidentally, sells very well at our readings. Look for another chapbook in the coming year.

Our online Catalogue of Exiled Writers will continue to be expanded so that communities and institutions can match a writer to a planned event or placement.

New Fundraising Efforts

As E.D. you quickly learn that integrity, competence and communication are your first jobs, but fundraising is your biggest challenge. Everything must be accomplished in the spirit of both PEN’s Charter and the courageous people to whom we are accountable, and this includes our fundraising efforts and

choices of staff.

In an increasingly tighter economy, a more competitive funding environment for NGOs means that you must not only be dogged about bringing in funds, but you must be more creative than ever about your methods and relationships, especially in order to sustain operations so that PEN's work can be done. When money is lacking and staff is tiny, it can be agonizing to have to make choices between helping or not helping, or between spending your small amount of time left fundraising or sending out a press release. That is why we are establishing new fundraising categories: we seek corporations to come into our Corporate Circle and support the work and operations of PEN at \$10,000 a year for three years. We've also added more ways for both our member categories to support us if they are able. And we're going to make it easier for anyone wishing to support freedom of expression by establishing a monthly donation plan.

Staff

This spring, we bid farewell to Margaret Christakos, who steered the initial phase of the Readers & Writers program with great creativity. We wish her all the best in her future endeavours. We are thrilled to welcome Philip Adams as the new Coordinator of Outreach and Events (Readers & Writers). Philip comes to us with a wealth of experience as a producer of theatre events and reading series across Canada and we look forward to working with his vision for the program.

Last year also saw our Administrator/Programs Assistant Julie Payne move to our sister organization, Canadian Journalists for Free Expression, as their Programs Manager. We continue to work closely with CJFE, finding ways to sponsor joint actions and join in each other's press freedom activities.

We are fortunate to now have Caitlin Smith as our new Administrator. As a member of the Association of Fundraising Professionals, Caitlin not only brings skills as a fundraising database manager but is developing expertise as a fund-

raiser with great ideas for development and implementation in the near future.

We are also happy to have the part-time services of David Cozac as Programs Coordinator. He is a star researcher and the one issuing your weekly Rapid Action Network appeals, making up the petitions and writing the letters on behalf of our Honorary Members. He is also part of the National Affairs Steering Committee (with CJFE and the Writers' Union of Canada) set up to monitor the situation of author Stephen Williams.

Other essential service providers are Amber Lin, our intrepid Web Master, and Mirka Zivanovic-Kosciuk, Bookkeeper. Thanks to Emily Blakelock for her ongoing part-time clerical assistance.

In-kind Contributors

Sincere thanks are due to our very own designer guys: Jim Ryce and Gary Beelik at Soapbox Design Communications—always on the cutting edge and with the awards to prove it. They are committed to our mandate and have given us their expert designs for our print materials pro bono for the last seven years. This Annual Report is their creation for which we are all very grateful.

Thanks also to Michel Blondeau at Ecentricarts, the original creator of the very first PEN Canada website way back in 1995. Michel continues to inspire with his communications vision and we hope to engage in future projects together.

Thank you also to our student interns: Kaleigh Wisman (Northern Secondary School), and Stephanie Hallett (Inglenook Community High School). They assisted us as part of their volunteer obligations for a course called World Issues (25 volunteer hours are required in an organization that works on international issues).

This year, we lost Arthur Gelgoot, long-time supporter of PEN Canada and provider of our annual audit. However, his firm has decided to keep up its pro bono services to PEN Canada, for which we are deeply appreciative.

이 태 북 (Lee Tae Bok).

1988. 8. 25.

Lee Tae-Bok

SOUTH KOREA

Before his arrest, Lee Tae-Bok was a publisher and owned a small company called Kwangmin-sa. Lee was arrested in Seoul on June 10, 1981, along with 25 others, and was charged under the National Security Law on suspicion of fomenting “rebellion in preparation for a communist revolution.” The arrest was reported as connected to his publishing activities—the books he published were said to be “pro-communist”—although the Ministry of Culture and Information censors had cleared them all. Lee had also organized a group of students and intellectuals called the National Labour Union for Democracy to discuss editorial questions. Authorities accused this group of plotting to overthrow the government.

In 1982, Lee was found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment. In August 1983, his sentence was commuted to 20 years. During the trial, Lee and some of his co-defendants claimed they had made confessions under extreme physical duress and ill treatment. On October 3, 1988, under a special amnesty marking South Korea’s National Foundation Day, Lee was one of more than 1,000 prisoners released.



Vincent Rwabukwisi

RWANDA

Vincent Rwabukwisi, editor of *Kanguka*, was arrested in July 1990 and charged with endangering the security of the state, apparently because he had visited the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, and met with Rwandan exiles there. In October 1990, the State Security Court sent him to prison for 15 years. He appeared to be jailed simply for performing his journalistic duties. He was released in early May 1991. Rwabukwisi was arrested again at the end of May 1991 because of further articles that apparently displeased the authorities. He was charged with endangering the security of the state, apparently because during his brief period of freedom he had written an article that the authorities deemed supportive of the rebels. Rwabukwisi was set free in September 1991, but he was restricted to his home district of Kigoma. He was in hiding until early 1992 because he was being sought by the security forces for disobeying the restriction order by living in Kigali. His trial was scheduled for early 1992 but was abandoned as a result of the general amnesty for political prisoners in February of that year.

In April 1994, during the Rwandan genocide, Rwabukwisi was shot dead by the military in front of his home.



Writers in Prison

Committee Report

BY ALAN CUMYN

As I write, the world's attention is riveted by scandal unfolding in Baghdad. Photos of U.S. soldiers ill-treating, even torturing Iraqi prisoners are appearing on front pages of newspapers everywhere. Words of shock, disgust, anger, outrage and apology are echoing in the halls of power; details of much more widespread abuse are emerging from journalistic reports and the work of NGOs. Among analysts, the doubts that those in command will ever face justice for the extraordinary abandonment of basic human rights practices are very strong.

I am reminded of a horrifying case in Iran that emerged a year ago. Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi died of head injuries inflicted while in Iranian custody. She had been photographing the families of prisoners outside the notorious Evin prison in Tehran. Her treatment in prison was, sadly, not a complete shock to those who follow the fate of political prisoners in Iran. Several PEN Canada Honorary Members in prison in Iran have faced torture and remain in very poor condition. It seems clear, however, that Kazemi, a Canadian, was not supposed to die, and that the Iranian government greatly regrets the international outcry surrounding the case.

Throughout last summer and fall, PEN Canada pressured the Iranian government, among other things, to conduct a full and impartial investigation into Kazemi's ill-treatment and death, and return Kazemi's body to

Canada as per her family's wishes. PEN Canada also worked along with a coalition of NGOs to lobby the Canadian government into applying its own pressure on Iran.

By November, however, when PEN Canada hosted a roundtable in Mexico City on the problem of impunity for the murder of writers and journalists, the Kazemi case was looking like a prime example of officials literally getting away with murder: the case was stalled in court and the Iranian government was showing no signs of wanting to investigate any deeper into the mystery of her death.

The impunity roundtable was the finale of a year-long International PEN campaign, headed by PEN Canada, to shine a spotlight on a problem that affects journalists and writers in many parts of the world. As saddening as the mounting cases of unsolved crimes against writers can be, it was heartening to see Mexican General José Francisco Gallardo take his place at the roundtable and speak freely about his ongoing campaign to clean up abuses in the Mexican military. Gallardo's was a major case for PEN Canada for many years, after he was imprisoned ostensibly for writing about the need for an ombudsman in the Mexican military. His hard-won release two years ago still stands as a shining example of what can be achieved even against an institution determined to stonewall and avoid difficult questions about individual rights.

At our own Department of Foreign Affairs NGO consultations this February, PEN Canada made interventions concerning impunity and freedom of expression resolutions on which Canada took the lead at the UN Human Rights sessions in Geneva in the spring. PEN Canada also worked with a coalition of NGOs concerned with human rights in China to try to get the Canadian government to put more pressure on China to improve its deplorable practices. A letter-writing and lobbying campaign by the coalition, with PEN Canada's participation, finally helped persuade Prime Minister Paul Martin to meet with the exiled Tibetan leader the Dalai Lama despite strong Chinese disapproval.

It often takes many years of effort to get governments to change even in small ways; meanwhile, individuals suffer. One new Honorary Member adopted in January is Uzbek journalist and human rights activist Ruslan Sharipov, whose writings against Uzbekistan's repressive leader, Islam Karimov, landed him in prison last year on what are likely trumped-up charges. Like many others, Sharipov has been mistreated in prison. In September 2003, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan received a dramatic letter from Sharipov in which he complained of psychological torture tactics used to make him "confess" to all charges at his trial and recant his original denials. Sharipov joins fellow Uzbek writer Mamadali Makhmudov, an eminent poet who is currently serving a 14-year sentence for allegedly threatening both the president and constitutional order. Makhmudov, whose health is fragile, has also suffered torture while in prison.

PEN Canada's newest Honorary Member is Jiang Weiping, a Chinese journalist serving a six-year sentence after reporting on various government corruption scandals. Jiang endured 45 days of solitary confinement in prison, and for the first two years of his sentence his family was not allowed to visit. Now his wife and daughter are in Toronto as landed immigrants, and PEN Canada has facilitated the transfer of US\$5,000 to the family, the amount of a Hellman-Hammett grant previously awarded to Jiang by Human Rights Watch but uncollected until now. We are also circulating a petition on his behalf and lobbying to get him released.

And there is news on the Kazemi case. In April 2004, PEN Canada met with Nobel Peace Prize laureate Shirin Ebadi, who is representing Kazemi's family in Iran. Along with Kazemi's son, Stephan Hachemi, and Toronto criminal lawyer Marlys Edwardh, Ebadi is doggedly pursuing this case. The trial of an Iranian intelligence officer accused of the "quasi-intentional murder" of Kazemi is expected to resume in July. Foreign Affairs Canada has also stated that it intends to find independent legal observers from Canada to attend the trial.

When fundamental rights are not protected, prison can be a kind of hell, as current photographs from Iraq attest, as researchers have been documenting in far too many places for far too long. No country is immune to abuses, and no country's willingness to protect such fundamental rights as freedom of opinion and speech can be taken for granted.

As always, thanks to so many for writing to and on behalf of writers, for responding to the Rapid Action Network's many appeals, and contributing in other ways to the work of the WiPC. Thanks especially to Isobel Harry for her terrific work on so many fronts, and to David Cozac for his wonderful research and writing. It has been another sad but heartening and worthwhile year.

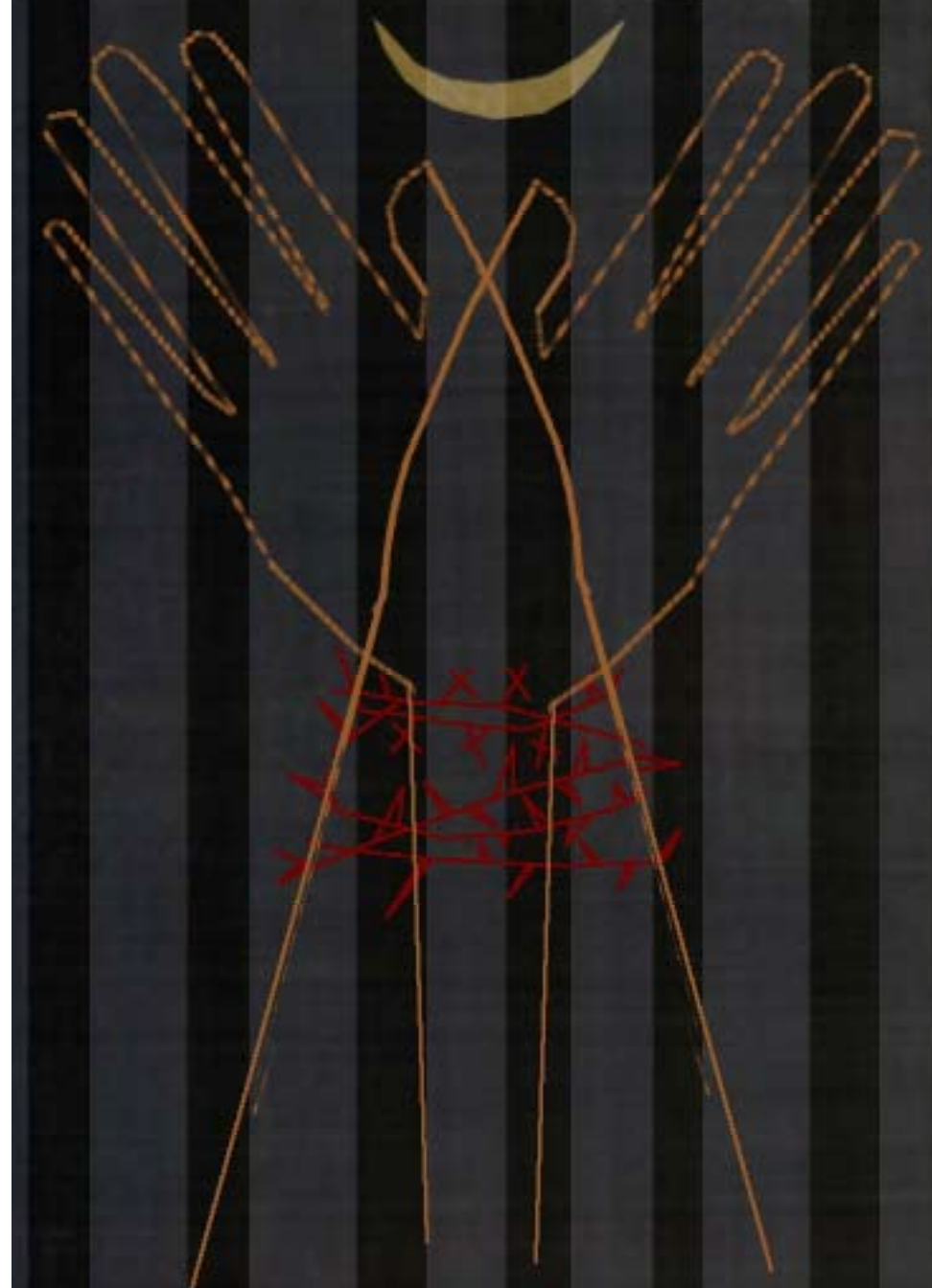
Mauricio Rosenkof

URUGUAY

Uruguayan poet and playwright Mauricio Rosenkof began his work as a militant with the Communist Youth. He also worked as a journalist for the newspaper “El Popular,” the organ of the Uruguayan Communist Party. Among his works are *El Gran Tuleque* (1960), *Las Ranas* (1961), *Pensión Familiar* (1963), *La Valija* (1964) and *La Calestia Rebelde* (1966).

In May 1972, as a member of the Tupamaro Movement for National Liberation, Rosenkof was arrested. His detention was part of a widespread arrest of suspected dissidents by the regime in power at that time. In June 1973, a coup d'état installed a military dictatorship, which, among other things, resulted in the roundup of some 1500 Uruguayans who would become political prisoners. During this time, Rosenkof was held in deplorable conditions, often kept in solitary confinement and moved around among different barracks. Family members and lawyers were rarely given an opportunity to visit him. While in prison, Rosenkof was also subjected to regular torture, which weakened him both physically and mentally.

Mauricio Rosenkof was released from prison in March 1985 as part of a general amnesty for political prisoners.



Doan Quoc Sy

VIETNAM

Writer and professor Doan Quoc Sy was first arrested in 1976, essentially for being an intellectual and teacher who was widely read in southern Vietnam. Although authorities had initially announced that he would only be detained for one week, Doan Quoc Sy was held in a re-education camp until 1980, when he was released, in part due to international pressure. His second arrest, in 1984, for “anti-revolutionary propaganda by circulating samizdats overseas” was a cause célèbre. In April 1988, Doan Quoc Sy and three other Vietnamese writers were officially sentenced. Doan Quoc Sy was sentenced to nine years in jail. In November of that year, his conviction was reduced to eight years. He was sent to the Xuan Loc k3 prison camp in Dong Nai province. Doan Quoc Sy was released in 1991, after having “sufficiently” served his sentence, given that he had already spent four years in custody before being tried and convicted. In 1995, Doan Quoc Sy fled into exile, eventually relocating with his family to Houston, Texas.



National Affairs

Committee Report

BY CHRISTOPHER WADDELL

It has been a difficult year for freedom of expression in Canada. Too often PEN Canada has been forced to defend the rights of authors and journalists to protect the identities of the sources that provided them with critical information for their works.

Three cases stand out—those of Stephen Williams, Juliet O’Neill and Andrew McIntosh.

More than a year has passed since the initial police raids on the home of author Stephen Williams—harassment that continued, with additional raids on his home last fall. It is very clear now that the raids and subsequent laying of more than 90 charges of violating a court order for his having published information on a website were designed to intimidate Mr. Williams with the aim of finding the sources for his work.

To show its support for Mr. Williams, International PEN Foundation’s Emergency Fund has given him a grant of 1,000 euros. More recently, PEN Canada, the Writers’ Union of Canada and Canadian Journalists for Free Expression have formed a coalition to support Mr. Williams and his partner, Marsha Boulton, whose work was confiscated by police during the second raid on their home. PEN Canada members will be kept informed and encouraged to participate in the coalition’s activities in the coming weeks and months as it presses the province’s Attorney General to drop the charges and hold an inquiry to explain why Mr. Williams is being harassed.

The Stephen Williams case has since attracted even greater international attention, as he received a Hellman-Hammett Grant in May from the international organization Human Rights Watch. The grants, awarded to more than 400 writers around the world since 1990, focus attention on repression of free speech and censorship by publicizing the political persecution the grant recipients have endured.

In January, an extraordinary and shocking RCMP raid on the home and office of *Ottawa Citizen* reporter Juliet O’Neill focused national attention on police intimidation of journalists who try to protect their sources. The police were trying to find the source for a story Ms. O’Neill had written about the government’s handling of the Maher Arar case, claiming it was a matter of national security even though the raid took place almost three months after her story appeared in the *Citizen!*

Since the raid, Ms. O’Neill has been through a lengthy, expensive and continuing court process to try to overturn the search warrant. She has been forced to fight to obtain information about the warrant as the government has used national security exemptions to restrict details about the case. This raises disturbing questions about the ease with which police can obtain search warrants in cases in which they are trying to track down whistleblowers and discover the sources for stories and books that criticize and embarrass governments, police and judicial authorities.

The chilling effect of these attempts to restrict freedom of expression was at least partially offset by two other issues.

One is the case of Andrew McIntosh, successfully nominated by PEN Canada for this year’s National Press Club Press Freedom Award, given on May 3 at the UNESCO World Press Freedom Day luncheon in Ottawa.

Ironically, the same day that Juliet O’Neill’s home was raided by the RCMP, the Superior Court of Ontario ruled on an attempt by the RCMP to force Mr. McIntosh and his editors at the *National Post* to hand over material that could identify Mr. McIntosh’s sources for a story involving Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and his financial involvement in a golf club in Grand-Mère, Québec.

The groundbreaking ruling from the court on January 21, 2004, endorsed the right of journalists to protect confidential sources. It is worth quoting from Justice Mary Lou Benotto at length here since this is an extremely important decision for Canadian journalists and free expression in Canada.

“Mr. McIntosh is a well-respected journalist working for a major national newspaper on an important story. Society’s interest here, in protecting the confidentiality he promised, outweighs the benefits of disclosing the document,” Justice Benotto stated.

“The importance of the journalist-informant relationship is established by the evidence. If the journalist-informant relationship is undermined, society as a whole is affected. It is through confidential sources that matters of great public importance are made known. As corporate and public power increase, the ability of the average citizen to affect his or her world depends upon the information disseminated by the press. To deprive the media of an important tool in the gathering of news would affect society as a whole. The relationship is one that should be fostered.”

“Freedom of expression is a cornerstone of our society,” Justice Benotto continued. “The ability of the public to know what its elected leaders are doing is fundamental to our democracy. We rely on the news media to provide us with this information. The expectation that a source will remain confidential is often the very reason people feel free to go to the press. Often the more explosive the story is, the greater the risk to the informant if he or she is exposed. Reputations, livelihoods and security may be at stake. Without confidentiality the press would not receive some information. Protection of the confidentiality serves the interests of the informant. In serving the interests of the informant, the interests of society are served to

an even greater degree.”

This ruling simply would not have come about had Mr. McIntosh not had the courage to protect his source and, with the support of his employer the *National Post*, and in court, *The Globe and Mail* and the CBC, to challenge the RCMP’s actions.

Finally, after a lengthy campaign that included representatives from PEN Canada and many other literary and cultural organizations, the House of Commons passed Bill C-12 (formerly Bill C-20) just before calling the election. The bill was not, however, passed by the Senate before Parliament was dissolved. Had it passed, the law would have eliminated the defence of artistic merit against charges of child pornography. In future, that would be replaced by a two stage test—does the material serve the public good and does it go beyond what serves the public good—ill-defined concepts open to abuse as tools to restrict freedom of expression.

While the bill died in Parliament, the new government may decide to bring it back after an election. If that happens, PEN Canada will continue the fight for changes to the legislation to maintain the defence of artistic merit.

Chris Anyanwu

NIGERIA

During her more than three years of incarceration in Nigeria, journalist Chris Anyanwu managed to document her ordeal by smuggling notes and letters out of prison. Anyanwu, publisher of “The Sunday Magazine” (TSM) at the time of her arrest, turned her notes—many composed on scraps of napkins, toilet paper, children’s exercise books and newsprint—into a book titled *The Days of Terror*, which documents her life as a political prisoner. Anyanwu was one of many journalists, politicians and others jailed in the 1990s under the dictatorship of General Sani Abacha. She was one of four journalists jailed in 1995 “as accessories after the fact” for reporting about an alleged plot to overthrow the general. The critical media, including TSM, described it as the “phantom coup,” because it was perceived to have been staged to purge the dictator’s enemies. The Famous Four, as they became known, were only released upon the sudden death of Abacha in 1998.

“A free press is a threat to untrammelled dictatorship,” Anyanwu wrote. “As an open marketplace of ideas, it equips people to form reasoned opinion based on verifiable information, not dogma or propaganda.”



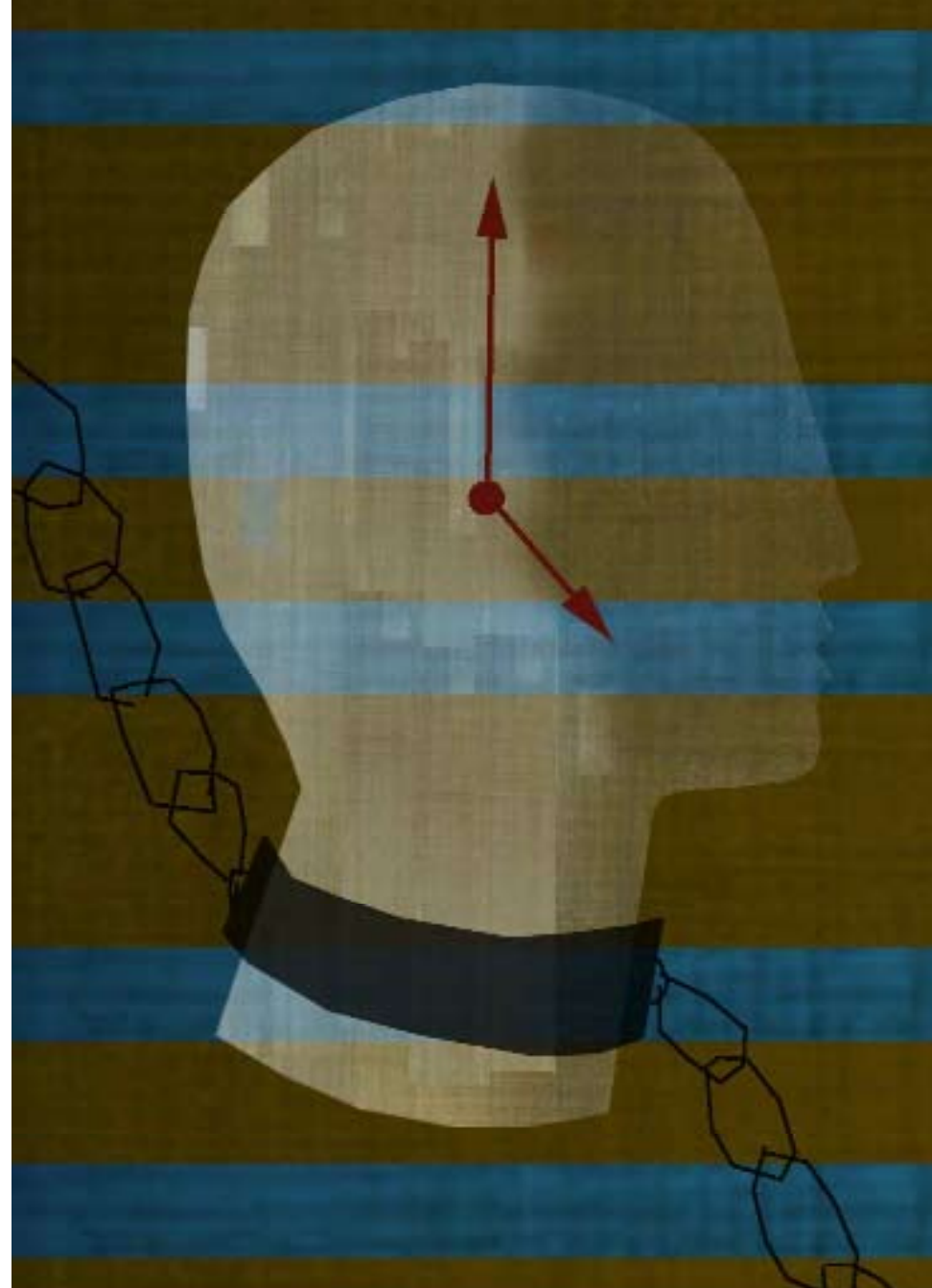
Yehude Simón Munaro

PERU

Peruvian writer, lecturer and human rights activist Yehude Simón Munaro has written a number of books and articles on the conditions of poor farm workers in his country. He has also played a role in politics and represented the United Left Political Front in parliament, where he was a member of the Parliamentary Justice and Human Rights Commission.

In June 1992, Munaro was sentenced to 20 years in jail because a special court claimed to have found evidence that he had cooperated with the guerrilla organization Tupac Amaru through his writings for the magazine *Cambio*. At the time, he was also engaged in forming a new radical party in the country, Patria Libre (Free Homeland). Munaro was tried without an attorney by anonymous judges wearing hoods. His sentence was related to the terrorism laws implemented in 1992, which led to the arrests of many innocent people.

Munaro was released on December 2, 2000 after serving over eight years of a 20-year sentence. Despite the fact that the country's Ad Hoc Commission had long since found him innocent, then-President Alberto Fujimori consistently refused to sign papers ordering his release.





Honorary

MEMBERS

BANGLADESH

Taslima Nasrin POET AND AUTHOR

Poet and author Taslima Nasrin continues to face legal charges of “insulting religious sentiment” in Bangladesh. She has been the subject of attacks by Muslim extremists who have called for her to be prosecuted for “blasphemy,” and even executed, with a bounty offered for her death. Three of her books have been banned in Bangladesh. In September 1993, members of an extremist Muslim group in Bangladesh reportedly offered a reward for her assassination following the publication of her novel *Lajja* (*Shame*). *Lajja* was banned in July 1993 by the Bangladeshi government. On June 4, 1994, the government charged Nasrin with committing acts that “insult religious sentiment.” She later left the country to seek refuge in Europe. On October 13, 2002, a magistrate’s court sentenced Nasrin in absentia to one year in prison on a charge of writing derogatory comments about Islam in several of her books.

CHINA

Gao Qinrong JOURNALIST

Gao Qinrong worked for the Xinhua state news agency as a reporter when he was arrested on December 4, 1998 and sentenced to 13 years’ imprisonment after a closed, one-day trial on April 28, 1999 on charges that are believed to have included bribery, embezzlement and pimping. It is thought that the charges against him are trumped-up, and that the real reason for his arrest is a report he published alleging corruption on an irrigation project set up in drought-plagued Yuncheng, Shanxi Province. Xinhua never carried Qinrong’s article, but it was sent to the Central Disciplinary Inspection Committee, the party’s internal investigative unit. On April 5, 1998, the Committee is believed to have sent a local team of investigators to interview Gao about his findings. After trying unsuccessfully for three years to secure his release from prison, Gao Qinrong has asked the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to intercede with the Chinese government on his behalf. Qinrong is currently being held in Qixian Prison, Shanxi Province.

Gu Linna JOURNALIST

Gu Linna is an award-winning journalist who has written about poverty, state reforms and ecology. She has worked as a journalist, fiction writer and radio broadcaster with Shijiazhuang People's Broadcast Station. She is also an outspoken and active member of Falun Gong (which the Chinese government has declared "an evil cult"). In April 1999, Gu Linna was fired for moderating a radio broadcast that she concluded by discussing her faith. She then joined 18,000 demonstrators in a protest against the government in Beijing. Gu Linna was arrested, transported to Shijiazhuang, fined and released. She was again taken into custody following a press conference that she helped organize in Beijing on October 28, 1999. On June 14, 2000, Gu Linna was sentenced to four years' imprisonment for "undermining the implementation of the law using an evil cultist organization."

Guo Qinghai ECONOMIST

Freelance writer and economist Guo Qinghai was arrested in September 2000 and sentenced on April 3, 2001 to four years' imprisonment following a short closed trial. He was arrested on charges of "subverting state power" for publishing articles and editorials on the Internet. The charges are believed to relate to articles Qinghai wrote discussing the case of his friend Qi Yanchen, which he published on foreign news sites. According to the Hong Kong-based Information Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, Qinghai used a pen name to publish his articles on overseas websites, but Chinese police hacked into those sites and traced the articles back to Qinghai. A judge who visited Qinghai after his trial said to him that his crimes were "no less serious than Qi Yanchen's." The U.S.-based Chinese dissident publication "V.I.P. Reference" reports that Qinghai is a moderate scholar who supports peaceful reform and has published some 40 articles on the Internet.

Jiang Weiping JOURNALIST

Jiang Weiping is the former Dalian bureau chief for the Hong Kong-based newspaper *Wen Hui Bao* and reporter for the state news agency Xinhua. He is also a published poet. He was arrested on December 4, 2000 after publishing a number of articles in the Hong Kong-based monthly magazine *Qianshao (Frontline)* reporting on corruption in north-eastern China. His coverage exposed several major scandals involving high-level officials. Weiping was likely targeted for arrest by local officials angered by his investigations. Weiping was charged in May 2001 with "revealing state secrets," "instigating to overthrow state power" and "illegally holding confidential documents." He was reportedly tried in secret on September 5, 2001. He was sentenced to eight years in prison on November 2, 2001. The Liaoning Province Higher People's Court reduced that sentence to six years on appeal on December 26, 2002. During the first two years of his imprisonment, he was not allowed visitors. After that, his family was permitted one half-hour visit per month. Weiping's sentence is due to expire on December 3, 2006.

Liu Weifang PUBLISHER

Liu Weifang, an Internet publisher and small business owner, was arrested in October 2000 and sentenced in Xinjiang, in north-western China, to three years' imprisonment. According to a June 15, 2001 report in the *Xinjiang Daily*, the Ninth Agricultural Brigade District's Intermediate People's Court in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region convicted him of inciting subversion against state power. Weifang reportedly published a number of essays on the Internet that were critical of China's leaders and political system, and is considered by the Chinese authorities to be "a major threat to national security." The essays reportedly covered topics such as official corruption, development policies in China's western regions and environmental issues. In one essay Weifang wrote, "The reasons for my actions are all above-board, they are not aimed at any one person or any organization; rather, they are directed at any behaviour in society that harms humanity... The goal is to speed up humanity's progress and development."

Tohti Tunyaz HISTORIAN

Tohti Tunyaz (Muzart) is an ethnic Uighur historian and writer from Zinjjiang Province. He was arrested in February 1998 and in February 2000 he was sentenced to 11 years' imprisonment and two years' deprivation of political rights. He was arrested in Urumchi, Xinjiang Province, where he had gone to collect research material. He had reportedly been watched by security police for some time prior to his arrest, and is said to have been arrested with allegedly sensitive material. Some reports claim that the content—on ethnic relations—was published for classified circles only; others, that it was material published for the general public. Tohti Tunyaz is said to have been formally charged with “inciting national disunity” and “stealing state secrets for foreign persons.” Tunyaz has exhausted his appeals and remains incarcerated in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region Prison Number Three in the province of Urumqi.

Yu Dongyue JOURNALIST

On May 19, 1989, Yu Dongyue, fine art sub-editor of the *Liyang Daily*, travelled to Beijing with two friends. As representatives of the Hunan Delegation in Support of the Beijing Students, their mission was to join the pro-democracy demonstrators in Tiananmen Square. Hanging in the centre of the square, overlooking the thousands of demonstrators, was a giant portrait of Mao Zedong. The three men filled empty eggshells with paint and threw them at the portrait, hitting the former Chinese leader in the forehead, neck and shirt-collar, and splattering his face. Yu Dongyue was convicted in August 1989 for “counter-revolutionary propaganda, sabotage and incitement” and sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment and a further five years' deprivation of civil rights. His friends received life imprisonment and 16 years, respectively. The Justice Ministry said Yu Dongyue had his 20-year sentence reduced in March 2001 to 18 years “because he sincerely expressed regret and a willingness to reform.” He is due to be released on May 21, 2007.

CUBA**Raúl Rivero Castañeda** WRITER

Raúl Rivero Castañeda is a poet and one of the pioneers of the current independent press in Cuba. In September 1995, he founded the independent agency Cuba Press, one of the biggest independent news agencies in the country. Rivero was arrested on March 20, 2003 as part of a mass arrest of dissidents. After a one-day trial, he was sentenced on April 7, 2003 to 20 years under Law 88, the “defence of national independence law.” The trial was not open to the public, and there is concern that the manner in which the trials were carried out did not meet international standards of fairness. It appears that the case against Rivero was based on such evidence as the fact that he and his colleagues possessed laptop computers, tape recorders, air conditioners and plastic chairs. The prosecution also relied on the fact that Rivero had met with U.S. diplomats. During his arrest, his home was searched, and papers, books, a typewriter and computer were confiscated.

Marta Beatriz Roque Cabello ECONOMIST

Marta Beatriz Roque Cabello is an economist and writer. She is director of the Cuban Institute of Independent Economists and a member of the Internal Dissidents Working Group for the Analysis of the Cuban Socio-Economic Situation. She was arrested in March 2003 during a massive arrest of approximately 78 writers and dissidents. Prosecutors originally pursued a life sentence against Roque, but this was subsequently reduced to 20 years. She was charged under Law 88, which prohibits acting against “the independence or the territorial integrity of the state.” Government officials searched Roque's home and confiscated her computer, books, documents and other items. In January 2002, Roque launched a new website, designed to show an opposing view of life in Cuba, independent of government influence. The mainly Cuban content of the site is placed on a website in the United States, as there is no server in Cuba that would publish it.

IRAN

Hojjatolislam Hassan Eshkevari RELIGIOUS SCHOLAR

Eshkevari, a cleric and writer, was director of the Ali Shariati Research Centre and contributing editor of the now-banned *Iran e Farda* monthly newspaper. He was charged with apostasy and “corruption on Earth,” which carry the maximum penalty of death. A verdict was issued in October 2002 punishing him with seven years in prison for the crime of expression of thought. At a conference in Berlin, Eshkevari gave a presentation titled “Dictatorship and its History.” In response to a question, he stated that in his view, “the veiling and enforcement of a strict dress code for women had cultural and historical origins in Iran, but was not required by Islam.” Eshkevari is an insulin-dependent diabetic and there are serious concerns for his health.

Akbar Ganji JOURNALIST

Akbar Ganji was arrested on April 21, 2000 upon his return to Iran after attending an academic and cultural conference on Iran at the Heinrich Böll Institute in Berlin. He was charged with “insulting religious edicts and figures, threatening national security and dissemination of propaganda against the Islamic system.” Ganji reportedly told the judge he had been hung upside down in his cell while being kicked in the head and stomach by four prison guards. He started a hunger strike to protest his ill-treatment, which included 80 days in solitary confinement and no access to his family or lawyer. On July 16, 2001, Ganji was sentenced to six years in jail on charges of collecting confidential information that harms national security and spreading propaganda against the Islamic system. Ganji was said to be looking well physically and mentally in October 2003.

Siamak Pourzand JOURNALIST

Journalist and film critic Siamak Pourzand disappeared on November 24, 2001. He had been abducted and taken to prison, then charged with espionage and threatening national security. He was sentenced to 11 years in prison on May 3, 2002 on charges of “undermining state security through his links with monarchists and counter-revolutionaries.” It is widely believed that the charges against him are based on “confessions” that are thought to have been exacted under duress. It is thought that Pourzand’s disappearance and the charges brought against him are either connected to his position as manager of the Majmue-ye Farrhangi-ye Honari-ye Tehran, a cultural centre for writers, artists and intellectuals, or to his articles critical of the Islamic regime. Pourzand was re-arrested on March 30, 2003 after being conditionally released in December 2002. He suffers from diabetes and a heart complaint.

Khalil Rostamkhani JOURNALIST

Khalil Rostamkhani is a journalist with the *Daily News* and *Iran Echo*, and director of a translation company. He was detained in May 2000 after providing translation services to an academic and cultural conference about Iran in Berlin. Accusations against him include being a “mohareb” (fighter against God), and of “having participated in the organization of the Berlin conference, which posed a threat to the country’s security.” On January 13, 2001, Bench 3 of Tehran’s Revolutionary Court handed down a nine-year prison sentence. He was then released on bail, pending appeal. On August 26, 2001, the Supreme Court reduced his sentence from nine to eight years. Rostamkhani was married to writer Roshanak Daryoush. Daryoush, who was living in Germany with the couple’s son, died from an inoperable brain tumour in November 2003.

Nasser Zarafshan LAWYER

Nasser Zarafshan was arrested on August 7, 2002 and later charged with “disseminating state secrets and the possession of firearms and alcohol.” He was convicted in a secret trial by a military court and sentenced to five years’ imprisonment and 50 lashes. Zarafshan is the legal representative of two of the families of Iranian writers assassinated in November 1998 in what came to be known in Iran as the “serial murders” case. The action against Zarafshan is thought to be both in retribution for his criticism of the official investigation into the murders and also as a means of silencing others who seek the truth behind the killings. Zarafshan has denied the charges against him. He has asserted that he was simply carrying out his duties as an attorney, and claims that the weapons and alcohol were planted in his office. He is now imprisoned in Evin prison.

MYANMAR (BURMA)**Aung Myint** JOURNALIST

Aung Myint is a journalist, poet and head of the information department of the National League for Democracy (NLD). He was arrested on September 14, 2000 and sentenced by a military court for violation of the State Protection and Emergency Provision Acts. The charges brought against him are believed to relate to a press release concerning repression against the NLD written by Aung Myint and his assistant Kyaw Sein Oo (who was sentenced to seven years’ imprisonment) and distributed to international press agencies. On December 20, a military tribunal sentenced him to 21 years’ imprisonment. Aung Myint started his career by writing poems and satirical articles for the official newspaper *Bothtaung*. From 1983 to 1988, he worked for the now-banned *Pay-ful-lwa (The Message)* and, in 1988, was assistant editor of *Cherry* magazine. He was also arrested in 1997 and sentenced to two years in prison for his activities with the NLD. His name is reportedly banned from all Burmese publications.

Aung San Suu Kyi WRITER

Aung San Suu Kyi is the leader of the National League for Democracy (NLD), a writer and a Nobel Peace Prize winner. She was taken into “protective custody” on June 1, 2003 following clashes between the NLD and pro-government supporters on May 30. Aung San Suu Kyi was held in a two-room hut at the notorious Insein prison under a 1975 law that allows detention for as long as five years without access to family or lawyers. Diplomats and UN officials have been denied access to her. Aung San Suu Kyi was admitted into hospital for a hysterectomy on September 19, 2003. She was reportedly released a week later to her home, where she remains under house arrest. Aung San Suu Kyi has spent much of the past 14 years under house arrest.

Ko Aung Tun and U Myo Htun ACTIVISTS

Student activist and writer Ko Aung Tun was arrested in February 1998 and reportedly sentenced in March 1998 to 17 years’ imprisonment for writing a book on the history of the student movement in Burma. U Myo Htun, who assisted Aung Tun in writing the book, reportedly received a 10-year sentence. According to opposition sources, six other people were also arrested in connection with the case and handed down prison sentences ranging from seven to 10 years for supplying information to Aung Tun. According to official reports, Ko Aung Tun and U Myo Htun were charged under the 1962 Printers and Publishers Registration Act, the Unlawful Association Act and the Emergency Provisions Act. They are detained at Insein Prison and were reportedly held incommunicado in solitary confinement during the initial stages of their detention. They are said to be in very poor health as a result of their ill-treatment in prison.

TIBET

Drepung Monastery Printing Group: Jampel Changchup, Jampel Chunjor, Ngawang Gyaltzen, Ngawang Oeser and Ven. Ngawang Phulchung

The group of Buddhist monks in the Drepung Monastery known as the Tibetan Freedom Organization produced pro-democracy leaflets, a Tibetan translation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the first Tibetan political manifesto calling for a democratic system based on Buddhist tradition. In September 1988, Chinese authorities implemented a “re-education program” at the monastery. On November 30, 1989, the monks were convicted and each sentenced to 17 to 19 years in prison for various charges of espionage and “counter-revolutionary” organizing. It is thought that the long sentences given to the members of the group were intended as a warning to other Tibetan “separatists.”

TURKEY

Asiye Güzel Zeybek JOURNALIST

Zeybek, who was arrested in 1997 was the editor-in-chief of *Atilim*, a radical newspaper, and was accused under Article 168 of the Penal Code of connections with the now-banned Marxist-Leninist Communist Party, specifically with running and distributing the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (MLKP) journal *İşçinin Yolu* (*Worker's Path*). During a trial hearing in October 1997, Zeybek filed a complaint against eight police officers, claiming that she had been subjected to severe torture, including repeated rape, while she was being held for interrogation. The officers were brought to trial in November 1998; however, on November 1, 2000, the court decided not to proceed with the prosecution of the eight policemen. Zeybek was reportedly shot in the back and leg during a police raid on her prison in December 2000. She was released on June 5, 2002, at the conclusion of a lengthy trial. On October 16, 2002, Zeybek was sentenced to the heavy term of 12 and a half years' imprisonment for belonging to the MLKP. She was sentenced in absentia and currently lives in Sweden.

UZBEKISTAN

Mamadali Makhmudov POET

Mamadali Makhmudov is a well-known poet in Uzbekistan. Makhmudov was taken into custody in February 1999 and held in an unknown location. He “reappeared” in May and was charged with threatening the president and constitutional order. Those charges appear to have been based on the evidence that he possessed copies of the banned *Erk* newspaper, voice of the banned Erk political party, and because of his association with writer Muhammad Salih, Erk's exiled leader. The trial was “99-per cent closed” and Makhmudov was sentenced to 14 years in prison. Although only in his 50s, he has had three heart attacks and his health is very poor. He was moved to a prison medical centre in May, but was returned to prison camp at the end of June 2001. He was transferred to the medical centre at Tashkent prison around March 2001 and subsequently moved to Chirchik prison. He was reportedly transferred to a hospital wing on July 3, 2002.

Ruslan Sharipov JOURNALIST

The journalist, human rights activist and member of the Union of Independent Journalists of Uzbekistan (UIJU), was arrested on May 26, 2003 in Tashkent with two other colleagues on suspicion of having committed homosexual acts and having sex with minors. Sharipov, although openly bisexual, denied the second charge. Sharipov stated that authorities had fabricated the case as punishment for his critical reports about them for the Russian PRIMA news agency and for his activities as chair of the unregistered human rights organization Brazhdanskoe Sodeystviye (Civic Resistance). On August 8, however, Sharipov appeared in the Mirzo Ulugbek district court and reversed his previous denials, instead confessing to the charges and renouncing his critical articles from 2001 to May 2003. Sharipov reportedly told a visitor on August 27, 2003 that he had been forced to confess. His lawyers appealed against the conviction; however, the sentence was reduced by only one year. In March 2004, Uzbek authorities allowed Sharipov to complete the remainder of his sentence under house arrest.

VIETNAM

Bui Minh Quoc POET AND JOURNALIST

Bui Minh Quoc, 63, is a poet and journalist. He was detained on January 8, 2002 at the Thanh Tri train station, Hanoi, where he had gone for a meeting with a group of dissidents. He was charged with “possessing anti-government literature,” including his own writings, and put under house arrest. It is thought that his arrest may be connected to an investigation he led concerning territorial concessions granted to Beijing by the Hanoi government in the northern regions of Vietnam bordering with China. Bui Minh Quoc is forbidden from leaving his neighbourhood and cannot meet with anyone without official authorization. His telephone line has been cut, his home is under police guard and his family members are also under surveillance. He had previously been placed under house arrest from April 1997 to December 1999 for campaigning for greater press freedom. Bui Minh Quoc is reportedly due to be released from administrative detention in 2004.

Ha Sy Phu BIOLOGIST

Ha Sy Phu is a member of a group of intellectual dissidents in Dalat and the author of several critiques of the Communist system. In December, 1995, Ha Sy Phu was arrested and charged with “revealing state secrets” for being in possession of a letter from then-Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet to the Politburo calling for political and economic reforms. He was held without trial until August 1996, when he was sentenced to one year in prison and placed in isolation. Since his release, he has lived under unofficial house arrest. On January 4, 2001, it was reported that the house arrest was over. However, on February 9 of that year, police in Dalat issued a two-year house arrest order against him for “making contact with reactionaries living abroad to sabotage Vietnam, and demanding the overthrow of the socialist regime and the leadership of the Communist Party.” In November 2001, Ha Sy Phu was reported to be held in total isolation in his Dalat home, with all mail censored and no telephone communication allowed. He is said to be in poor health.

Le Chi Quang LAWYER AND TEACHER

On February 21, 2002, Le Chi Quang was arrested in an Internet café and detained in Ha Dong. On November 8, 2002, he was sentenced by the People’s Court of Hanoi, after a three-hour-long trial, to four years’ imprisonment and three years’ house arrest for “acts of propaganda against the state” and “undermining the security of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.” The indictment concluded that Quang’s crimes included calling for pluralism and a multi-party system as well as writing, distributing and storing documents that “distorted” the political situation and the internal affairs of the Vietnamese Communist Party and the government, causing readers to “lose faith” in both. The sentence was in connection with the article, “Beware of Northern Empire,” which he had posted on the Internet. The article discussed the secret signing of two border agreements with Beijing officials that surrendered some land and sea rights to China in 1999 and 2000. Reports in the fall of 2003 indicated that Quang’s health had deteriorated and that he was unable to receive the special medical attention that he needs. Quang had allegedly lost a great deal of weight and was said to be suffering from a peptic ulcer.

A WRITER IN EXILE

The New Pilgrimage of the Monkey King

BY BENJAMÍN SANTAMARÍA OCHOA

*With thanks to PEN Canada,
Trent University
and George Brown College
for invaluable and
unconditional support*

In the popular saga of the Monkey King, Journey to the West, written by the wise Chinese novelist Wu Ch'eng-en (1500-1582), the principal character—a passionate, rebellious, mischievous, yet eventually enlightened monkey is punished by Buddha after committing a series of arrogant attacks against Heaven. Only then is he ready to make his amazing journey in search of the scriptures designed to liberate human beings from delusion and suffering. The punishment: five hundred years under the Five Phases Mountain, five hundred years under the ground in solitude. Powerless and lonely.

This is the way I've lived in Canada since I arrived: under the ground (powerless in basements) and lonely (apart from my culture, family and friends). The crime for which I was punished (and not by a Buddha, unfortunately) was writing, working and talking to children, teachers, servants and activists about the reality that Latin American, particularly Mexican, children confront.

I placed my feet on Canadian soil the evening of March 28, 2002 (Saint Hope's Day in my agenda book) and knelt, kissing and blessing this terra firma, to ask the Eternal Light for permission to continue in Canada, my commitment to children. From that moment, it seemed as if golden doors opened: Mary Jo Leddy from Romero House and the noble hearts of PEN Canada were my first guardian angels.

Street kids in an abandoned building in Mexico City gave me the only title I have: *The Monkey King*, because, like Wu'cheng-en's venerable character, I encouraged them to seek and achieve enlightenment and to fight against what I call "The Empire of Forms": superficiality, perverted economic transactions and manipulation of minds.

Like them, I have no university degrees (and I've been so happy without them!), the *Monkey King* is enough—a literary model of life—a monkey who learns and shares spiritual life to liberate himself and his little monkeys from suffering, traveling all the four corners of the universe. He offers an enlightened heart to children: those invisible ones, victims of our incredible spiritual ignorance and our immense political madness; humanity's sacred but forgotten heritage.

While struggling with my own deep fears, isolation, and a new, to me, flavorless language, I soon became a privileged soul, guided by the decisive, creative, brave and tender light of PEN.

Two events in particular, have been milestones in my spiritual and professional path: the brief residencies at Trent University (October-November 2003) and at George Brown College (January-May 2004), under the visionary program "Readers and Writers," coordinated by a dear friend to refugee authors, Margaret Christakos. While these residencies of less than a year could not offer enough time to begin work on a serious literary project, let alone regain a normal life, they did help me rediscover questions related to my life as both a writer, and a human rights activist for children.

At Trent University, I had space not only to let my characters for children blossom into stories, but also the relief and respect to rebuild my wounded soul. There, I was able to nourish not only my body but also my mind and my spirit by "drinking," "eating" and "breathing" the precious, silent music and illuminated landscape of the Otonabee River.

But in truth, in a North American world where people tend to focus more on their domestic affairs and dreams, a writer in refuge is simply speaking, invisible. Not only do North Americans seem to care little about world problems caused in part by their own European colonization, they seem sadly isolated from the rest of the vibrant, energetic and tough struggles in the basement of their own stolen home—Americia—"the Land of the Winds."

I think of the smashing of Central America, the Caribbean struggle for social justice and the Zapatista movement's wisdom before the shameless submission of Mexican federal government to our historical curse: the government of the United States of America, with its perverted ethics, made up as Democracy, God and Progress—struggles that are minimalized, demonized, trivialized or not known here at all.

My writing aims to share the truth with children. This should be the first basic golden rule: to teach children everywhere the truth with our own lives as examples. Spiritual truth (beyond institutionalized religions or ideologies) and political truth. Yang and Yin. Inside, outside. Contents and form: Literature. Life.

Ken Saro-Wiwa

NIGERIA

Ken Saro-Wiwa was a well-known Nigerian author and producer of popular television sitcoms. He was president of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), an organization set up to defend the environmental and human rights of the Ogoni people who live in the Niger Delta. Since the multinational oil company Shell struck oil on Ogoni lands in 1958, an estimated US\$30 billion worth of oil has been extracted. In return, the Ogoni received little except a ravaged environment. In January 1993, Saro-Wiwa and MOSOP asked the oil companies to begin environmental remediation and pay compensation for past damage. In May 1994, Saro-Wiwa was abducted from his home and jailed along with other MOSOP leaders in connection with the murder of four Ogoni leaders. In October 1995, a military tribunal tried and convicted Saro-Wiwa of murder. Governments and human rights' organizations worldwide condemned the trial as fraudulent, and urged the Nigerian regime to spare the writer's life. They also called upon Royal Dutch/Shell to intervene. On November 10, 1995, Saro-Wiwa and his eight co-defendants were hanged. The only crime he and his colleagues had committed was to demand sound environmental practices and ask for compensation for the devastation of Ogoni territories.





Honorary

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Salah al-Din Muhsin WRITER AND PUBLISHER

The District of Gaza Emergency State Security Court sentenced writer and publisher Salah al-Din Muhsin to three years' imprisonment with hard labour on January 27, 2001. Muhsin was reportedly convicted under Article 98 (f) of the penal code of "denigration of revealed religions" and "threatening social peace" in his publications *Musamarat al-Sama (Lecture of the Heaven)*, *Mudhakkirat Muslim (Memoirs of a Muslim)* and *Irti'ashat Tanwiriya (Shivers of Enlightenment)*, all of which were reportedly recalled from circulation.

Zouhair Yahyaoui JOURNALIST

Zouhair Yahyaoui, a Tunisian Internet journalist, was the founder of the Internet site TUNeZINE.com. He was arrested at a Tunis cybercafé on June 4, 2002, initially charged with "publishing information known to be untrue" under Article 309 of the Tunisian Penal Code, and was sentenced to two years and four months' imprisonment on June 20, 2002. He received one year for "propagation of false news" and a further year and four months for "non-authorized usage of an Internet connection" and "theft from an employer." Yahyaoui was re-tried on July 3, 2002. On July 10, Yahyaoui's sentence was reduced on appeal from 28 months to two years.

Bernardo Arévalo Padrón JOURNALIST

Bernardo Arévalo Padrón, the Cuban journalist and former director of the Línea Sur Press news agency, was arrested on August 14, 1997. Three days later, he was released pending trial for "defamation" on account of articles considered insulting to various government officials and to President Castro himself. When his case came to court, he was found guilty instead of "enemy propaganda," which carries longer penalties, and sentenced to six years' imprisonment. Arévalo Padrón completed his six-year sentence in November 2003.

Qi Yanchen JOURNALIST

Qi Yanchen was released four months before the expiry of his four-year prison sentence for alleged "subversion" and "distributing anti-government news." He had posted pro-democracy articles on the Internet. He reportedly spent some time at home in Cangzhou, Hebei Province, northern China, immediately after his release to rest and receive medical treatment for colitis and gallstones. He is now believed to have moved to Beijing, where he works with a private company.

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes the freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

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