

CJFE

reporter

2004 – Issue 1

CJFE defends Canadian writer facing 97 criminal charges

By Joel Ruimy

CJFE has often dealt with cases where journalists and authors abroad have been prosecuted repeatedly, and even jailed, for what

they write. But the case of Stephen Williams is a first for us in Canada.

Williams is an Ontario author who faces a staggering 97 criminal charges of disobeying court orders for publishing banned ma-

terial from the notorious Bernardo-Homolka case in his books and on his website. He was also jailed for a day and faces a civil lawsuit, brought against him by the province, seeking unspecified "puni-

tive and exemplary damages."

In response, CJFE issued a position paper on December 9, 2003, entitled "The Case of Stephen Williams: Secret Publication Bans, Selective Prosecution and Prosecutorial Conflict of Interest." The paper calls for an end to the prosecution of Williams and for changes to laws on publication bans.

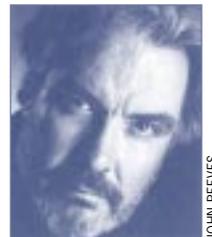
In an open letter that announces a cash contribution to Williams's defence fund, Guelph bookseller Doug Minnett notes that his work "is not everyone's cup of tea ... many people are offended by his work – whether they have read it or not."

Like Minnett, CJFE believes it is necessary to help defend Williams and to ensure that the legal context that allowed this case to arise in the first place is reviewed and fixed. CJFE has also contributed \$5,000 from our Journalists in Distress fund towards Williams's defence costs in the civil lawsuit.

Following are excerpts from CJFE's paper.

Williams wrote two books about the case of serial killers Paul Bernardo and Karla Homolka. In them, he criticized the plea-bargain deal with Homolka. The books were based in part on materials contained in a 'Crown brief,' a dossier prepared by police investigators and prosecutors for the trial.

It is important to note that he was legally in possession of this Crown brief; there is no law against his possessing it. Some of the material in the brief was covered by a series of publication bans – but some of the bans themselves were sealed,



Stephen Williams

JOHN REEVES

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DALE RATCLIFFE / CJFE

Staff of Harbel Community Radio Station in Liberia, which CJFE representative Dale Ratcliffe visited during an international mission to Liberia.

CJFE joins mission to help Liberia rebuild

By Dale Ratcliffe

In the middle of *Reconciliation Today*, a radio program on the Liberia Broadcasting System (LBS), the studio plunges into darkness. The LBS generator is down. Again.

No one panics. This is a regular occurrence in the capital of Monrovia, where everything runs on generators. Fifteen minutes later, the generator sputters back to life. The host apologizes. The program continues.

LBS was one of many media organizations, civil society groups and United Nations agencies that the Partnership for Media and Conflict Prevention in West Africa met in mid-December, 2003. The partnership, consisting of organizations involved in freedom of expression and media development, was developed a few months earlier to collaborate and avoid unnecessary duplication in countries such as Liberia.

CJFE was one of the organizations that travelled to Liberia in

December, along with International Media Support, Panos, the International Federation of Journalists, the Media Foundation of West Africa, Nigerian-based Media Rights Agenda, Article 19 and UNESCO. I represented CJFE and IFEX because of my experience managing CJFE's media project next door in Sierra Leone.

LBS was the 'state' broadcaster under the deposed president, Charles Taylor. There are many signs that its transformation into

Romeo Dallaire moves audience at awards banquet with Rwanda story

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Journalist from Pakistan receives death threats in Ontario

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Trainer's notebook: Reporting workshop in Thailand teaches flexibility

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Three new directors join CJFE at annual meeting

New faces and old friends graced CJFE's annual general meeting at Massey College in Toronto last October.

After hearing summary reports about the past year from President Arnold Amber and Executive Director Joel Ruimy, members voted on the nine directorships up for grabs this year – six whose two-year terms had expired and three who had left the Board. All posts were filled by acclamation.

Directors re-elected to two-year terms are:

- **Frank Addario**, lawyer with Sack Goldblatt Mitchell
- **Arnold Amber**, executive producer with CBC-TV Network News
- **Marlene Benmergui**, freelance
- **Bob Carty**, producer with CBC-Radio's *The Current* and *The Sunday Edition* in Ottawa
- **Bob Hepburn**, editorial page editor of *The Toronto Star*

• **Carol Off**, host of CBC-TV's *Counterspin*
Amber was also re-elected President of the Board.

The new directors, also elected for two years, are:

- **Khosro Shemiranie**, a journalist with the Farsi-language Toronto weekly *Shahrvand*
- **Roger Holmes**, publisher of the *Wainwright Star Chronicle* and president of the Alberta Weekly Newspaper Association
- **Alison Armstrong**, journalist and co-author of *The Child and the Machine: Why Computers May Put Our Children's Education at Risk*

CJFE thanks departing directors Phinjo Gombu (*Toronto Star*), Kokila Jacob (freelance) and John Paton (Knight Paton Media Corp.).

Another new face at CJFE is **Julie Payne**, the new Program Manager. Payne, who comes to us from PEN Canada, joined staff on November 10. She replaces Tariq Hassan-Gordon, who left to pursue a career at the federal Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

The AGM ended with a talk by Henry Ford, a journalist shot while covering fighting in the western



JAGG CARR-LOCKE / CJFE

Ugandan journalist Henry Ford recovers in a Toronto hospital.

region of his native Uganda in 1999. Three years after the shooting, Ford came to Toronto for hip-replacement surgery, and last fall he returned to Canada for follow-up treatments. Both trips were partly financed by CJFE's Journalists in Distress fund.

At the meeting, Ford spoke compellingly about what it's like to survive a gunshot wound and stay in a hospital bed for 115 days and many surgeries. The audience was mesmerized when he told of the shooting's impact on his young daughter – the anger, the rebellion, and the fears she exhibited while struggling with her father's close call.

It was a welcome reminder of why CJFE exists and whom it seeks to serve.

Ruimy resigns as Executive Director

Joel Ruimy has resigned as Executive Director of CJFE. He is leaving after two years to pursue other interests.

Ruimy took over at a crucial time in CJFE's history, and leaves it a much stronger organization. He became the aggressive public voice and face of CJFE on a multitude of issues involving free expression and press freedom across Canada. He moved the organization to the front ranks of analysis and advocacy in the field.

CJFE thanks Joel for his contribution, and wishes him well in his future endeavours. CJFE has begun to search for a new executive director.



Joel Ruimy at 2003 banquet

Sierra Leone project manager visits CJFE in Canada

Since launching a groundbreaking project to rebuild Sierra Leone's media two years ago, CJFE has visited the country many times to help journalists set up a printing press.

Recently, the project's local coordinator, Foday Fofanah, paid a reciprocal visit to Canada.

Last November, Fofanah visited Toronto for three days with CJFE staff, then flew to Wain-

wright, Alberta, to see the project consultant, *Wainwright Star Chronicle* publisher Roger Holmes.

In Sierra Leone, the temperature can reach 40 degrees Celsius; in Wainwright, he encountered -20. It was the first time Fofanah had seen snow, or his breath. He also remarked on the length of a 650 km drive through the Rocky Mountains: Sierra Leone is about the size of New Brunswick, 200 km. wide.

Fofanah praised Holmes's assistance as a Canadian trainer for CJFE's media development program in Sierra Leone.

"I admired his ability to observe and take mental notes. He helped us to use a digital camera for the first time, and he was able to lay the foundation for a whole new system of printing."

The six newspapers that the project supports have doubled from four to eight pages, with more pictures added. They have also begun to use classified advertisements to generate revenue.

Up-to-date news reports and pictures have replaced old, re-used stories, and the quality of reporting has improved greatly since Holmes visited the printing press last year.

The CJFE printing plant is the only one of its kind in the Mano River Union region, which comprises Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea.

After touring the *Wainwright Star Chronicle's* printing presses, Fofanah said, "I wish one day we could have this kind of press [in Sierra Leone]."



ROGER HOLMES / CJFE

Foday Fofanah takes his chances with late fall in Alberta.

CJFE reporter

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Canadian Journalists for Free Expression

is a Canadian non-governmental organization supported by Canadian journalists and advocates of free expression. The purpose of the organization is to defend the rights of journalists and contribute to the development of media freedom throughout the world. CJFE recognizes these rights are not confined to journalists and strongly supports and defends the broader objective of freedom of expression in Canada and around the world.

CJFE membership costs \$25 per calendar year. For any donation beyond that amount, a charitable tax receipt will be issued.

CJFE administers a Clearing House for the International Freedom of Expression eXchange (IFEX), which operates an Action Alert Network and globally disseminates information to organizations and individuals.



Exiled critic of Islam gets death threats in Ontario

By Bonnie Malott

Tahir Gora stands out at a bar in downtown Hamilton where he works. While around him people chain-smoke and clutch bottles of beer, he sips herbal tea from a plastic mug.

Sitting in a dark corner away from the noise, the soft-spoken journalist and writer opens a file and sifts through a mountain of articles he's written. He pulls out a photocopy of a typed note and slowly reads from the death threat he received last summer.

"Mr. Tahir Gora remember we will not spare you. Your articles are against Islam. Your idea of new Islam is enough to kill you. Your true Muslims will kill you and your family. You have no room on the earth. True Muslims"

Gora contacted Hamilton police. Detective Steve Hahn of the hate crime unit investigated and told CJFE he was taking the case seriously, but said he didn't have any promising leads.

This is not the first death threat that Gora, a vocal critic of Islam, has received. The Pakistani-Canadian has been kidnapped, jailed and repeatedly threatened. Yet despite being forced to abandon home after home, Gora remains on a mission.

Gora was born in Lahore, Pakistan's cultural capital and second-largest city. He saw the strict guidelines of Muslim tradition as a tool for elites to stay in power. Witnessing extreme poverty, he questioned hardliners who sheltered citizens, not from the elements, but from the outside world.

In 1987, the budding writer opened Gora Publishing. His company published more than 1,000 essays, articles and books that accused conservative Muslims groups of denying equal rights to women, practising polygamy, spreading hatred of Jews and Christians, and blaming the west for all of Pakistan's ills.

Gora was soon pegged as anti-Islam, a dangerous label in a

country where 97 percent of the population is Muslim. First he was verbally threatened. After he published an article about the government's nuclear device testing, a fatwa was declared against him.

In July 1998, while driving in Lahore, Gora was stopped, accused of being a traitor to his country and to Islam, and put in a dark cell for 15 days. He later fled to Canada.

Living in Toronto, he began to write again. He launched a newspaper, *Watan*, hoping his ideas would be better received in Canada. He was wrong.

After reprinting stories from the mainstream media, including critical stories about Afghanistan's Taliban regime and a local Muslim principal molesting young boys, Gora encountered a familiar kind of hostility. There was a bomb threat at his home office, his distribution van was tailed

and advertisers pulled out in response to protests in the Muslim community. Fearing for his family, Gora closed his paper and moved to Hamilton in March 2003.

True to form, Gora picked up where he left off and opened Hamilton's first Urdu journal, *Hamilton Times*. It published his most controversial work to date, "The New Islam," which proposed the eradication of polygamy, holy war or jihad, called the use of halal meat "ridiculous" and advocated equality for women and homosexuals. He concluded by giving his email address, and urging readers to write and discuss the issues.

People responded, including Tarek Fatah, host of *Muslim Chronicle*, a weekly current affairs show on CTS Television. Fatah's email said, "This is a dangerous and unnecessarily provocative path to take. It serves no purpose, except to incite and anger the very

people we need to calm down."

For those who don't know him, Gora sounds like a man who takes pleasure in stirring up controversy. He has offended and been ostracized by almost an entire community. In his lifelong fight for change and acceptance, he constantly battles deeply-rooted institutional beliefs. The fight still fills him with passion and anger.

For now, Gora is keeping a low profile. But whenever he finds a spare moment he works on three books he's writing: about Islam, about coming to Canada and about Pakistan.

Asked if he's ready for more problems, he shrugs and sighs, "I wish that I lived on a mountain somewhere, where I could write and nobody would bother me."

It seems unlikely.

Bonnie Malott is a fourth-year journalism student at Ryerson University in Toronto.

Donner/CJFE Fellowship 'found my compass'

By Aaron Berhane

When I arrived in Canada in August 2002, at first I focused on how to find work in my profession, not to mention the disturbing thoughts I had about my colleagues who were in jail back home.

I was forced to flee my country, Eritrea, after the government shut down my newspaper in September 2001 and security officers arrested me. Seventeen journalists have been arrested simply because of their profession and nobody knows their whereabouts. Sometimes I blame myself for not doing much to help my colleagues get out of prison, but the reality is that first, I had to survive.

I was diligent in my employment search. I applied to several community newspapers, but without success. I understood the competitive climate in which I had to compete with English

speaking, Canadian reporters, but I had hoped to be hired to provide another perspective.

It never happened. After realizing I wouldn't be able to find work as a journalist, I convinced myself to look in other fields.

When I arrived in Canada armed with a journalism and mass communication degree, I thought it would be easy to transfer my skills to other fields, but that has not been the case. I have had to research and consult others while earning a living. It has proved difficult to do the research and think rationally about my options when faced with the demands and pressures of earning a living.

I was totally lost, like a fisherman without his compass in the middle of the ocean not knowing which way to head, just waiting for a miraculous saviour. Like the fisherman, I didn't know which direction to take. I didn't know on which door to knock. I didn't even know if I should curse the day I became a journalist, haunted by just such a remark from an Eritrean official in June 2001 after I criticized his department.

Everything was messed up until I found the Donner/CJFE Fellowship. This program has found my compass and handed it to me.

A newcomer needs to learn a great deal about this society and government in order to adjust to the system. This doesn't happen overnight, but if one receives sufficient time to adjust, as I have, one doesn't need years to step up to the line. Through the opportunity that I received from the Donner/CJFE Fellowship, I am able to explore my future path.



Eritrean journalist Aaron Berhane

JULIE PAYNE / CJFE

The fellowship covers my living expenses and I get a chance to concentrate fully on my studies at the University of Toronto. The courses that I am auditing now will become the anchor for my future. The seminars that I attend two or three times a week are also very helpful in understanding Canadian society. Moreover, the senior and junior fellows and staff whom I have met at Massey College are my inspiration and they will become my everlasting community.

Now, I am proud of being a journalist and I feel compensated. My memories of the worst times have started to fade, though I still think of my colleagues who are incommunicado. My terrible memories have begun to be replaced by good ones, and above all I am hopeful as I witness the strong support of journalists' and writers' organizations.



Melissa Kluger and volunteers at CJFE's booth at Toronto's 2003 Word on the Street festival.

CJFE

CJFE Press Freedom Awards

honour courageous journalists



CJFE President Arnold Amber welcomes keynote speaker Romeo Dallaire to the banquet (left). At right, awards were accepted by (from left) Guatemalan Luis Barillas, Stephan Hachemi (for his deceased mother, Zahra Kazemi) and Sharon Hom (on behalf of Xu Wei, jailed in China).

'Are some humans more human than others?' asked keynote speaker Romeo Dallaire, highlighting the role of journalists in protecting human rights.

CJFE PHOTOS BY ANDREW STRAUSS

By Joel Ruimy

Three courageous journalists and an eloquent lieutenant-general captured centre stage – and the hearts of more than 500 people – at CJFE's sixth annual awards dinner on November 6, 2003.

The audience came to honour Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi, murdered in Iran last July. Kazemi was posthumously awarded a Tara Singh Hayer Memorial Award, the first since 2000.

Luis Alberto Perez Barillas of Guatemala and China's Xu Wei were honoured as this year's winners of the CJFE International Press Freedom Award.

Lieutenant-General Romeo Dallaire's keynote address was sometimes witty, often moving and always powerful as he recalled his experiences as head of a UN mission in Rwanda during the 1994 genocide.

Money raised at the dinner goes mainly to CJFE's Journalists in Distress Fund, which each year distributes about \$25,000 to colleagues in Canada and abroad to help with everything from legal fees to medical and resettlement bills.

The dinner is the last big media event in Toronto before the holiday season. Co-chairs of the evening were former Ontario Premier Bob Rae and *Globe and Mail* publisher Philip Crowley; CBC newscaster Peter Mansbridge was master of ceremonies.

'Warriors of truth'

Romeo Dallaire, who in the same week launched a new book of memoirs, opened by saying he was pleased to appear "in front of such warriors of truth."

Now retired from the Canadian Armed Forces, Dallaire said he planned to speak of a "revolution." He quickly added: "A general speaking of a revolution is nothing to be worried about. If colonels talk about revolution, that's to be worried about."

Dallaire's revolution had to do with an increase in the popular appetite for "more information and transparency from all of the pillars of our society, pillars like the one I was in, conservative bastions of the continuance of our nation."

This new appetite, he said, spells an end to "the era of the general being able to invite media in when things go well and when things don't go well, to put up the barbed wire gate, put a lieutenant out there [to] say,



CTV News president Robert Hurst (left) with authors Stephen Williams and Marsha Boulton.

"The General has no comment. That era is gone."

At the same time as Canada's Department of National Defence "entered an era of transparency ... this revolution went beyond our borders," all the way to the United Nations.

Dallaire's voice rose as he said: "The question is: Are all humans human or are some humans more human than others? Do some count more?"

More people were killed in the first 100 days of fighting in the Rwandan conflict than in the six or seven years of the Yugoslav campaign, he pointed out. But the world paid no heed. And the UN rejected his calls for more troops to prevent the carnage.

Dallaire recalled a "superpower visitor tripping over bodies" in Rwanda but saying his country would not send troops because "Rwanda is of no strategic value ... just tea and coffee." The visitor added: "the only thing here is overpopulation and humans,

so we're not coming."

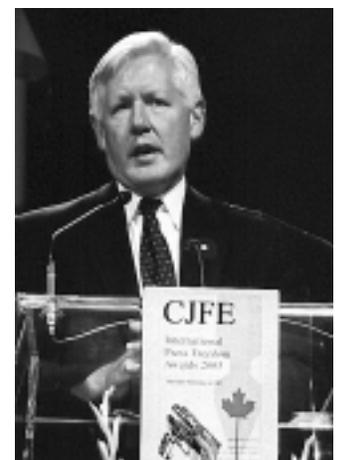
"Such an incredible lack of a sense of humanity!" Dallaire commented. "The 800,000 who died in Rwanda are just as important as even the 2,800 who died in North America on September 11.

"We mobilized the world [after] 9/11. But a few years earlier, nobody came."

Dallaire said the world's indifference to Rwanda changed after "platoons of journalists" arrived in the country. He offered journalists military assistance to get their stories out, "and they responded with gusto, courage and energy.

"The media became the voice of the conscience of the world. [But] to my sorrow it did absolutely nothing. No one wanted to come anyway."

For all that, Dallaire said, the media have "the ability to move mountains of public opinion and even to sway government structures and institutions ... to assist Canadians in anticipating what their role is in the international community as a middle power, a leading middle power, to advance human rights in places where the people are being subjected to atrocities and dictatorships."



Bob Rae, co-chair of the banquet, thanks Romeo Dallaire.



CJFE staff at the banquet: (back row, left to right) Nick Fillmore, Christina Kruning, Geoff Chan and Anders Hayden; (front) Rachael Morton-Gittens, Maureen James, Vera Top and Marianna Tzabiras.

Cited for courage

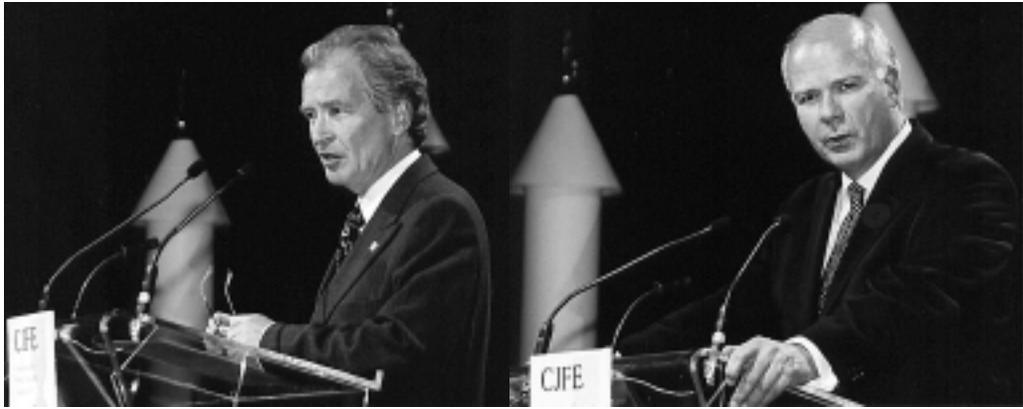
The first winner of an International Press Freedom Award, **Luis Alberto Perez Barillas** of Guatemala, knows all about atrocities and dictatorships.

He was cited for his courage in writing about a presidential candidate who is implicated in the massacre of civilians two decades earlier in Barillas's hometown of Rabinal. Barillas has had to live in hiding after several attempts on his life.

Speaking through an interpreter, Barillas said he accepted the award "for those people who can't speak for themselves." He said the CJFE award, coming at an unexpected time and from an unexpected place, gave him courage to carry on.



Retired CBC-TV newscaster Knowlton Nash at the banquet



Banquet co-chair Philip Crawley, *Globe and Mail* publisher (left), and MC Peter Mansbridge of CBC.

Referring to Zahra Kazemi, he ended his acceptance speech by saying that "one day I would like to put some flowers on her grave."

Hostage in China

The second winner, **Xu Wei**, has just begun serving a 10-year prison term in China for writing two Internet articles on political reforms. Accepting in his name was Sharon Hom, executive director of New York-based Human Rights in China.

Hom said protests can make a difference in China, where a "pattern of hostage release" has coincided with international campaigns to help journalists and others imprisoned by the state.

She urged the audience – "those of you doing business in

China or interested in doing business in China" – to keep pushing Beijing for reforms during what she called a window of opportunity that has seen China join the World Trade Organization and host the 2008 Olympics.

Hom said she had spoken with Xu Wei's father in China.

"When we told Xu Wei's father about the award, he was quiet and then he said he was very touched. He said, 'Thank you for this recognition and you should know it will give my son spirit and great support while he's in prison.'"

Killed in custody

Stephan Hachemi spoke briefly but movingly while accepting the Tara Singh Hayer Memorial Award

on behalf of his mother, **Zahra Kazemi**, the Iranian-Canadian photojournalist murdered last summer while in the custody of Iranian security.

Iran refused to allow a forensic examination of Kazemi's remains by Canadian experts, and insisted on burying her in Iran instead of allowing the return of her remains to Canada.

Hachemi, wearing a black t-shirt, began by asking "once again" to have "the body of my mother brought back to Canada, where she belongs."

He thanked CJFE for helping to keep his mother's memory alive and added he shares the award with "all the journalists who courageously do what to them is the right thing despite the danger."

Forced into hiding: A journalist tells his story

By **Luis Barillas**

Being a journalist isn't easy in Guatemala, or in many other parts of the world. (My solidarity goes out to each of you, my colleagues).

Statistics for 2003 show that numerous journalists are threatened and persecuted in this country where powerful forces want to silence all those who fight for justice, peace and the truth.

Dark forces, acting in the shadow of impunity, weave their black plans against this sector to weaken and silence the people's only channels of expression. For them, wearing a reporter's vest, or carrying a press card or camera, is reason enough to make an attempt on a journalist's life.

These aggressions are proof that in Guatemala freedom of expression is still not respected. They are acts that recall the practices of the past, when journalists were kidnapped, disappeared or even murdered for criticizing the government or other powerful sectors.

In the face of these abuses and given the justice system's limitations, a group of journalists launched a proposal last November aimed at protecting reporters in the countryside, since they tend to be the most vulnerable.

That is why it is important that government leaders, both the incumbents and those who will take up office on January 14, 2004, avoid more confrontations with the press and recognize the role the independent media play in the construction of true democracy in Guatemala.

I've played my part by bringing to light,

through the press and radio, the names of government officials and members of the party now in power who are implicated in the death or disappearance of some 200,000 during the civil war. My hometown, the Maya-Achi city of Rabinal, was one of the areas hardest hit during the war.

I reported on the exhumation of clandestine cemeteries where many of the war's



Luis Barillas of Guatemala, winner of the International Press Freedom Award.

victims lie buried, and on local demands to close local army base. My reports also covered the government's decision to compensate the paramilitary Civil Defense patrollers who took part in the massacres in the region during the 1980s, and on public de-

mands that the government compensate victims of violence, abuse and corruption. These reports have made me the target of attacks.

From 2001 to 2002 I was physically attacked and persecuted by individuals dressed in military garb. In 2003, I was followed by gang members and received death threats over the telephone. A bomb was set off in my house and my sister received a written note threatening her and her children if I did not stop my reporting.

These are some of the incidents that mark my work as a journalist and broadcaster. In the face of these attacks, and for my own safety, I was forced to live in hiding in Guatemala.

I hoped that the authorities would find and process those responsible. To date, no information has been given about the status of the investigation.

Following my nomination by the Canadian-based organization Rights Action, Canadian Journalists for Free Expression awarded me the International Press Freedom Award, an honour that humbles me and lets me know that somewhere on this planet there are people and organizations, like CJFE, who recognize the risks taken when we work to inform and be informed.

That is why this prize is not mine alone. I share it with Xu Wei and with Zahra Kazemi. "Wherever you are, Zahra, you have my respect. Many of us will follow your example."

I share this prize with all those journalists who, under the same dangerous circumstances, work tirelessly so that, one day, true freedom of expression will be achieved.

CJFE training in Thailand adapts to journalists' needs

by Madelaine Drohan

What should journalism trainers do when they discover that the course they planned does not match the skills of the participants? Proceeding without change will lead to boredom or bewilderment, depending on whether the original course was aimed too high or too low. The only real option is to quickly readjust the sessions to make a more suitable match.

This was the path that Bernard Simon and I chose when we arrived in Thailand last September to conduct workshops jointly sponsored by CJFE and the Thai Journalists' Association (TJA) funded by the Canadian Partnership Branch of the Canadian International Development Agency. Although the Thai group had asked member newspapers to send junior journalists, editors sent some of their most senior writers instead to hone their investigative journalism techniques.

Bernard and I drew on several decades' experience in writing and editing to replace basic sessions with more challenging material.



CJFE trainers Madelaine Drohan and Bernard Simon (third and fourth from left) helped Thai journalists develop their investigative reporting skills.

For example, instead of discussing the nuts and bolts of how to organize material during an investigation, we covered that with a handout. This freed time for a vigorous discussion about obstacles individual reporters have encountered during investigations and how to circumvent them.

Media freedom was a central concern in these sessions. The result, according to the evaluation forms filled in by all participants, was a workshop that even experienced

journalists found worthwhile.

The Thai journalists see themselves as watchdogs on the government, currently headed by a former businessman who is adept at public relations and sometimes contemptuous of the media. On occasion, the government has punished news organizations critical of its policies by withdrawing advertising by state-controlled businesses. This has whetted the appetite of Thai journalists to dig even deeper for the news; they want better techniques to help uncover the real story.

We quickly discovered that investigative journalism in Thailand was somewhat narrowly focused on uncovering government corruption. We tried to broaden the scope to include business, health

and social issues. Guest speakers, arranged by TJA, made an invaluable contribution by giving a local perspective on gender issues, the use of access to information, and local examples of successful investigations.

One surprise for us was how eager the participants were to learn how investigative journalism is done elsewhere. They also wanted to discuss what they saw as one-sided coverage of the Iraq war by the U.S. media.

Translation can make or break a workshop. We were fortunate to have two translators who were also practising journalists. Their comfort with journalistic jargon and the issues made the language barrier disappear.

In feedback following the sessions, participants particularly noted that the workshops were interactive. Few sessions consisted of static lectures; participants could not just sit back and listen, but had to get involved.

For example, over the course of the week, they had to propose and then flesh out a story idea. While a week is too short for a full investigation, it was enough for the journalists to go to the local town to look for sources and other angles on their stories. The field work and subsequent feedback from us and the group rated highly in the evaluations.

The idea from the beginning was to leave the TJA with a curriculum that its members could deliver on their own. Accordingly, we fine-tuned the course following the workshops and left the revamped version with the Thais. A session to train the local trainers is scheduled for this spring.

Madelaine Drohan is a Canadian business journalist who has facilitated training for journalists in Nigeria, Zambia and Thailand.

Thai training to continue

Once again CJFE is working with the Thai Journalists' Association on a training program, funded in part by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

The Train-the-Trainers program, a follow-up to the Radio Skills Course taught in April 2003, will train six journalists to be radio journalism trainers themselves. CJFE members Jane McElhone and Havoc Franklin flew to Thailand in early January to conduct the training.

Critical time for Liberian media

— continued from page 1

a public service broadcaster has started.

The new director general is a former journalist who talks about free expression, social responsibility and objective coverage. He says LBS wants to 'catch up' with the rest of the world.

That will take some doing. LBS is one FM station that reaches only Monrovia and the outskirts. Television and short wave radio were destroyed during the years of conflict.

The newsroom has two typewriters. Still, it's on air 16 hours a day. Three times a week it translates English programs into some of the country's many languages.

Gyude Bryant, who is the chair of Liberia's transitional government, refers to LBS as a 'public' broadcaster. The former businessman knows LBS needs more

money, if only to buy more fuel for the generator to stay on air longer. He knows all of the media outlets in Liberia need training.

"We truly are coming from the bottom," he says as a matter of fact.

Liberia's newspapers are also in a sorry state. Most operate out of a single room. Journalists are lucky if they make \$20 US a month. Many were forced into exile under Taylor's regime. It's a climate where ethics and professionalism often take a back seat.

Amazingly, the spirit of all those we met hasn't been broken. They want to work with international partners to ensure freedom of expression and professional, responsible journalism.

Before Taylor's brutal government was toppled, CJFE and IFEX provided financial support and training for part-time free expres-

sion monitors in different parts of Liberia. In addition, several journalists who fled the country to Ghana following threats received financial support from CJFE's Journalists in Distress Fund.

This is a critical time for Liberia. Disarmament has just started. Elections are anticipated in 2005. Everyone knows they have an important role to play if there is to be peace and democracy in Liberia.

The partnership is now compiling an extensive report on its mission. The report will be widely distributed to international donor agencies with the intention of raising money to allow the partner groups to help Liberian journalists rebuild their media institutions.

Dale Ratcliffe is a journalist, lecturer and trainer in international training and development projects.

Pressing questions in Williams case

— continued from page 1
meaning their contents are secret and it is thus not possible to know what is, and is not, covered under these secret orders.

Last April, Williams told a newspaper interviewer he planned to post material from the Crown brief on his website. When police said some of the posted material violated the publication bans, Williams responded by taking down the entire website. But days later, police arrived at the home he shares with author Marsha Boulton, took him into custody and jailed him overnight. He could not get a bail hearing until the following day.

Williams was forced in May to surrender the Crown brief to a court despite the fact he was legally in possession of it. He now faces a highly unusual dual criminal-civil prosecution at the hands of the Ontario government – and what a prosecution it is. In May, he was charged with two counts of disobeying a court order.

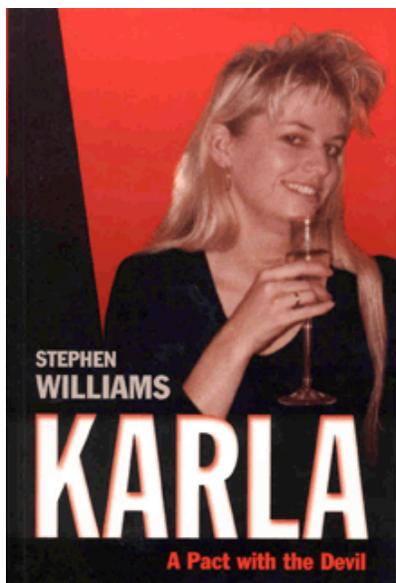
Five months later, on Oct. 22, prosecutors laid another 94 criminal charges of disobeying a publication ban and violating a court order – 58 in connection with the website that was up for less than a day, 28 in connection with his first book, *Invisible Darkness*, and eight in connection with his second, *Karla: A Pact with the Devil*.

A 95th charge, alleging he breached a civil order to turn over material to the authorities, was

also laid on Oct. 22. In addition to these 97 charges, Ontario has launched a civil action seeking “punitive and exemplary damages” of unspecified amounts. No trial dates have been set.

It is significant to note that this is not the first prosecution of Williams in this case: he was charged in 1998 for having viewed restricted evidence – the notorious video tapes made by Bernardo

CJFE believes Williams may have been targeted by these same prosecutors. For this reason, the prosecution and civil lawsuit are fatally tainted by the appearance of a conflict of interest and self-justification by the same office, the Attorney General’s, that Williams criticized in his books. CJFE is also concerned that Williams was essentially jailed for writing a book.



Stephen Williams' controversial book about the Homolka case.

and Homolka – but was acquitted two years later.

In his books, Williams criticized the actions and decisions of Ontario provincial prosecutors.

CJFE believes there are several troubling issues and questions arising out of this case, including:

- The overwhelming appearance of a conflict of interest on the part of prosecutors whose work was criticized in the book and who now are involved in these prosecutions;

- What was the emergency that required the arrest of Williams on a Sunday?

- Why was it necessary to jail Williams when he posed neither a danger to the community nor a flight risk?

- Why was Williams the only journalist required to surrender his copy of the Crown brief when at least two other media organizations are also understood to be in possession of the document and have never been so ordered?

- Why did prosecutors apply in 2003 to seize materials known to have been in Williams' possession since the mid-1990s?
- Why are courts allowed to issue sealed publication bans, effectively making it impossible for someone to know if they are in violation of such orders?

CJFE calls on the Attorney General of Ontario to:

- cease immediately its criminal and civil prosecutions of Stephen Williams;
- take steps, if the prosecution continues, to eliminate any perception of conflict of interest by turning the Williams case over to outside prosecutors.
- end the practice of jailing people accused of publishing banned information where no threat to the community is posed.

CJFE calls on the federal government to:

- enact legislation to eliminate secret publication bans that give no notice to people likely to be affected by them;
- enact legislation requiring any person applying for a publication ban to deliver public notice of the application to all interested parties, including media organizations;
- enact legislation to set out the criteria under which publication bans may be issued.

IFEX launches new projects in Central and Southeast Asia

The IFEX Clearing House is as busy as ever, with planning under way for the 2004 general meeting in Azerbaijan, and the launch of new outreach projects in Southeast and Central Asia.

Project strengthens freedom monitoring in Central Asia

In November 2003, IFEX's Outreach Program launched a new project to improve the monitoring of free-expression violations in Central Asia and to build links between local groups and IFEX's international community.

A decade after the collapse of the Soviet Union, hope for democratic development in Central Asia is dwindling. One key indicator is the drastic deterioration of free expression in the region. Governments in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan increasingly rely on violent force and repression to quell dissent and hold onto power.

IFEX's project, "Building Democracy in Central Asia: Filling

the Gaps in Free-Expression Monitoring, Training and Advocacy," will run for 12 months. Funded by the Peace and Stability Fund of Denmark's foreign ministry, it will involve regional and national training with local organizations to support free-expression monitoring. Salla Kayhko is co-ordinating the project, based in the Kazakh capital of Almaty.

The project emerged out of a pilot scheme IFEX initiated last year to assess the potential to develop an internationally linked, regional free expression network in Central Asia. The scheme, also supported by Denmark's foreign ministry, gave IFEX an opportunity to meet and interact with a broad range of key actors in the free-expression field, to identify key skills gaps and to develop a longer-term strategy for supporting a free-expression network.

Kayhko says organizations that work on freedom of expression in Central Asia do not get the attention they deserve. Through the IFEX project, their knowledge, expertise and information can be

gathered and linked to the wider international community.

For more information, email salla@ifex.org.

3-year project in Southeast Asia

The Outreach Program is starting a three-year project to strengthen media rights and protect freedom of expression in Southeast Asia.

Funded by the Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency, the project will be co-ordinated with the Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA). Four of SEAPA's five members belong to the IFEX network.

IFEX's Director of Development, Nick Fillmore, says the project activities will focus on building up SEAPA's organizational capacity as a regional network, implementing a mechanism for monitoring free-expression violations, and initiating campaigns in countries where media are heavily restricted.

Baku to host 2004 IFEX meeting

Free-expression groups from around the world will converge in Baku, Azerbaijan, from June 13-18 for IFEX's general meeting. IFEX's 57 member organizations and other international partners will gather for a series of panel sessions, workshops and IFEX business meetings. The Clearing House has hired Christina Sufrim to help organize the meeting.



Coordinator Salla Kayhko in Central Asia

CJFE pushes free-expression agenda at UN information summit

By Geoff Chan

It wasn't what CJFE had hoped for, but it could have been a lot worse.

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), which took place in Geneva in December, 2003, promised to be an unprecedented opportunity for governments, civil society and the private sector to hammer out an agreement on how to bridge the so-called "digital divide" separating rich and poor countries.

The UN-sponsored summit was to issue a declaration and action plan that would provide a "roadmap" for managing the spread of Internet technologies worldwide. Many civil society organizations, including CJFE, saw the summit as an opportunity to promote and reaffirm the importance of free expression in the Internet age.

With Internet censorship rising in many countries, coupled with a post-September 11 "war on terrorism" agenda, there was concern that governments would use the summit to scale back international standards on free expression in favour of national security. Add to that a widening

gulf between countries with quick access to the Internet and countries still struggling to lay down reliable telephone lines, let alone Internet cables.

At preparatory meetings for the Geneva summit, it became clear that freedom of expression wasn't high on the WSIS agenda. Until the December meeting, "free expression was almost absent as a founding principle for a new Information Society," said CJFE Board Member Bob Carty, who attended the Geneva proceedings.

"The media was barely mentioned [in draft WSIS documents] as a key force."

Only after forceful lobbying by free-expression groups, including CJFE, did governments at the WSIS affirm the importance of freedom of expression. The final document clearly referred to Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and to the important role of the media. The WSIS also recognized that journalists, rather than governments, should monitor their own ethical practices.

CJFE was active at Geneva, networking with members of the IFEX community to promote freedom of expression, gaining first-hand knowledge of the issues in the process, and supporting UNESCO's presence at the WSIS.

Carty also met with key members of the Canadian government delegation and reminded them of CJFE's position on the WSIS. In the lead-up to the summit, CJFE played a key role in national consultations on the WSIS. Many of our recommendations were included in a Canadian UNESCO report that was widely circulated among government officials.

Carty's visit coincided with the launch of a special WSIS section on IFEX's website (www.ifex.org), featuring specially commissioned articles on free expression issues.

Although the Geneva meeting didn't turn into the disaster CJFE and many free-expression groups feared, many issues were ignored. "The final declaration failed to

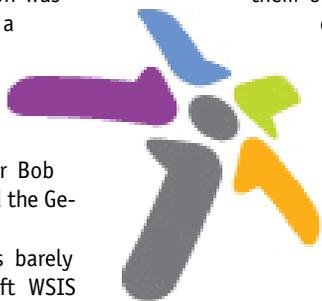
address the growing problem of media concentration and virtually ignored the role of community media in expanding free expression in developing countries," Carty says. Neither was attention paid to the role of public service broadcasting.

Perhaps most glaring was WSIS's failure to insist that governments implement Article 19. "Half of the world's nations attending WSIS violate free expression, yet there was no call for governments to stop censoring the Internet," points out Carty.

The second phase of the WSIS, scheduled for Tunisia in 2005, will seek agreement on issues left unresolved by the Geneva meeting, including the thorny question of who should regulate the Internet and whether nations should contribute to a special fund for Africa.

However, there is concern that hosting a conference in a country known for violently repressing free speech may turn the WSIS into a farce. The lead official appointed to coordinate the Tunisia phase has been accused by human rights groups of authorizing the use of torture.

CJFE will be watching.



CJFE helps Iranian cartoonist cope with distress of exile

by Julie Payne

"In your country you are pressed. When you get out, you're depressed."

So goes one of Nikahang Kowsar's favourite cartoons. One of many displayed at the University of Toronto's Robarts Library in December, 2003, it's a sobering reflection of the realities of Nikahang's life – five months after his arrival in Canada.

Nikahang, a well-known and prolific cartoonist from Iran, travelled to Canada last July on an invitation to speak to Canadian editorial cartoonists at their association's convention in Quebec City, and to exhibit his cartoons.

On July 10, his wife, Niloufar

Moezzi, received a legal summons from the Iranian Press Court, demanding that he return to Iran within three days. Nikahang believes that if he had returned to Iran, he would have been immediately arrested.

Three years ago, Iranian authorities arrested Nikahang after one of his cartoons was criticized for resembling a famous cleric. He has also been accused of having a relationship with cartoonists and journalists associations



Nikahang Kowsar at his Toronto exhibit of cartoons.

JULIE PAYNE / CJFE

of foreign countries such as Canada and the United States. Over the past four years, his home, office and cellular phone have been tapped, and his house searched in his absence. All his letters arrive opened.

And as Nikahang wryly notes in another cartoon, he now shares the honour of being included on a recent list of 10 Iranians targeted for assassination by militant Islamic groups. An honour indeed to have his name appear just below that of Nobel Peace Prize winner, Shirin Ebadi.

Last September, CJFE helped Nikahang with a grant from the Journalists in Distress Fund. The \$1,000 has enabled Nikahang to receive counselling on dealing with post-traumatic stress.

He says it is helping: the headaches have gone, and he's starting to sleep at night. He has fewer panic attacks.

But for the near future, Nikahang remains in legal limbo, staying in Canada as a visitor. His wife and daughter, Negar, remain in Iran.

When he telephones his family, Negar, wise at four years of age, asks him "When will your exhibition end?"

It is a question to which he does not know the answer.

To see more of Nikahang's cartoons visit: <http://sicknick.org>

