

## CJFE helps commemorate 10th anniversary of Tiananmen Square

By Beth Asher

**O**n 28 May 1999, Canadian Journalists for Free Expression co-hosted the Human Rights City in Toronto. The event commemorated the 10th anniversary of the 4 June 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, when more than 1,000 unarmed students and ordinary citizens were killed by government troops following days of pro-democracy protests, crushing China's emerging pro-democracy movement.

A featured guest at the Human Rights City was Wang Dan, one of the most prominent leaders of the student protests in China in 1989. Following the military crackdown in Tiananmen Square, Wang was sentenced to a total of 15 years in prison and finally released on medical parole in April 1998. Wang is commemorating the anniversary of the massacre by launching a global petition campaign for human rights in China. The petition, which can be accessed via the Internet at <http://www.june4.org>, has gathered more than 120,000 signatures and can be signed until October. It calls on the Chinese government to overturn the official verdict on the 1989 pro-democracy movement, to release all political prisoners, and to re-

— continues on page 3



Wang Dan (centre) and other speakers at the Human Rights Tent City in Toronto release doves into the air as a gesture calling for peace and democracy in China.

KRISTINA STOCKWOOD / CJFE

## Doan Viet Hoat: symbole de la lutte pour la liberté d'expression au Vietnam

Par Michaël Elbaz

**D**oan Viet Hoat, professeur et journaliste vietnamien, était l'invité d'honneur lors du lancement du Comité québécois pour la liberté de la presse, qui s'est tenu à Montréal le 3 mai

passé, pendant la Journée mondiale de la liberté de la presse. M. Hoat est un véritable symbole des difficultés auxquelles bon nombre de citoyens à travers le monde font face pour défendre leur droit fondamental à la liberté d'expression. Il a raconté son expérience lors de la conférence de presse annonçant la création du nouveau comité.

Il a passé vingt des vingt deux dernières années en prison et dans des "camps de rééducation" pour avoir défendu la liberté d'expression dans son pays - notamment en tant que rédacteur en chef du journal clandestin pro-démocratique *Dien Dan Tu Do (Tribune libre)*. Il a enfin été libéré en septembre 1998, lors d'une amnistie déclarée par les autorités vietnamiennes, suite à la multiplication des pressions interna-

tionales.

Lauréat de la Plume d'or 1998 de l'Association mondiale des journaux, M. Hoat a expliqué que, dans sa prison, les détenus écoutaient clandestinement les diffusions de Radio France International, de la British Broadcasting Corporation, et de Voice of America, et que, "puisque'ils écoutaient, ils ont appris qui j'étais et ont essayé de m'aider".

Exilé aux États-Unis, M. Hoat occupe maintenant un poste de chercheur invité à l'Université catholique de Washington, D.C.. Il concentre sa recherche sur la question de la défense des droits humains au Vietnam. Selon lui, "le gouvernement du Canada ne fait pas entendre sa voix assez fortement lorsqu'il s'agit des droits fondamentaux. Les échanges commerciaux et les investissements

— suite à la page 3



Chinese dissident Wei Jingsheng (left), journalist Peter Kent (middle) and organiser Cheuk Kwan at the 4 June event.

KRISTINA STOCKWOOD / CJFE

**New training  
programmes  
in Thailand and  
East Timor** p 2

**Cape Town '99  
– IFEX meets  
in Africa** p 4-5

**Louise Arbour  
headlines CJFE  
Press Freedom  
Awards** p 7

**Media as witness  
and weapon  
in former  
Yugoslavia** p 8

# CJFE trains radio journalists in Asia

## Indonesian project under way

By Beth Asher

Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE) has been successful in its mandate to offer training programmes to journalists in developing countries. Asia has been an important regional focus, and in Indonesia alone over 40 radio journalists have received training so far.

One of the main objects of the various training programmes CJFE has offered is to equip journalists to share and disseminate the knowledge they gain. David Candow, who runs CJFE training in Indonesia, says that "part of our agenda is to encourage all participants to give away whatever they learn at the course. This way, discussions about what constitutes good radio writing, what is a good story, how do you do a good interview, etc. will be brought back to their stations and the conversations will continue long after we've left."

According to Andreas Harsono of the Jakarta-based Institute for the Studies on Free Flow of Information (ISAI), until recently there was not a wide recognition of radio journalism in Indonesia. CJFE radio journalism training programmes were part of the beginning of a greater awareness for the medium. Candow notes that training participants have gone out on their own, spoken at universities and colleges and have given seminars around the country. A measure of success is that "most of them have reported to

their own stations and most have been invited to help their colleagues," says Candow, a former CBC Radio trainer.

Training participants have gone on to form their own com-

Indonesia to run courses on Programme Development. This will be the final phase of training for Indonesian journalists.

CJFE's training activities in Southeast Asia are funded by the

less experienced than journalists in other parts of Indonesia. Recently, threats against journalists have not encouraged them to test greater openness.

### Thailand training

Following its success in Indonesia, CJFE hopes to develop a similar training programme for Thailand. CJFE Founding Director Nick Fillmore, who is working to develop the Thailand project, says that "there has been an opening for freedom of expression and more freedom for the media in Thailand during the 1990s, and radio journalists working in both the private and public systems are eager to take part in training programmes."

CJFE is working to establish a training partnership with the Reporters Association of Thailand (RAT), the country's leading journalists' organisation and another member of the International Freedom of Expression eXchange (IFEX). Candow and another CJFE trainer, Ray Rideout, have visited Bangkok to meet with RAT and begin working out some of the details of the training. It is hoped that the first training session will be held in October 1999.

KRISTINA STOCKWOOD / CJFE



**Representatives of RAT and ISAI join other IFEX members from Asia in a regional discussion at the annual meeting of IFEX in April.**

mittee, called FOWAR. The committee, which meets in Jakarta, is meant to offer journalists a forum in which to support one another and to discuss events of the day and how they are covered. There are also plans to form a congress of radio journalists.

One of the country-specific courses designed for Indonesia dealt with election coverage, which Candow explains was very important to the participants, as they anticipated the country's first democratic national elections in decades, which took place in June. In September and November 1999, Candow will return to

Southeast Asia Fund for Institutional and Legal Development (SEAFILD), a division of the Canadian International Development Agency.

A project to hold radio training sessions in East Timor in advance of the August referendum on independence or autonomy has been postponed due to violent attacks on the media, both foreign and local, in East Timor. In April, the office of *Voice of East Timor*, a pro-independence newspaper, was ransacked by pro-integrationists. In May, Canadian journalist Ian Timberlake, a CJFE member, and seven other journalists were attacked by an aggressive mob in Dili.

Once the situation stabilises in East Timor, CJFE hopes to carry out skills development training for radio journalists there. The United Nations, which is overseeing the referendum, has already started broadcasting news and feature reports locally in four languages through its UN Assistance Mission in East Timor (UNAMET).

Thanks to SEAFILD, CJFE was able to carry out a feasibility study for its training project. CJFE discovered that repression has led to Timorese journalists practising self-censorship in the past, and that they were poorly trained and



**IFEX Development/Outreach Coordinator Isabelle Patenaude left CJFE in July after nearly five years. Isabelle was instrumental in improving and expanding the work of the IFEX Clearing House, and will be sorely missed not only by CJFE but by all the members of the IFEX network. We are sad to see Isabelle go, but wish her all the best in her new endeavours.**

## New look for a new millennium!

Actually, the millennium has absolutely nothing to do with the new *CJFE Reporter*. After four years, we thought it was time for change. We hope you like it and we welcome your comments at [cjfe@cjfe.org](mailto:cjfe@cjfe.org).

Eric Mills, who helped design the original *Reporter*, worked on the redesign with the help of Monika Wagner of MBW Associates. Thanks to Eric and Monika for this dynamic new look.

And thanks to the R.H. Webster Foundation in Montreal for financial support of this publication.

2

### CJFE reporter

1999, Issue #2 (16)

Newsletter of  
Canadian Journalists  
for Free Expression

489 College St. #403  
Toronto, Ontario M6G 1A5

tel: +1 416 515 9622  
fax: +1 416 515 7879

e-mail: [cjfe@cjfe.org](mailto:cjfe@cjfe.org)  
<http://www.cjfe.org>

**Executive Director**  
Wayne Sharpe

**IFEX Alerts Coordinators**  
Michaël Elbaz  
Marianna Tzabiras

**IFEX Development/  
Outreach Coordinator**  
Kristina Stockwood

**IFEX Communique Editor**  
Rebecca Nelems

**CJFE Programme Manager**  
Lisa Roberts

**Founding Director**  
Nick Fillmore

#### Board of Directors

Arnold Amber (president), Lon Appleby, Marlene Benmergui, Ilona Biro, Diana Bishop, Phinjo Gombu, Richard Gwyn, Bob Hepburn, Gordana Knezevic, Frank Koller, Moira MacDonald, Ali Rahnama, Jeff Silverstein, Joyce Smith, Ingrid Walter

#### Advisory Board

Peter Desbarats, Parker Barss Donham, John Hon-derich, John Macfarlane, Joe Matyas, Ann Medina, Rick Moffat, Linda Powless, Lloyd Robertson, Robert Scully, Julian Sher, Keith Spicer, Norman Webster

#### Editorial Board

Beth Asher, Michaël Elbaz, Gordana Knezevic, Eric Mills, Wayne Sharpe, Kristina Stockwood, Marianna Tzabiras

#### Contributors

Sonsles Fernandez, Ted Flitton, Iain McLellan, Miraldina Moreira, Isabelle Patenaude, Derek Shapton, Claude Villemur, Monika Wagner

**Design / Production**  
Eric Mills

**Canadian Journalists for Free Expression** (formerly the Canadian Committee to Protect Journalists) is an independent, non-profit association of journalists, writers, producers, editors and publishers promoting freedom of expression.

CJFE membership costs \$25. For a tax-creditable donation of \$50 or more, the membership fee is waived.

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





**Chinese dissident Wei Jingsheng (left) speaks to a receptive crowd at Metro Square in Toronto to mark the 10th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre. He is joined by Cheuk Kwan, the Chair of the Toronto Association for Democracy in China, which organised the event.**

## Wang Dan launches Internet petition

— continued from page 1

spect international human rights covenants.

When asked why he started the global petition, Wang told the crowd gathered in Toronto the story of his friend, a university student majoring in physical education.

On the morning of 4 June 1989, Wang's friend decided to leave the protest in Tiananmen Square and return to his dormitory, but as he retreated he was crushed by a tank and was paralysed. It is this type of sacrifice that inspired the global petition campaign, said Wang.

### Democracy demo

Another speaker at the event, Nobel Laureate Dr. John Polanyi, recalled that the one million people who gathered in Tiananmen

Square were demonstrating for freedom of speech, freedom of the press and the right to assembly, rights which were already enshrined in the Chinese constitution. Polanyi drew a contemporary parallel between the right of Chinese citizens to demonstrate against the recent NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade and their right to demonstrate ten years ago in Tiananmen Square. The students and their supporters who occupied Tiananmen Square were "not China's enemies, but its most loyal citizens," Polanyi said.

That night, another leading Chinese dissident, Wei Jingsheng, joined Global TV journalist Peter Kent and Toronto councillor Jack Layton at a human rights concert broadcast across the country. Wei echoed Wang's call for democracy

in China, agreeing that the students still had an important role to play to see it flourish. Kent told the crowd that the work of free expression groups like CJFE is integral to the fight for democracy worldwide.

### Enemies of the Press tour / CJFE AGM

CJFE will present "Warlords and Strongmen: Enemies of the Press 99", a speaking tour featuring journalists from Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Egypt. One journalist from each country will speak about the unique challenges of reporting amidst the chaos of war and the chill of autocratic rule.

"Enemies 99" will take place in Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto. Stay tuned to the CJFE website at [www.cjfe.org](http://www.cjfe.org) for dates and locations for the Montreal and Ottawa stops, but make a date to be at Ryerson University's Rogers Communications Centre, 80 Gould St., on Thursday, 30 September, where "Enemies 99" will take place in conjunction with the CJFE Annual General Meeting.

The CJFE AGM will begin at 6:30 pm, and our panel will kick off at 8:00 pm. Admission is free.

— Michaël Elbaz

## Lancement du Comité québécois pour la liberté de la presse

Le 3 mai, la Fédération professionnelle des journalistes du Québec (FPJQ) a marqué la Journée mondiale de la liberté de la presse en lançant son nouveau Comité québécois pour la liberté de la presse, lors d'une conférence de presse à Montréal.

Par l'entremise de ce nouveau comité, la FPJQ se propose d'étendre sa défense de la liberté de la presse au niveau international, et d'informer les Québécois sur la liberté de la presse à travers le monde. Le CJFE envisage de collaborer étroitement avec le nouveau Comité québécois.



**Doan Viet Hoat raconte son expérience à la conférence de presse de la FPJQ.**

— suite de la page 1

doivent être liés à ces droits. Sans réforme politique, l'aide ne sert que les dictateurs".

Il a également demandé aux associations pour la liberté de la

## Situation inquiétante au Vietnam

presse de collaborer avec les journalistes vietnamiens et avec les communautés vietnamiennes à l'étranger pour améliorer le niveau professionnel des journalistes dans son pays, "pour qu'ils aient les moyens de réaliser une véritable liberté de la presse".

M. Hoat a également profité de cette occasion pour évoquer la détention, le 4 mars dernier, du Dr. Nguyen Thanh Giang, géologue et écrivain connu à l'échelle internationale, qui a dénoncé la corruption au sein du gouvernement vietnamien et a invité le Parti communiste à respecter la liberté de la presse. Pour M. Hoat, cette arrestation symbolise la suppression des droits au Vietnam.

Malgré l'annonce de la libération de Giang le 17 mai, au moins quarante dissidents politiques et religieux restent emprisonnés au

Vietnam aujourd'hui, selon les groupes de défense des droits humains. Par ailleurs, selon M. Hoat, bon nombre de leaders politiques sont victimes de harcèlements divers: contrôles de leurs déplacements, interrogations quotidiennes par des agents de sécurité, contrôle de leur courrier et téléphone, campagnes de diffamation, interdictions de publication, etc. La détention à domicile est appliquée à tous les prisonniers relâchés, ainsi que la stricte interdiction de voyager sans autorisation officielle.

Par ailleurs, le gouvernement vietnamien a récemment approuvé une nouvelle loi sur la presse, qui multiplie les contrôles sur les médias, les obligeant à compenser les individus "blessés" par des reportages médiatiques, même si les informations diffusées sont

vraies. Les journalistes, déjà contraints à l'autocensure, se voient ainsi encore plus étroitement surveillés. Ainsi, le gouvernement contrôle tous les médias au Vietnam: publications, radio, télévision, et Internet.

Comme nous l'a rappelé M. Hoat, la politique de répression rend non seulement difficile le processus d'ouverture et de libéralisation amorcé par les autorités vietnamiennes, mais contribue également à limiter le développement économique et la prospérité du pays et de ses citoyens. "Sans liberté de la presse et libre circulation de l'information, la lutte contre la bureaucratie, la corruption, l'abus du pouvoir et le manque de transparence est voué à l'échec". Un triste bilan pour ce pays de quelques soixante-douze millions d'habitants.

# IFEX annual meeting held in Africa for first time

## Participants focus on free expression in times of conflict



KRISTINA STOCKWOOD / C/JFE

By Kristina Stockwood

**A**t the annual meeting of the International Freedom of Expression eXchange (IFEX) held in South Africa in April, participants discussed free expression in Africa and the rest of the world. Of particular interest was the free flow of informa-

tion in areas of conflict, as well as media crackdowns in Swaziland, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

IFEX members and participants signed joint resolutions on several African countries, and supported calls to condemn freedom of expression violations in Yugoslavia, Iran, Argentina and Azer-

baijan. The meeting was hosted by the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) in Cape Town from 19 to 22 April, and was followed by Outreach Programme workshops, which helped groups in the North and South cultivate skills on resource development, evaluation, management, proposal writing and strategies for success.

Apart from the daily business sessions, MISA hosted a dinner on 22 April, which featured drumming and dancing, where the formation of a national chapter in the country, MISA-South Africa, was announced. Jeanette Minnie, Executive Director of MISA, stressed the importance of gathering together to demonstrate solidarity on freedom of expression issues in Africa and around the world.

At the meeting, an ad-hoc committee was formed to monitor media ownership concentration, which many delegates feel poses a threat to free expression worldwide. Workshops were held to promote free expression in Southeast Asia and Nigeria, and to strategise on how to develop stronger links to groups in the Middle East and North Africa.

In a joint action on Zambia, IFEX members expressed "concern and alarm at the continued and calculated attempts by the Zambian government to silence the independent media in general and *The Post* newspapers." Twelve journalists were arrested and charged with espionage in March and have been committed to the



IAN MCLELLAN

**IFEX members and other participants spent several days of intense discussions. The meeting attracted delegates from America, Asia, Russia, Europe and a large number of African delegates.**

Zambian high court for trial in May for a story published in *The Post* about Zambia's military capabilities against that of Angola. If found guilty, they face a prison term of at least 20 years, according to MISA. Delegates at the IFEX meeting discussed plans to monitor the trial in Zambia.

IFEX members were also asked to sign on to a campaign by the International Press Institute (IPI), in partnership with the



**Top left: WAJA president Kabral Blay-Amihere discusses media in times of conflict. Left: IFEX members and other participants at the annual meeting strategise on freedom of expression issues worldwide.**

# for first time expression around the world



Participants gather together in South Africa after several days of meetings. The group included delegates from as far away as South Africa, the Balkans and North America, along with quite a

Trade Union of Journalists (TUJo) of Azerbaijan, to free journalist Fuad Qahramanli from prison in Azerbaijan. He was sentenced to 18 months in prison for an alleged "call to social disorder" in an article which was never published. [Editor's note: He was released in July, with the help of international pressure.]

At the meeting, three groups were accepted as new members. They are the Media Institute of Kenya, Formación Jurídica para la Acción (Legal Training for Action, FORJA) of Chile, and the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) in the United States. Nina Ratulele, Coordinator of the Pacific Islands News Association (PINA), was elected Convenor, or leader, of the IFEX Council. The news that the IFEX Internet Service ([www.ifex.org](http://www.ifex.org)) has been transferred from the Norwegian Forum for Free Expression (NFFE) to the Freedom of Expression Institute (FXI) in South Africa was also announced in Cape Town.



KRISTINA STOCKWOOD / CJFE

**IFEX members elected Nina Ratulele of the Pacific Islands News Association in the Fiji Islands as the new head of the IFEX Council.**

## IFEX members and affiliates – July 1999

Alliance of Independent Journalists (Aliansi Jurnalis Independen), Indonesia  
ARTICLE 19, UK  
Association of Independent Electronic Media, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia  
Canadian Journalists for Free Expression  
Comisión de Libertad de Prensa de la Asociación de Periodistas de Guatemala (Press Freedom Committee of the Guatemalan Association of Journalists)  
Committee to Protect Journalists, USA  
Egyptian Organization for Human Rights  
Formación Jurídica para la Acción (FORJA), Chile  
Free Expression Ghana  
Free Media Movement – Sri Lanka  
Freedom House, USA  
Freedom of Expression Institute, South Africa  
Glasnost Defence Foundation, Russia  
Greek Helsinki Monitor  
Hong Kong Journalists Association  
Human Rights Watch  
Independent Journalism Centre, Nigeria  
Index on Censorship, UK  
Institut Studi Arus Informasi (Institute for the Studies on Free Flow of Information), Indonesia  
Instituto Prensa y Sociedad (Institute for Press and Society), Peru  
Inter American Press Association, USA  
International Federation of Journalists, Belgium  
– Federación Internacional de Periodistas (IFJ Latin American Regional Office), Venezuela  
– Asociación Nacional de Periodistas del Perú, Peru  
International Press Institute, Austria  
Journalist Safety Service, The Netherlands  
The Media Institute, Kenya  
Media Institute of Southern Africa, Namibia  
Media Watch, Bangladesh  
Network for the Defence of Independent Media in Africa, Kenya  
Norwegian Forum for Freedom of Expression  
Pacific Islands News Association, Fiji  
Pakistan Press Foundation  
Periodistas, Argentina  
Reporters sans frontières, France  
Reporters' Association of Thailand  
Sindicato de Periodistas del Paraguay (Paraguay Union of Journalists)  
Society of Professional Journalists, USA  
West African Journalists Association, Ghana  
World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC), Canada  
World Association of Newspapers, France  
World Press Freedom Committee, USA  
Writers in Prison Committee, International PEN, UK  
– PEN American Center  
– PEN Canada

## Torture of journalists in Zimbabwe shocks world

By Wayne Sharpe

One of the International Freedom of Expression eXchange (IFEX) network's prominent cases of the year was that of Mark Chavunduka, editor of the Zimbabwe Sunday newspaper *The Standard*, who was arrested by Zimbabwean Military Police on 12 January. The arrest came two days after *The Standard* published a story alleging that about 23 soldiers had been detained for attempting to overthrow the government of President Robert Mugabe.

Within hours IFEX member the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) had filed an alert on this crisis. What followed soon after was a deluge of alerts from members in South Africa, France, Austria, the United Kingdom and elsewhere protesting the treatment of this journalist. All the while MISA was reporting new details, and updating the Clearing House as one journalist after another was picked up and detained as part of Mugabe's all-out attack on the press.

The international uproar was fueled even more when it was revealed that Chavunduka and *Standard* journalist Ray Choto



David Jamali (left) of Zimbabwe's Zimrights chats with David Makali of the Media Institute of Kenya at the IFEX meeting.

were tortured while in prison. The IFEX community was hoping to meet them at the Annual Meeting in Cape Town in April, but they were in the UK receiving treatment for the wounds – both physical and psychological – sustained in prison.

In all, the IFEX Clearing House issued 18 alerts about these events in the last two weeks of January alone, and another ten the following month.

David Jamali attended the Cape Town meetings as a representative of the Zimbabwe hu-

man rights organisation Zimrights. He delivered a detailed description of how the media in his country is prevented from reporting on the antics of its rulers – a throwback to colonial times.

"The undemocratic legalised monopoly of certain infrastructures which was inherited from the Rhodesian front put in place to keep down the very same men who now rule us, is now overdue for change," Jamali said. "It makes Zimbabwe one of the most boring places to work," he continued, "and it is very relaxing."

# Seeking freedom of the pen in Iran

By Marianna Tzabiras

"For 32 years, I have lived by the pen, and for 32 years, I have yearned for freedom of the pen," said Faraj Sarkoohi, an Iranian writer and editor in Toronto recently speaking about press freedom in Iran. Sarkoohi was released from prison in January 1998 and now lives in exile in Germany.

Sarkoohi was the editor of the social and literary journal *Adineh* and one of the signatories of the "1994 Declaration of 134 Writers", which called for an end to all literary censorship in Iran. He says his sole crime was "being a writer and my membership in a small circle of writers who were calling for unhampered expression of thought." For such "crimes," he was imprisoned and tortured by both the regimes of the Shah of Persia and by the Islamic Republic of Iran (in place since the 1979 revolution.) Sarkoohi credits the role of international pressure and his support from exiled Iranian writers – such as the Toronto-based Reza Baraheni – for his release from prison.

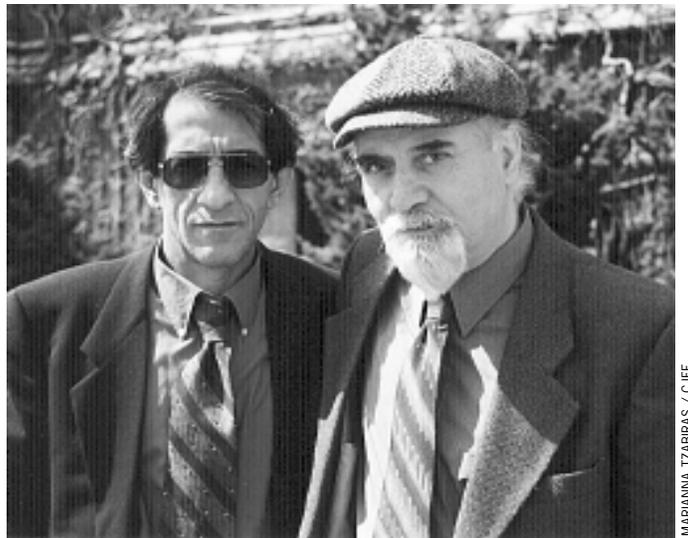
## Unofficial censorship

Sarkoohi notes that both official and unofficial censorship exist in Iran. Those with publishing licences make a point of censoring written materials, out of loyalty to the government or out of fear of the press law, which criminalises criticism of Islamic

principles. After the 1997 landslide election of President Seyed Mohammad Khatami, Iranians expected a brighter future for freedom of expression. On public television, Khatami, a moderate clergyman, called for the defense of freedom of the press and more transparency in state media. Although originally Sarkoohi welcomed Khatami's liberalizing influence, he says the President has little influence over daily newspapers, which are all owned and run by Islamic leaders. While the presidency is accorded considerable power under the constitution, Khatami is subordinate to the leader of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Khamenei, whose followers dominate parliament and the judiciary.

*The absence of any truly independent political party suggests an even more important role for writers and the media.*

Under the cultural and political liberalisation initiated by Khatami, newspapers began tackling political subjects that would have been unthinkable only a year earlier. But almost as quickly, the press found itself the target of relentless attacks by conservatives. Journalists were warned that if they exceeded the limits of the religious laws – "shariat" –



Faraj Sarkoohi (left) meets with exiled Iranian writer Reza Baraheni while visiting Toronto.

they would be treated as traitors by the courts. The offence of "slander" has led to the suspension of 16 newspapers and the arrest of 13 journalists in the last 18 months. Particularly disturb-

admit to a role in these killings, he later warned that "the press must not exceed the limits and the frameworks set up through religious rules," thus contradicting statements made prior to his election.

In Sarkoohi's view, Khatami has been trying to manoeuvre amidst the growing conflict between Islamic fundamentalists and reformers. He notes that this is only a short-term solution that does not begin to address Iran's economic crisis, growing inflation, and unemployment.

ing is a June 1999 proposal that would see press law violations dealt with by the more conservative revolutionary courts. In addition, the murder of five dissidents and intellectuals (including two journalists) late last year sent a chilling message to independent-minded writers and journalists. Although Khatami forced the Ministry of Information to

In April 1999, after a reformist intellectual was imprisoned for writing in favour of greater separation between politics and religion, ten editors-in-chief of liberal newspapers appealed to the president in his defence. This highlights the significant mobilisation of the liberal press, which, notwithstanding the ongoing pressure to self-censor, has become a key player in political debate. Sarkoohi says the absence of any truly independent political party suggests an even more important role for writers and the media in a society that is trying to step outside the narrow framework of the dominant uniform culture towards true democracy.

## Golden Pen

Sarkoohi, winner of the World Association of Newspapers' 1999 Golden Pen Award, believes the most serious challenge to the Islamic government is the change that has taken place within the minds of Iranians and the growing influence of the Internet and satellites in affecting the flow of information. Sarkoohi believes the despotic system in Iran is a system that accepts only one version of truth. "The truth for the writer is that unknown thing which should be discovered through the power of imagination, a truth which cannot be dictated," he says. His message reiterates the importance of international attention on the plight of other writers who "are waiting as I did on death row."



## PRESS FREEDOM on the wane in Canada?

Canada's level of press freedom dipped slightly in 1998 according to a recent report issued by Freedom House. The report, entitled *News of the Century: Press Freedom 1999*, awarded Canada a still-respectable rating of 16 points, up slightly from the previous year's figure. The worsening trend was reflected in the 49.04 average for the 186 countries rated, up from 1997's average of 46.29. Scores are determined by examining a country's press laws, political and economic pressure on the media and attacks against journalists.

The report cited a number of attacks on free expression in Canada in 1998 as factors in the declining level of press freedom. They include the surveillance of a broadcast reporter, the kidnapping of two journalists, the

harassment of a Quebec reporter, the intimidation of a CBC reporter by the Hell's Angels, and the fatal shooting of editor Tara Singh Hayer in British Columbia.

The New York-based Freedom House monitors political and civil rights worldwide and publishes its survey of press freedom each year. – Ted Flitton



# Mexican journalist wins prestigious UNESCO award

By Sonsoles Fernandez

Mexican journalist and editor Jesús Blancornelas has won the world's most prestigious press freedom award. On 3 May 1999, free expression groups worldwide joined the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) to mark World Press Freedom Day. Blancornelas received the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano Press Freedom Prize at a ceremony in Bogota, Colombia. This prize was named in honour of the Colombian journalist who was murdered for his reporting on corruption and drug trafficking. Cano's killers have yet to be identified and punished.

Blancornelas was nominated for the US\$25,000 prize by Canadian Journalists for Free Expression. The courageous journalist survived a November 1997 assassination attempt in which he was shot four times and his bodyguard was murdered. He told CJFE that he lives with armed guards 24 hours a day and finds it difficult to leave his house.

The assassination attempt occurred after Blancornelas had repeatedly exposed Tijuana-based drug trafficking in his weekly newspaper *Zeta*. Blancornelas founded his newspaper with Hector Felix Miranda, who was murdered in Mexico in 1988. Although those responsible for carrying out Miranda's murder were convicted, the motive and the identity of the person who commissioned the crime were never resolved.

## UNESCO honours Jesús Blancornelas after assassination attempt

Blancornelas is currently vice-president of the Mexican Society of Journalists, which he helped create to fight for press freedom in his country.

The decision to hold the awards ceremony in Colombia, and to present the prize to a Mexican journalist, was particularly appro-

priate. The theme of World Press Freedom Day this year was impunity. Violence against members of the media and the impunity afforded to those who commit these crimes make Latin America one of the most dangerous zones for journalists in the world.

Despite the continuing democratisation of Latin America, violence continues to be used to silence journalists, particularly in Colombia, Mexico and Peru. Last year, at least two journalists were murdered in Mexico while investigating drug trafficking. According to the Network for the Protection of Journalists and the Media, which is made up of eight Mexican organisations, another four journalists were murdered in connection with their work in 1998, while many others were threatened and harassed. The Network reported over 200 attacks on the media in Mexico last year, which it cites as "a record high." It is hoped that this award will help bring further awareness to the situation many journalists and media workers face in this part of the world.

## New faces at CJFE

We are pleased to announce two additions to the staff of CJFE.

Lisa Roberts joins us as CJFE Project Manager. Lisa is a former CBC Radio journalist in Cornerbrook, Newfoundland. She recently returned from Guatemala where she managed a program to resettle Guatemalan refugees.

Rebecah Nelems is the new Editor of the weekly *IFEX Communiqué*. Rebecah is a former Co-ordinator and Election Monitor with the Organization of American States, who has worked in Paraguay, Belize, Nicaragua and Guatemala. She holds an MA in Social and Political Thought from York University.

Kristina Stockwood, formerly Editor of the *IFEX Communiqué*, has taken over the IFEX Developing Countries Outreach Programme as Coordinator.

## Louise Arbour headlines CJFE's second annual Press Freedom Awards

It was such a smash last year that we decided to do it again. The second annual International Press Freedom Awards are set for Monday, 15 November 1999 in Toronto at the Grand Ballroom at the Sheraton Hotel.

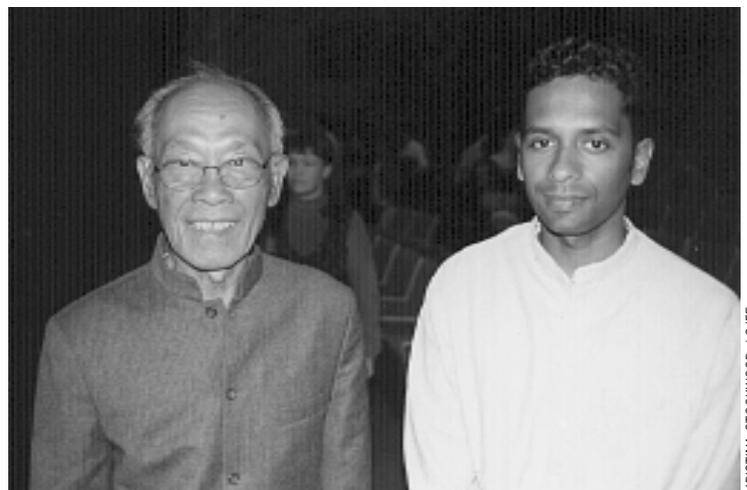
This year's keynote speaker will be Louise Arbour, chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. Madame Justice Arbour returns to Canada this Fall to take her position on the Supreme Court of Canada.

At this year's banquet we will honour courageous journalists from around the world and here at home. To reserve your seat at the dinner, please contact CJFE.



DEREK SHAPTON

Louise Arbour: keynote speaker at awards banquet.



KRISTINA STOCKWOOD / CJFE

Indonesian writer Pramoedya Ananta Toer (left) spoke in May in Toronto, where he was joined by Canadian author Shyam Selvadurai.

## Persecuted Indonesian writer visits Canada

Indonesian writer Pramoedya Ananta Toer, a long-time dissident who has spent almost half his life in jail or under house arrest, visited Toronto and Vancouver in May as part of a North America tour.

Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE) hosted a speaking event on 27 May with Pramoedya entitled "Human Rights and Freedom of Expression in Indonesia."

Pramoedya described the difficulties he overcame to write in prison, and said that the key to democracy in Indonesia lay in the country's students. Pramoedya has

won a number of international awards, and repeated nominations for a Nobel Prize in Literature.

Other speakers included author Shyam Selvadurai, who read from Pramoedya's latest work, *The Mute's Soliloquy*.

The evening was also rounded out by talks by Indonesian journalist Joesoef Isak, a colleague of Pramoedya's who toured with him this spring, CJFE Executive Director Wayne Sharpe, Brenda Doner of CUSO, and Winnie Sanjoto of Canadians Concerned about Ethnic Violence in Indonesia (CCEVI), which helped organise the tour.

# Has war reporting changed?

## Two opinions on Kosovo

WITH THE APPARENT END TO THE WAR in Kosovo and the region, CJFE solicited the opinions of Canadian journalists on the conflict. Gordana Knezevic, former editor of Sarajevo's *Oslobodenje* and CJFE board member, asked:

**"In the most recent war in the former Yugoslavia, both foreign and domestic journalists were targeted by the rival combatants, namely the Serbian government and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). How has this changed the nature of war reporting?"**

**PETER KENT,**  
Global TV journalist:

"I think we've seen in Kosovo only the logical progression of propagandising and attempted media manipulation that has resulted from technical advances (in transmission, reception, and interception) ... made since the Gulf War.

"Host governments have always tried to influence – or eliminate – the flow of reportage ... but, never more efficiently than this time around.

"At the same time, I think that NATO audiences were better served by the range of information, opinion, and intelligence

delivered up by skeptical international media outlets ... than Yugoslav audiences which seemed to have been more effectively isolated by the Milosevic regime."



**BARRIE ZWICKER,**  
Vision TV, and Sources  
Publisher:

"NATO's war on Yugoslavia hasn't changed the nature of war reporting much. Western journalists on the scene – when they are able to get to the scene, which remained a problem in this war – for the most part bore witness in a straightforward and sometimes courageous way.

"[However,] Western reporters assigned to NATO briefings and to Western capitals for the most part acted as megaphones for NATO's line, which was a superbly coordinated spin throughout.

"The 'objective' style of reporting, when applied to co-ordinated, systematic, sophisticated spinning of black, grey and white propaganda, is inadequate. Unfortunately, too many journalists in the West cannot see how their carrying out their tasks within the conventional framework puts them, in effect, at the service of the highest reaches of Western global geopolitical maneuvering.

"What was new in this war was a combatant side (in this case, NATO) brazenly targeting the public communications networks of the other side (i.e., bombing TV transmitters and journalists' work spaces.) A change – for the worse – was the extent to which Western journalists endorsed this bombing.

"A fundamental democratic principle is that the different sides in an argument do not claim to possess the whole truth, but put forward their understandings of a given issue at a given time, and listen to the other sides, and out of the back and forth emerges a picture still not perfect but more complete than if one side just sticks to its initial version of the truth."

– compiled by Ted Flitton



## Be Free B92

From its beginning, Radio B92 in Belgrade was on a collision course with the Serbian and Yugoslav governing parties. The journalists took a firm anti-war, pro-democracy, free media stance that infuriated President Slobodan Milosevic and some opposition members as well.

When NATO went to war with Milosevic this year, the writing was on the wall for B92.

On 2 April, Radio B92 was banned from further broadcasts. Two Telecommunications Ministry officials and ten policemen entered the B92 studios and instructed its staff to immediately discontinue broadcasts, switch off their computers, and stop answering the phones. Then Veran Matic, Radio B92's chief editor, was arrested and taken to the Belgrade police station, where he was detained for eight hours.

As of 26 July, Radio B92 is back on the air in Belgrade, albeit on a new frequency.

Matic and crew are taking advantage of the chaos in Milosevic's government and the growing protests around the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, to compete with the puppet B92. The new station is called B 2-92.

## Chronology of repression in the former Yugoslavia

**2 April** – Yugoslav Government officials shut down Radio B92, silencing the last independent voice in Serbia. Police officers sealed the station and order staff to leave. B92 continued to broadcast via the Internet.

**3 April** – Serbian Police closed *Koha Ditore*, the last Albanian-language newspaper in the country, by storming its Pristina office and killing the doorman. *Koha Ditore* and its editor Baton Haxhiu were charged a month earlier with "inciting racial hatred" and fined \$50,000 for an article that quoted a delegate to Kosovo peace talks who accused Serb forces of human rights abuses and genocide.

**11 April** – Journalist Slavko Curuvija was killed by an unidentified gunman outside his apartment building in Belgrade. He had been accused of "treason" in the official Serbian media after publishing an article against NATO air strikes and against President Slobodan Milosevic. Earlier this year the ban was imposed on both newspapers owned by Curuvija, *Dnevni Telegraph* and *Evropljanin*, and he was sentenced to five months in prison for an article criticising the Deputy Prime Minister.

**22 April** – Albanian-language daily *Koha Ditore* resumed publishing in Macedonia.

**24 April** – Eric Vallant and Antun Masle, French and Croatian journalists respectively, were detained on allegations of spying in Montenegro. A Yugoslav Army judge ordered a month-long investigation into charges of espionage against both journalists. At least 80 foreign journalists have been arrested and interrogated by the Serbian Army and police force since 24 March 1999. Most of them were expelled from Yugoslavia after being held for periods ranging from a few hours to several days.

**26 April** – Serbian authorities placed a military censor in the studios of Belgrade's Studio B Television station to monitor their daily half-hour newscast. The move came in response to Deputy Prime Minister Vuk Draskovic's criticism of Milosevic's disinformation tactics, urging the news providers to be more truthful with people.

**27 April** – Montenegro's independent Antena M Radio and weekly *Monitor* suspended their operations due to censorship. Miodrag Perovic, who heads both media outlets, went into hiding. He decided to close down both operations rather than to submit

to military censorship. An outspoken critic of President Milosevic, Perovic said that he was trying to avoid capture and possible torture by Army authorities.

**28 April** – An international campaign of solidarity with Radio B92 and 50 other independent broadcasters in Yugoslavia was announced by the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) at the IFEX 1999 meeting in Cape Town. The AMARC action was supported by CJFE and 22 other IFEX members. The long-term campaign goal was to get Radio B92 and other independent broadcasters in Yugoslavia back on the air as soon as possible.

**3 May** – President Milosevic was named the press' worst enemy by the Committee to Protect Journalists in New York.

**13 June** – German photographer Volker Kraemer and journalist Gabriel Gruener of *Stern* newsweekly were murdered along with their Albanian interpreter Senol Alit in Kosovo by unidentified gunmen.

**22 June** – Kosovo-based Albanian journalists entered Radio Pristina's newsroom for the first time since 1991, when they were fired by Yugoslav authorities.

– compiled by Gordana Knezevic