



The CCVT Newsletter, which is published monthly, is intended to inform the Centre's volunteers of important news, events and meetings and, in doing so, to acknowledge the vital role they play in fulfilling the CCVT's mandate.

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The Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture aids survivors in overcoming the lasting effects of torture and war. In partnership with the community, the Centre supports survivors in the process of successful integration into Canadian society, works for their protection and integrity, and raises awareness of the continuing effects of torture and war on survivors and their families. The CCVT gives hope after the horror.



United Way

Canada Citizenship and Immigration Canada / Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada

EDITOR'S NOTE: The information provided in this publication is not controlled by the CCVT and therefore may not reflect the Centre's views.

The CCVT Connection

November 2010

Singh Decision and Newly Proposed Bill C-11: Andrew Brouwer Article on Volunteer Spotlight Night By: Wen Liu

What is 1985 Singh decision?

On April 4, 1985, the Supreme Court recognized that:

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees the basic right of refugee claimants in Canada; Refugee determination must respect the principle of fundamental justice; Fundamental justice requires that, where credibility is an issue, refugee claimants must have an oral hearing.

What is Bill C - 11?

On April 29, 2010, Bill C-11, [An Act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and the Federal Courts Act](#), passed second reading in the House of Commons and was referred to the [House Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration](#). Positive changes are including: the process is speedy, establishes an appeal process, and so on.

Who is Andrew Brouwer?

Andrew Brouwer is a refugee lawyer in Jackman and Associates. He is also a Chair of the Law Reform Committee, and a member of CCVT's Legal Committee. With a focus on refugee protection and the rights of non-citizens, he is also a former board member of the

Canadian Council of Refugees and a former staff member of the Citizens for Public Justice and the Maytree Foundation.

The Way Ahead Is Long

April's speaker, Andrew Brouwer, made a deep impression on us with his sharp eyesight and his penetrating opinions.

Since the Singh Decision, Canada's refugee system has won the reputation for being one of the fairest in the world. Andrew also agrees that Canada has a good will government. Though, in regard to Bill C-11, Andrew also shares a number of serious concerns with us.

According to his opinions, firstly, under

Bill C-11, claimants would have an interview 8 days after arrival, and a hearing just 60 days later. These timelines will deny many refugees the opportunity to gather necessary evidence, and will disproportionately affect some of the most vulnerable refugees, including torture survivors and other traumatized applicants, as well as refugees whose claims are based on their sexual orientation.

Secondly, bar on appeal for selected nationalities or groups of claimants: the creation of a list of countries or groups of claimants denied an appeal on the merits brings political decision-making into what should be an independent and neutral human rights context. It also imposes a discriminatory bias against refugee claimants from affected countries, in violation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Bill C-11 does not even set minimum criteria to determine which countries or groups may be designated.

Thirdly, denial of humanitarian consideration and pre-removal risk assessments: the proposal to deny access to humanitarian relief, including for children, or to a final assessment of risk prior to deportation violates Canada's obligations under both the Charter and international treaties, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Yes, of course, Bill C-11 would bring new money to refugee and immigration lawyers, but we stand in awe of Andrew's sense of responsibility. In April Volunteer Spotlight Night, he answered every question from us. He sat among us, talked with us, and made friends with us.

FREE

Upcoming Free Events for Befrienders

FREE

Cavalcade of Lights Festival t Nathan Phillips Square. November 27, 2010
The festivities kick-off at 7:00 p.m. with the lighting of Toronto's official Christmas tree, fireworks and live musical performances by Shawn Desman, Divine Brown and Sarah Slean.

Every Wednesday at 4pm from November 17th until December 15th, the National Film Board Mediatheque will be presenting a favourite NFB title on the big screen for FREE! The perfect midweek break and an easy way to catch up on NFB classics!

Check out the Winter 2010 Visual Arts Exhibitions at York Quay Centre opening Friday, November 12. Runs November 13, 2101 - January 2, 2010.

DO YOU HAVE a story, a poem, a recipe, a review, a picture or anything else you would like to contribute? We would love to **PUBLISH** it. Drop us a line at connectCCVT@gmail.com



Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture

Cordially Invites you to Attend:

Annual General Meeting & Holiday Party

Sunday December 12, 2010

At Bickford Centre

777 Bloor St West

(Bloor and Christie)

From 12:00 to 4:00 P.M.

Bring your family with you to celebrate the holiday season.

Please bring your favourite dish to share with us.

Refreshments & light snack will be provided!

Speakers: Roza Dalipaj and Saiharan Prabaharan

For more Information or to RSVP, contact CCVT: 416-363-1066

**Le Centre Canadien pour les Victimes de la Torture
Vous invite cordialement à participer à la réunion de
l'Assemblée Générale ordinaire et fête des vacances
Dimanche, Le 12 Décembre 2010.**

Dans le Cafétéria du centre de Bickford

777, Rue Bloor Ouest (Bloor et Christie)

De 12h00 à 16h00

**Venez nombreux avec votre famille pour célébrer la saison des vacances. S'il vous
plaît, apportez votre plat favori pour partager avec nous. On fournira des fraîchisse-
ments et les casse-crûte légers**

Pour plus d'information ou à RSVP,

Veillez contacter le CCVT :(416) 363-1066

Orateurs: Roza Dalipaj et Saiharan Prabaharan



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Ontario

Neither words nor sentences are so strong to show my profound hate of the State; this hate circulates in my blood.

War in the Eyes of State Violence

Sirus Kashefi, PhD from Panthéon-Sorbonne, PhD student at Osgoode Hall Law School

The relationship between humanity and violence is undoubtedly as old as human history. According to mythology, Cain committed the first murder by killing his brother Abel. After this atrocious violence, humankind has never stopped murdering or committing other kinds of violence (e.g. wound and insult). Mythology also reveals the darkness of human mind when it comes to creating a long list of war Gods and Goddesses throughout the world. For instance, Agurzil is the Berber God of war while Huitzilopochtli is the Aztec God of war.¹

Nevertheless, there is not only mythology that is intoxicated by war, but political philosophy is also a real warlike. A band of great political philosophers have somehow deified the State and its legitimate right of war. In this case, Machiavelli, Grotius, known as the father of international law, Hegel, and Marx are typical examples. In *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel finds “*the ethical element in war*”². He philosophically develops some arguments to prove that war cannot “*be regarded as an absolute evil;*” “*it is a mere appearance, is recognized its essence, namely, necessity.*”³ Since, “*by war people escape the corruption which would be occasioned by a continuous or eternal peace.*”⁴ Contrary to Hegel, by depriving humanity of all compassion and by making of human beings wild animals devouring each other, war itself is historically the source of all corruption. In a letter to Engels, Marx wrote: “*More graphically than anything else the history of the army demonstrates the rightness of our views as to the connection between the productive forces and social relations. Altogether, the army is of importance in economic development.*”⁵ And we know well the results of these views. For example, during the Second World War, a series of mass executions were committed by the People’s Commissariat Internal Affairs (the Soviet NKVD) against prisoners in Eastern Europe and in other parts of the Soviet Union as the Red Army withdrew after the German invasion in 1941. They estimate that there were nearly 100,000 victims⁶.

Regarding the scope of violence, what is more catastrophic does not come from individual or separated violence, but from systematic and massive violence committed or ordered by the Statesmen (State violence). Thus, human violence has been unbelievably intensified by State power. State violence is a blurred concept, since it contains a large number of acts: war, genocide, torture, conscription, punishment (e.g. death penalty, stoning, and flogging), tax extortion, etc. Among these cruel acts, war is beyond any doubt the worst. War shows how humanity can be reduced to the most brutal and humiliating phenomenon that we can never ever observe even among the wildest animals. Indeed, during any type of war, all monstrous acts are systematically and massively done, *banalisés*, and desensitized by the State or under its command: killing, rape, torture, pillage, concentration camps, *medical experimentation*, mass displacement, the use of chemical and nuclear weapons having harmful effects not only on human beings but also on ecosystem, etc. For example, between 1962 and 1971, American military aircraft sprayed some 70,000,000 liters of extra-strong herbicides over Vietnam, dousing 1.7,000,000 hectares, often several times over. As a result, “*by the end of the war, a fifth of South Vietnam’s forests had been chemically annihilated, and more than a third of its mangrove forests were dead. Some forests have since recovered, but much of the land has turned, apparently permanently, to scrubby grassland.*”⁷ During the Gulf War, about 300 tones of depleted uranium were dispersed across the battlefield. The environmental and human health effects of the radioactive material left behind by these munitions stays unclear⁸.

Thus, Parry has judiciously noticed that by coupling with State power, “*the problem of evil – in whatever way we define term – the scale of harm increases, sometimes exponentially.*”⁹ War among or inside of the States has caused the most violent acts that can never be produced by the ordinary individuals without political power. When it comes to specifying

scope of State violence during all kinds of war, rebellion, revolution, or colonization, nobody can tell us exactly how many people have been mobilized, enrolled, killed, wounded, beaten, raped, humiliated, exploited, medically experimented upon, punished, enslaved, discriminated, displaced, imprisoned, and tortured. However, Zimmermann estimates that more than 136 million human beings perished from all forms of deliberate human and governmental violence from 1820 to 1970¹⁰. Which individual or gangster can massacre on such a scale? In comparison with the scope of State violence, political violence or even terrorist acts are a drop in the ocean¹¹. We cannot also forget the destructive effects of war on the environment.

Due to its ethnic cleansing, genocide, and the murdering of unprecedented numbers of civilians in wartime and through acts of massive political repression, Charles Maier has described the twentieth century “as an epoch of moral atrocity.”¹² As for State violence in the twenty-first century, the situation is not at all better than the last century. For example, during the last ten years, Afghan War, Iraq War, the Darfur Conflict, and the Ivorian Civil War have proved how much State violence remains omnipresent as long as the professional criminals (i.e. Statesmen) exist, and possess the armies, which are made up of “disciplined murderers.”¹³

Now, the States make war under so-called *international humanitarian law*! In reality, as long as the States exist, and they use their armies as their own legitimate force against each other or against their own subjects, there is not at all any hope for peace. Many years ago, Tolstoy correctly wrote: to free human beings from the ever-increasing evils of armaments and wars, we need neither conferences nor congresses, “nor treaties, nor courts of arbitration, but the destruction of those instruments of violence which are called Governments, and from which humanity’s greatest evils flow.”¹⁴ After the Hague Conference of 1899, it became evident that as long as the States with armies exist, the termination of armaments and wars is not possible.¹⁵ The art of war is a part the art of governing¹⁶ inasmuch the State always finds the excellent pretexts for war: cold war, holy war, war on terror, and so on.

Bourne believes that “war is essentially the health of the State,” which is the organization of the masse to act defensively or offensively against another masse similarly organized.¹⁷ As a matter of fact,

“the more terrifying the occasion for defense, the closer will become the organization and the more coercive the influence upon each member of the herd.”¹⁸ In this case, patriotism divides the world into different “spots, each one surrounded by an iron gate.”¹⁹ The individuals who have had the fortune of being born on some particular spot, consider themselves nobler, grander, better, and more intelligent than the living beings inhabiting any other spot. It is thus the duty of any individual living on that chosen spot to kill, fight, and die in the attempt to impose her superiority upon all the others.²⁰

That organization obviously needs to create or find foreign enemies, “even when none really exist.”²¹ In this case, Jews, Islamic terrorists, and Communists are typical examples. The creation of intern or extern enemies is a very old governmental tactic. Thus, Plato noticed that the tyrant has disposed of extern enemies by treaty or conquest, and there is nothing to be scared of them. Then, “he is always stirring up some war or other, in order that the people may require a leader. (...) And if any of them are suspected by him of having notions of freedom, and of resistance to his authority, he will have a good pretext for destroying them by placing them at the mercy of the enemy; and for all these reasons the tyrant must be always getting up a war.”²²

War is not only the health of the State, but also the necessary element of its foundation inasmuch as there is scarcely any type of State (democratic as well as despotic States) that has not been created during a civil war or international war.²³ In other words, the State is based on the right of force or the right of conquest.²⁴ In this case, the US, Canada, and Australia are some examples. For instance, Ryan demonstrates that the massacres in the Meander River region in Tasmania in June 1827 were planned and executed by a discrete group of stock-keepers and the military whose “actions were well within the legal framework of the Civil Power that operated at the time.”²⁵ He concludes that the imperial and local authorities sanctioned these massacres as a vital strategy in the overall destruction of the Pallitorre.²⁶ Thus, are not the social contract theories about the creation of the State merely mythical? Who can show us only a State without bloody history?

We cannot separate the State from the army, and the army from the State, since they are twin. In other words, they overlap each other: the strong

State without army is a puppet State. All States All States unexceptionally struggle to increase their military budgets. For example, in 2009, the net budget of the US Department of Defense rose to \$515.4 billion (+74% increase over 2001) while the net budget of the Department of Education and the Department of Justice rose to \$59.2 and \$20.3 billion (+47.6% and +10.4% increases over 2001).²⁷

Under the pretext of “national defense”, the States justify their military budgets. However, the States have often embarked on military adventures unrelated to the defense of their subjects.²⁸ For instance, many Americans strongly doubted that the US bombing of Cambodia and North Vietnam had very much to do with protecting their freedom.²⁹ Even during unambiguously defensive wars, the States often systematically sacrifice the defense of their subjects to the defense of themselves.³⁰

Moreover, terrorist acts provide an inestimable opportunity for the State not only to punish severely any act against its violence, but also to torture its dissidents or enemies. The State also reduces or destroys liberties (i.e. freedom of association and freedom of speech) under the pretext of war against terrorism. For example, following the violent acts of September 11, 2001, the US, Canada, the UK, and other States, have implemented new anti-terrorist legislation with the negative outcome of the violation of political and civil rights.³¹ Objections to war, criticism of the State, and lukewarm opinions about the necessity of conscription are made subject to ferocious punishments, “far exceeding in severity those affixed to actual pragmatic crimes.”³²

Those who commit terrorist acts are not the only criminals. The States are too criminals, since “when war criminals legitimately occupy positions of authority, which enable them to decide “who are the criminals”, when in fact they are the criminals.”³³ Nevertheless, State crime becomes *secret d’Etat*. For instance, torture in Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay prisons and the Canadian Afghan detainee issue all belong to that secret.

Due to systematic and massive violence committed by the State, the Anarchists claim that the State does not have any right to exist.³⁴ As Tolstoy noticed, human emancipation from war is not at all possible unless the State is totally destroyed.

We are in 2010, and we still have 90 years for finishing this century. Who can confirm us that State violence in this century will be less horrible than the

twentieth century? As far as I am concerned, I strongly believe that a world without State will have much less systematic and massive violence than our current world in which all States train and keep wild and professional murderers (i.e. militaries) who are greedily or docilely ready for committing any atrocity against human dignity and environment.

Footnotes

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“The Hub at Victoria Park/Eglinton”

CCVT will now be providing services at “The Hub at Victoria Park/Eglinton” located at 1527 Victoria Park Avenue. Offering services at this new location will increase accessibility among community members living in the surrounding area.

This is one of eight hubs being established by United Way in priority areas around the GTA. The hub will provide space for community members to gather, where previously there was no accessible, affordable space available. It will also be a “one stop shop” for a variety of services.

Other hubs will be located in Jamestown, Mount Dennis, Bathurst & Finch, Steeles & L’Amoureux, Dorset Park, Mid-Scarborough and Danforth East.

To find out more about the community hubs, visit the United Way website:

<http://www.unitedwaytoronto.com/whatWeDo/communityHubs.php>

8th Annual “First Light Celebration”

The Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture successfully organized our **8th Annual “First Light Celebration”, Fundraiser and Awards Ceremony**, Friday Nov.12th, 2010. First Light is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate, unite and build on the strength of the CCVT community.

CCVT was honoured to welcome accomplished author and social justice activist Lawrence Hill as a guest speaker. Mr. Hill’s address will include a reading of a passage from his acclaimed novel- *The Book of Negroes*.

250 people from our broad range of donors and supporters enjoyed a spectacular and moving evening hosted by Jian Ghomeshi, and with Olivia Chow as our celebrity auctioneer.

This year we hosted the gala at Arcadian Court in the Hudson’s Bay Centre. We continued the tradition of the Trevor Bartram and Amina Malko Awards, where leaders are recognized for their contribution to the refugee and human rights sectors. Mr. Hari Narine Lalla and Dr. Rosemary Meier were this year’s recipients.

Thanks to all our donors, supporters and volunteers that pitched in to make this event a success!



Board Chair Susan McGrath presenting the Trevor Bartram Award to Hari Narine Lalla.



CCVT Executive Director Mulugeta Abai presenting the Amina Malko Award to Dr. Rosemary Meier.



Celebrity hosts Jian Ghomeshi and Olivia Chow teaming up as fundraising auctioneers.

CCVT cooking Club: A place for fun and socialising

Curiosity to know about unknown places, cultures and things is deeply imbibed in human nature. This inquisitiveness of human disposition generates marvelous ideas. One of such wonderful ideas of establishing a Cooking Club by the students of the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) came up out of human quest for knowledge.



“One day I was walking down the corridor when some of the female students at our centre stopped me on my way and asked why don’t we have a kitchen here? My answer was simple that we don’t need it because we all bring our food from our homes and use microwave oven to warm it up to eat,” said Huda Bukhari, the Manager of Settlement Services at CCVT.

“But we want to know how food is cooked in different countries,” said the students with one voice. But, an old proverb, ‘Where there is a will there is way’ absolutely proved fit in this case.

“Sarah Polley, an internationally acclaimed Canadian actress and who is also a friend of CCVT, while on visit to the Center asked what else you want from me to do for you other than funding,” Huda said. “As the idea of the club always provoked me to do something for it, I spontaneously said yes, that we need a kitchen to launch a cooking club for our women students,” she narrated the event with glitter in her eyes. Sarah promised that she would ask her friends if any of them could donate a kitchen for the centre.



Lynne Chichakian, a CBC producer and a friend of Sarah, opened her kitchen for the students of the centre to launch a cooking club. The Club was started in August 2009 and meets once every second week. It’s not only a place for students to learn cuisines from different countries and cultures but also a great place for socializing.

The CCVT provides transit tickets and a fund for raw food stuffs. It is very inspiring to watch the club members while cooking. One of the members selects a recipe from her country and buys the ingredients herself and all others help her to prepare it. The most interesting thing to note is that they cannot speak English properly but they coordinate with each other with only a few words and signs. The result at the end of the night is a delicious dish each time.

“Some of the club members have exceptional leadership qualities. One of them is Yeshe Gurmu, a sexagenarian Ethiopian woman who moves with the help of walking stick. She cannot speak English very well but instructs all the members on who should do what during cooking,” Huda noted. The students are also compiling a cookbook with recipes prepared by the students. The students write the recipe as they would prepare it after the cooking club meets.

When people from diverse backgrounds and interests get together, new ideas come to the forefront. So is the case with Cooking Club, those who don’t know how to cook started knitting at the meeting, giving way to a knitting club.



A fundraiser for the cooking club was held in April 2010 with all the proceeds allocated to keep the club going for another year. The CCVT is doing its utmost to provide opportunities of fun and recreational activities to the members who are part of CCVT for education and help.



Helping Survivors of Torture Since 1977

**CANADIAN CENTRE
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If you are no longer a volunteer at CCVT or do not want to receive the newsletter, please contact Angela Woodcock at 416-363-1066 ext. 222. If you would prefer to receive the newsletter by e-mail, please write to Angela at awoocock@ccvt.org from the account to which you want the newsletter to be sent. Thank you!

Hope After Horror

Welcome to CCVT

New Volunteers

Kirk Lowry
Jenan Smith
Farhad Waizi
Vadim Paskarou
Igor Mihajlovic
Trevor Ormerod
Vera Teschow
Julia Dow
Lana Tetlock
John Kevin Ko
Brian Mallette
Sarah Jurgens
Sabrina Salim
Chrissy Deckers
Eleanor Berenson
Kimberley Edwards
Esmeralda Viasus
Gisela Buckler
Anastasia Korosteliov
Nadia Fayyaz



Yonas Woldemichael
Kwasi Obeng
Naomi Brown
Tess Andrada
Kinza Ahmed
Srivany Kanagalingam
Matthew Keogh
Tracey Leonardo
Brittany Logsdon
Jessica Uthayakumaran
Athena Madan
Nana Boateng
Jean Exil
Mary Choy
Khaled Nour
Angie Ji
Jaclyn Katz
Nada Nouman

"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world". ~Anne Frank



Befrienders: Looking for something a little different to do each week? Each month we will feature a new spot to visit in the city.

The One in the Only Café

On the Danforth, at 966 Danforth you will find this cosy café/bar. A curtain separates the bar from the café but you can walk freely between the two. The One in the Only features nights of art shows and live music. Every Sunday night starting at 7pm free movies are shown. For more info check out www.theonlycafe.com



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