



## Project Update

As the calendar turned over to 2017, our small but dedicated group was thrilled to start a countdown to the time when the jury will meet in Ottawa to make the decision on the new concept for the Memorial to the Victims of Communism.

On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, five groups, all who qualified to make a short-list of designers, will meet in Ottawa at the new Art Hotel to present their design concepts to the jury. The jury will be ultimately responsible for choosing the new design concept.

During that evening, from 5:30pm-7:30pm, the Public Viewing of the maquettes will be held. This is the public's chance to see the design teams preliminary models and sketches of their design concepts. If you are in town, or plan to visit Ottawa, please join us.

Also on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Department of Canadian Heritage will be launching a public consultation of the design concepts. The public consultation will run for approximately two weeks after which time the selection committee will re-convene for final deliberations before ultimately making their final recommendation.

How can you help?

We still need your help in two ways.

First, the 999 Project. As part of our fundraising initiatives, Tribute to Liberty developed a project asking donors to donate \$1000 towards construction of the Memorial. (*cont'd on next page*)

Tribute to Liberty is a Canadian organization whose mission is to establish a memorial to the victims of Communism in the National Capital Region.

Tribute to Liberty's Newsletter is published four times a year. If you would like to add an email address to our subscriber list please email [info@tributetoliberty.ca](mailto:info@tributetoliberty.ca).

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 84558, 2336 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario M6S 4Z7

Charitable #: 814999660RR0001

[www.tributetoliberty.ca](http://www.tributetoliberty.ca)



Memorial site at the Garden of the Provinces and Territories.

In return, we will place the name of a victim of communism on the site of the Memorial and establish a way for an online story to be told. We could not think of a better way to honour an affected friend or relative than to have their story live on as a reminder to anyone who visits the site.

Second, your online presence. When the public consultation starts on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, it is important for all of us to show our support by viewing the online consultation presented by Canadian Heritage and registering our choice for one of the designs. This will help ensure we have a strong multicultural representation of people who suffered under communism.

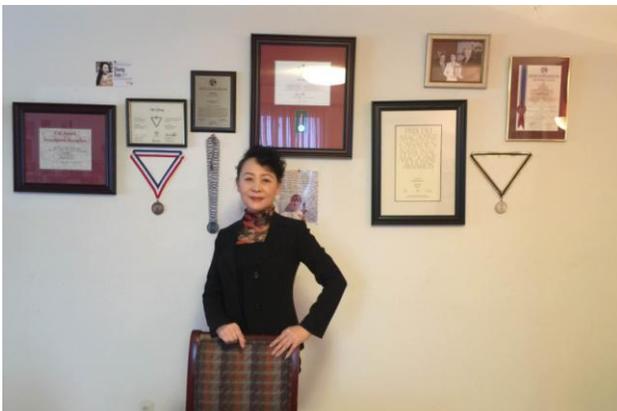
We know that, together, we will ensure that this project will stand as a symbol for all those who had to flee their homelands and found refuge and peace in Canada. After years of hard work, it looks like the final steps are close. Please help us today.

## History Unhidden

### *Canada Goose Tells the Time of Autumn – To My 27 Years in Canada*

I wrote an article to pay tribute to my father on the second anniversary of his death in 1994: *Flying Wild Goose Tells the Time of Autumn*. This is a sentence from an ancient poem. My father got seriously ill and then passed away in April 1992. I was on a blacklist of the Chinese authorities and was not allowed to go back to China to say goodbye to my father.

Now, it is the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my father's death and the 27<sup>th</sup> year the Canada goose tells me the time of autumn. I am still on the blacklist.



"I shall be back soon," I said to myself with nonstop tears running down my face as I looked outside through the small window of an airplane leaving Beijing for Canada on August 20, 1989.

All memories of the Tiananmen Massacre were vivid. I found it impossible to continue to live in the city after the massacre but leaving that sad city behind was very difficult and painful at the same time.

After the Tiananmen Massacre, filled with pain and sadness, I came to Canada – where I had no friends or relatives at all. I left so hurriedly that I did not even have time to consider the tremendous hurt in my heart after leaving all my relatives and friends in China. I was down with sickness for a week immediately after I got off the plane, and lost my way six times in the first month. That kind of horror and sense of loneliness is beyond what words can describe.

I necessarily joined the overseas Chinese democratic movement soon after I arrived in Toronto. Ever since then, my life is so busy filled with phone calls, conferences, protests, speeches, petitions, interviews, lobbying etc.

27 years have passed since I left China, and six of my relatives passed away during these years but I have never been allowed to say goodbye to them.

I study, write, work, travel and I won some awards for journalism, and I was awarded the Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012. Also, I have been chosen as one of Canada's Stories by *Maclean's* for 150 years of Canada.

But I am still on the blacklist of Chinese authorities.

And the Chinese authorities are never far enough to leave me alone. They launched wild online attacks against me and even my family members, since they can't kidnap me from Canada like they did my friends Dr. WANG Bingzhang who was kidnapped from Vietnam in 2002 and Dr. GUI Minhai who was kidnapped from Thailand in 2015.

My father and his father were torn apart in 1949 when the Communists started to rule China. My grandfather went to Taiwan with the old government. They never saw each other again.

In the past few decades my father and mother have experienced public criticism, house break-in and searchings by policemen, and re-education through

labour and humiliation. Thereafter, coming to Canada became father's central mental support.

My father's ashes had been brought to Canada from Beijing by my husband and buried beside my mother's body in the same cemetery in Oakville, Ontario. My mother passed away in 2014 in Mississauga.

Father and mother could remain in peace in Canada after all.

*Submitted by: SHENG Xue*

## History Unhidden

### ***Forced Adoption in the GDR***

It is still an unscripted chapter in history books: **Zwangsadoptionen** (forced adoptions) in the GDR. Unofficially it is known – officially it is supposed – that children in the GDR were systematically alienated from their parents and, hence, fell victims to forced adoptions. None of the responsible masterminds and operators have ever confessed this practice officially but the grief and sorrow of victims speak louder than words.

**Political motivation of forced adoptions in the GDR** **Kindesentziehung** (parental child abduction) was politically motivated in the GDR. Parents were obliged to teach their children to become socialist personalities. **Regimekritiker** or **Andersdenkende** (dissidents) and people who tried to flee the **DDR – Deutsche Demokratische Republik** (GDR – German Democratic Republic) were a thorn in the state's side. Moreover, education wasn't a private matter in East Germany. The whole society had to contribute to the upbringing of a child. According to this, the state felt responsible for those children who lived in families that weren't loyal toward the state. Alienating their children from them punished citizens who tried to flee from the GDR, who stirred up hatred against the state or who slandered against it. Even making an application to exit the country was reason enough to hand out this kind of punishment.

#### **The practices of pressure and blackmail**

The conditions of the forced adoptions were different and every family certainly experienced its own cruel story. Some children had lived with their parents for some time and came in the state's custody only at the age of 1-year or later. Other children were stolen from hospital. The mothers were told that their newborn babies died shortly after the birth and the neonates

were officially declared dead. Usually, mothers were put under pressure and blackmailed to sign the adoption papers.

The story of Daniela Lehmann and her mother Regine Vaupel gives insight into the cruel practices under the East German Regime. Both are searching for their brother and son René. Regine Vaupel reports that the state permanently told her that she wasn't able to raise two children because her apartment was too small and a larger one wasn't available for her. She was "asked" to put her son René up for adoption. Some years later, the state threatened her that if she didn't spy on an acquaintance, the state would also take her daughter Daniela away from her.

#### **Still in search for each other**

Nowadays, children and parents are still searching for each other. But this isn't as easy as it could be. The **Jugendamt** (child protective service) isn't allowed to give any information about children or parents because **aus Datenschutzgründen** (for data protection reasons). Because of that Katrin Behr, who is also a victim of forced adoption, initiated a website that help children and parents to find each other. On the website children and parents can place notes with their names and the names of the people they are looking for. By now, 562 family reunited with the help of this website. Currently 326 people are still looking for their family members who fell victim to forced adoptions.

*Written by Sandra Rosner on the blog, [German Language Blog](#)*

If you are interested in reading more on the topic of forced adoptions in the GDR, click on [this link to an article from the Guardian](#).

## Resource Spotlight: ***Ljubo Sirc***

In December, *Forbes* magazine carried a fascinating article about Ljubo Sirc, "an intellectual entrepreneur who debunked Communism."

"A few days after the death of Fidel Castro (one of the most renowned communist leaders of our time), another man, Ljubo Sirc (one of the most astute communist fighters of our time) passed away in Scotland. Sirc was a Slovenian hero of the free society and a champion of liberty on many fronts. As a young adult, he was part of the resistance to National Socialist and Communist regimes..." [to read more click here.](#)

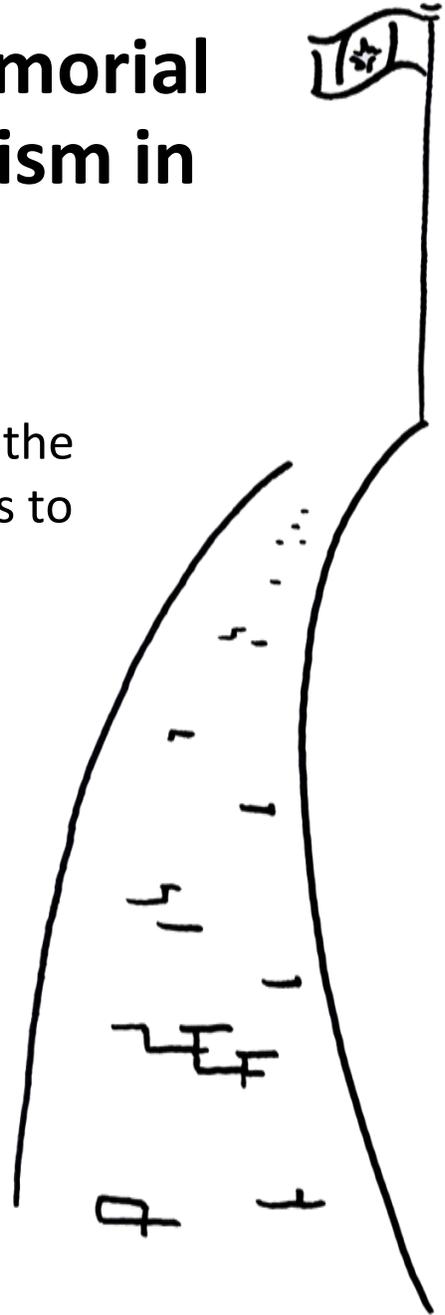
# Tell Your Story...

## And donate to the Memorial to Victims of Communism in Ottawa.

A donation of \$200 buys a brick for the virtual Pathway to Liberty that leads to the Memorial. Each brick can be donated with a story of a victim of Communism, a message or a dedication.

Tribute to Liberty needs your donation to build this memorial, so please donate today!

*For more information about Tribute to Liberty and the Memorial to Victims of Communism, visit [tributetoliberty.ca](http://tributetoliberty.ca).*



**donate today at [tributetoliberty.ca](http://tributetoliberty.ca)**

# Tribute to Liberty Mail-in Contribution Form

To contribute to the Memorial to Victims of Communism in Ottawa you can:

**1. Become a Brick Donor**

- Each brick is \$200 (you can buy as many as you like!)
- With each brick purchased you can submit the story of a victim of Communism, or a message or dedication
- Please email your story, message or dedication to [info@tributetoliberty.ca](mailto:info@tributetoliberty.ca) or include it on a separate piece of paper when you mail this form
- Tribute to Liberty reserves the right to edit submissions
- **Submissions will be published on the Tribute to Liberty web site along with donor's names. Donors who wish to remain anonymous must indicate this in the space provided below**

**2. Make a Simple Donation**

- Donations in any amount are welcome
- **Donors who wish to remain anonymous must indicate this in the space provided below**

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## Mail-in Contribution Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Province \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Amount: \$1000 \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 \_\_\_\_\_ \$200 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to remain anonymous:

Please make cheque payable to: Tribute to Liberty

Please mail contribution to: Tribute to Liberty

P.O. Box 84558, 2336 Bloor Street West  
Toronto, Ontario M6S 4Z7

**Don't forget to enclose your story, message or dedication!**

**Tribute to Liberty is a registered charity. Charitable Number: 814999660RR0001**