



MEMORIAL TO THE VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM

TRIBUTE TO LIBERTY



Newsletter

Spring 2026

Volume 17, Issue 2

Project Update

Our latest update comes directly from the Government of Canada: “Canadian Heritage is continuing to make steady progress toward the completion of the Memorial. The Monuments team has recently reengaged the design team and confirmed that Paul Raff and his studio are interested in supporting the project through to completion. Concurrently, the Monuments team is collaborating with the National Capital Commission to advance work on the West side of the wall; specifically, the fabrication of the dedication and artistic interpretation plaques, for which the text has been finalized and approved.

Planning is also progressing for the East side of the wall, where analysis of potential thematic approaches is currently underway. This stage is focused on carefully considering the appropriate scope and approach for the content, recognizing the importance of getting this element right before returning to TTL with a concrete proposal. PCH expects to be in a position to provide a more substantive update on overall progress to TTL by early summer, and we look forward to sharing further details at that time.”

History Unhidden

The Train I Didn't Take

A door opens, a meal, a train station—and a choice that changes everything.

After the chaos, after the shouting, after the haircut room and the near miss, I was taken into a small office.

A desk. A chair. A man who no longer looked at me as a problem.

On the table lay a sheet of paper. A new statement.

This time it wasn't written by me. The prosecutor had written it himself, in careful handwriting. It said that I denied any intention of crossing the border illegally and that I had been arrested by mistake.

I read it once. Then I signed.

Next came the inventory. One by one, the objects I had been carrying were placed on the desk: a wallet, some money, papers, keys. Ordinary things. Things that suddenly felt heavy with meaning. Each item returned was a small confirmation that this was real—that the process was moving forward, that I was no longer being held in place by someone else's pen.

No one congratulated us. No one apologized.

A door opened. Another corridor. Then, finally, the main exit.

Outside, evening had already fallen. The air was cold and clean. I remember stopping for a second, just to breathe. Not because I was happy—but because I could.

Behind us, inside the building, dozens of people were still waiting. Some would be transferred. Some would be sentenced. Some would disappear for months, maybe years. Their stories would continue inside those walls, without witnesses, without endings.

We walked away. Not faster than necessary. Not looking back. Freedom was not a triumph that night. It was an exception. And exceptions, unlike justice, do not repeat themselves easily.

After intense fear, the body does not ask questions. It asks to be fed. The first thing we did after being released was to look for a restaurant.

We entered without really knowing where we were. A cold room. Tables. A waiter who stared at us for a few seconds too long. At first, I didn't understand why.

Only later, in the bathroom, did I see myself in the mirror.

Unshaven. Pale. My hair uneven, like a mistake that hadn't been corrected. I looked like someone who had slept badly for several nights—which was true. I looked like someone who had been somewhere else—which was also true.

I returned to the table and ordered two pork steaks with fries. One for me, one for Mariana. We were both starving. The adrenaline had faded, leaving behind an overwhelming hunger.

When the plates arrived, we didn't hesitate. We ate quickly, with the hunger of people who had just returned to their bodies. Each bite pushed the fear a little farther away. Not the memory—just the fear.

The waiter kept glancing at us discreetly. He didn't ask questions. I suspect his main concern was simply that we might disappear without paying.

From the restaurant we took a bus to the main train station.

When we arrived there, I recognized the places we had passed through only three days earlier. It was Monday evening. The previous Friday we had boarded a train from this same station—the train that had taken us directly into the hands of the border guards.

Before catching the night train to Petrosani, I walked back to the platform where we had boarded the border train.

At that hour, the very train we had missed three days earlier was standing there.

For a moment, I hesitated. I wondered whether I should get on it and try again—this time without Mariana.

I stood there for about ten minutes, weighing everything. I knew that once I returned to Lupeni, there would be many questions waiting for me.

I imagined myself crossing the border illegally into Yugoslavia while Mariana sat on the train to Petrosani. I could see her crying, frightened—not only because she would now be alone, but because she knew she too would have to answer many questions.



That thought stopped me. Mariana had written four of the nine posters I had glued to the shop windows in Lupeni.

Her part in the story existed already. It was there, on those posters, and it could not be erased.

At that moment I understood something simple: my physical freedom could not come at the price of a moral prison.

I could not leave knowing that Mariana might be arrested once she returned to Lupeni.

The train from Timisoara to Petrosani felt short, because we slept almost the entire way. From Petrosani we took a bus back to Lupeni.

Around nine in the morning, Tuesday, October 24, 1989, I found myself exactly where I had been after the night of the posters.

The city was strangely quiet. Nothing suggested that only a few dozen meters away from that bus station, on one of the train station windows, a poster had recently been glued—a poster calling people to the streets to demand their freedom.

It seemed that no one had heard that call.

Used with permission. From the Substack of George Sava, [At the Top of the Stairs](#). Click to read more.

Victim Stories and Dedications

Submitted by our Donors

* In memory of our parents, Joseph and Christina Schafer, who came with their children as refugees from the Soviet Union (Ukraine) to Holdfast, Saskatchewan in December 1930.

* In honour of George Valentin Sarry.

* For the victims of the Ethiopian Red Terror - 1977-1978. [Thousands died during Ethiopia's Red Terror, but the culprits still evade justice | documentary Channel](#)

* In memory of our grandfather Konstantyn Dimitrovich Temerty, born in Styła Starobeshiv district, Donbas, Ukraine. Accusation: Enemy of the people, executed February 9, 1938.

* In memory of our great uncle Feodor Dimitrovich Temerty, born in Styła Starobeshiv district, Donbas, Ukraine. Accusation: Enemy of the people, deported to the Gulag in 1931. Drowned escaping from prison.

* In memory of our great uncle Ivan Dimitrovich Temerty, born in Styła Starobeshiv district, Donbas, Ukraine. Accusation: Enemy of the people, deported in 1931 to the Gulag, perished while escaping.

* In memory of our grandfather Maxim Grehorovych Novikov, born in Krasne, Dnipropetrovsk region, Ukraine. Arrested and tortured in 1921 by the KGB.

* In memory of our great grandmother Odarka Terechenko, born in Verbivtsi, Ukraine. Arrested and tortured in 1933 during the Holodomor/genocidal famine in Ukraine.

* In memory of Oksana Frolak.

* In memory of Jan Buka.

* In memory of Vasyl Misiura.

* In memory of Michailo Huculak.

* In memory of Maria Huculak.

* In honour of our mother Sub-Lieutenant Nguyen Thi Xuan Uyen, who suffered and perished in 1982, after having been detained in a re-education camp and passed away due to forced labour in the "new economic zone" in Daklak, Vietnam.

* In honour of my father Heinrich Weissenberger, and

my grandfather Heinrich Weissenberger.

* In memory of Helena and Jan Greczanik, Wanda and Henryk Semrau, who sacrificed so much under the motto "Bog, honor i ojczyzna."

* Milan Sobot escaped former Yugoslavia (Bosnia-Herzegovina) during WW2, evading Tito's Communists, Hitler's Nazi's and Mussolini's Socialists ultimately resettling in Canada to start anew. He then worked tirelessly to have his sons and their families join him in his new adopted country so they could enjoy opportunity and peace in Hamilton, Canada. Milan Sobot's courage and vision, like countless others like him, improved the human condition and reinforced humanity against tyranny. Let it be remembered in perpetuity.

* In memory of Stanislaw and Weronika Markowski (nee Klucznik).

* In memory of Victims of Communism in Latvia.

* In memory of Stan Reiniš.

* In memory of Jiri and Milada Teichmann.

* In memory of Dinh Dang Dinh. Teacher, environmental activist and blogger Dinh Dang Dinh was sentenced to six years imprisonment in August 2012 after a three-hour trial. A subsequent appeal hearing lasted only 45 minutes. He was charged with "conducting propaganda" against the state for initiating a petition against bauxite mining in the Central Highlands. The bauxite mining project had been awarded to Chinese firms which used obsolete technologies that polluted the waterways and threatened the environment where thousands of ethnic tribes people lived.

His wife reported that he was in poor health and had been beaten by prison officials. He was diagnosed with cancer while in prison but was denied timely medical care. The authorities only allowed Dinh Dang Dinh to be treated in hospital from January 2014, where he was kept under constant surveillance. Dinh Dang Dinh died of stomach cancer at his home in Dak Nong province in Viet Nam's Central Highlands in April 2014, at age 50. Before his death, Dinh Dang Dinh called for international scrutiny into detention conditions in Vietnam's prisons and camps, characterized by torture and systematic denial of medical care.

* In honour of Pastor Nguyen Cong Chinh in Vietnam, a Lutheran Christian, victim of arbitrary detention and inhumane treatment in prison because he refused to renounce his religion. Born on October 10, 1966 in the Highlands of Vietnam, Pastor Nguyen Cong Chinh is

serving 11 years of imprisonment in An Phouc prison camp of Binh Duong province. Leader of the Christian Congregation of the Lutheran Church in Pleiku, Gia Lai province, he was the target of a campaign of terror since 2003 from the local security agents who destroyed his church and his home and subjected his family to constant surveillance for eight years and finally put him in prison since 2011 with the charge of “undermining national unity”.

Pastor Nguyen Cong Chinh has been subjected to starvation, threats, beatings and humiliation. Most of all, he has been suffering from the prohibition to practise his faith. He was beaten many times by prison officials who suddenly rushed into his cell while he was saying his morning prayer.

* In honour of Mr. Nguyen Hoang Quoc Hung, a worker rights defender who is serving a 9 year prison sentence in Vietnamese Communist “re-education camps”. Born in 1981, Nguyen Hoang Quoc Hung was a computer engineer when he joined, in 2006, the “Victims of Injustice Movement” and the “Bloc 8406” calling for democratic reforms in Vietnam. In 2009, he joined the “Committee to protect worker rights” of Doan Huy Chuong. In February 2010, Nguyen Hoang Quoc Hung and Doan Huy Chuong were arrested by security forces in Tra-Vinh because of their participation to the organization of a strike of 10,000 workers at My-Phong shoe factory.

In pre-trial detention, Nguyen Hoang Quoc Hung was solitary confined for 8 months in a dark cell with interdiction to receive visits from family members and his lawyer. At that pre-trial period, he was beaten by security agents who tried to make him plead guilty. To pressure him to plead guilty, Nguyen Hoang Quoc Hung was subjected to starvation, threats and beatings causing injury to his head and stomach. He received no medical care for his injuries.

On October 26, 2010, Nguyen Hoang Quoc Hung was sentenced to 9 year imprisonment in a closed trial without a defense lawyer, convicted of disrupting security and order. After the unfair trial of October 2010, he was transferred to Phuoc Hoa prison, Tien Giang province where he was detained with HIV-infected inmates and those with other contagious conditions.

In 2011, he was transferred to Z 30 Xuan Loc “re-education camp” where he was allowed to receive visits from his father, Mr. Nguyen Kim Hoang, who reported that Quoc Hung was subjected to forced labour; he suffered from weakness, constant pain in his head and his stomach, yellow skin and yellow eyes. Quoc Hung was denied medical care and subjected to daily searches of his

belongings and his rectum. In June 2013, after a prisoner revolt in Xuan Loc re-education camps, Nguyen Hoang Quoc Hung was transferred with other prisoners to Xuyen Moc prison where more repressive measures were applied to him. In spite of the intervention from the U.N. Working Group on Arbitrary Detention in 2013, Nguyen Hoang Quoc Hung has not seen improvement of his conditions in prison. As his health problems continue to deteriorate, Quoc Hung may die in jail before the end of his prison term. Reference:

www.laodongviet.org

* In honour of Buddhist monk Venerable Thich Thien Minh (named Huynh Van Ba at birth) victim of the Vietnamese Communist religious persecution. Born in 1953 in Bac-Lieu province of South Vietnam, venerable Thich Thien Minh survived 26 years of imprisonment in Communist “re-education camps”, from 1979 to 2005, and published his memoir in 2007 to denounce the atrocities to which he was victim and also the numerous deaths among his fellow inmates in hard labour camps. Thich Thien Minh was subjected to confinement, starvation, beatings, hard labour, torture, threats, and humiliation in Minh-Hai prison, Xuan-Phuoc and Xuan Loc Z 30A re-education camps. Thanks to the intervention of the U.N. Special Rapporteur Abdelfattah Amor in 2004, Thich Thien Minh was released in 2005 from prison but has been kept under house arrest and prevented from conducting religious activity and teaching. Reference: www.vnhnrt.net

* In honour of Tran Huynh Duy Thuc. Born in 1966, engineer Tran Huynh Duy Thuc was a successful IT entrepreneur playing a pioneer role in Vietnam’s private sector IT in the late 1990s and early 2000s. He started to blog on the topics of government reform and human rights in 2008. On 24 May 2009, Tran Huynh Duy Thuc was arrested under the initial charge of “promoting anti-government propaganda” under Article 88 of the Vietnamese Penal Code for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression. On 20 January 2010, in a one-day trial, Tran Huynh Duy Thuc and his three co-defendants – Le Cong Dinh, Nguyen Tien Trung and Le Thang Long – were prosecuted at the People’s Court of Ho Chi Minh City for “conducting activities aimed at overthrowing the people’s administration” under Article 79 of the Penal Code. Thuc was sentenced to 16 years imprisonment followed by 5 years of house arrest. In 2012, the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) adopted the opinion that Thuc and his three co-defendants detention violated the right to freedom of opinion and expression guaranteed by Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), as well as the right to liberty and security of person (Article 9) and the right to freedom of

association (Article 21). He is currently serving his sentence at Xuyen Moc Prison, in Ba Ria – Vung Tau Province.



* For the victims of Bykivniya.

<https://war-documentary.info/bykivnia-graves-in-kyiv-the-fourth-katyn/>

* For the victims of Chornobyl.

* In memory of Viacheslav Chornovil.

* In memory of Levko Lukyanenko.

* In memory of Mihai Stauceanu.

* In memory of Arved Viirlaid.

* In memory of Ilmar Heinsoo.

* In memory of Heino Joe.

* In memory of Ilmar Kulvet.

* In memory of Aleksander Weiler.

* In memory of Oskar Puhm.

* For the Estonian refugees who fled Soviet terror.

* In memory of Mychajlo Witer.

* In memory of Vasyl Lishchynski.

* In memory of Leontyna Ihnatowycz.

* In memory of Osyp Ihnatowycz.

* In memory of Evhen Wreciona.

* In memory of Mychajlo Lishchynsky.

* In memory of Nguyen Trong Phu.

* In memory of Nguyen Huu Duc.

* In memory of Truong Van Phu.

* In memory of Tran Si Long.

* In memory of Le Xuan Phuong.

* In memory of Mykola Koshyk.

* In memory of Oleksander Matla.

* In memory of Stefan Podsiadlo.

* In memory of Father Jan Sajewicz, OMI.

* In memory of Tadeusz Gonsik.

* In memory of Andrija Pavletich.

* In memory of Juraj Gospodnetić, born in 1907, Postire, island Brač, Croatia. The Reverend Juraj Gospodnetić (January 9, 1910 - July 27, 1941) was a Croatian Catholic priest who was tortured and murdered by Chetniks during the Bosansko Grahovo massacre on July 27, 1941, the day that is considered the day of Communist uprising in Croatia, then-Yugoslavia. Juraj Gospodnetić was born in Postira on the island Brač. After graduating from elementary school in his hometown, he continued secondary education in Sibenik, Croatia. Theological studies he began in Split and finished in Zagreb, all in Croatia. As a deacon he was ordained on April 10, 1938. and as a priest in Zagreb on June 26, 1938. In 1939, he was appointed as parish priest of Bosansko Grahovo, Bosnia. During the Partisan-Chetnik uprising in West Bosnia on July 27, 1941, a group of Chetniks tortured and killed the Reverend Gospodnetić in an especially cruel manner: he was roasted alive on a spit, and later on his tortured body was brought to his mother.

* In memory of Ivo Masina (Preko, island Ugljan, Croatia, July 21, 1927 - prison Stara Gradiska, Croatia, Nov. 20, 1961.) Croatian historian. As a young man, he was the best student in high school in Zadar, Croatia. Later on, he went to study history at the Philosophical university, where he was known as an excellent student, one of the best. In 1953, he wrote in one of the Croatian newspapers "Slobodna Dalmacija" (Free Dalmacija) an article under the title "To Belgrade's 'Republic' editorial board the truth is unpleasant." He was arrested in 1954 and later on in 1957 because of his patriotic thoughts, and kept in the prison in the middle of Croatian capital, Zagreb. Militia arrested him so he couldn't pass his final exam at the university. They did everything so he couldn't complete his studies. He was brought to the court in Yugoslavia as one of the leaders,

and was sentenced to 11 years. However, he managed to flee from the prison, but was caught again, and then his sentence was increased to 15 years. He was in one of the hardest prisons of then Yugoslavia, Stara Gradiska, where he was tortured and poisoned. He was killed, strangled on Nov. 20, 1961. When he was killed he was only 35 years old. For the longest time his grave was unknown, inside prison walls. However, his earthly remains were later on taken to Preko, his native place, on July 24, 1998. Croatian association of political prisoners carries his name. Memory of him and his struggle for the truth about Croatia will never be forgotten.

* In honour of my father Lee Sung Kim, 1932-2007. Lee Sung Kim, born in the northern part of Korea before the Korean war, when there was only one Korea, was the third child of seven siblings. During the war, due to growing hostilities, he and his father (Woo Young Kim) and five of his siblings escaped the onslaught of Communist invasion by fleeing south toward Seoul. Tragically, they were forced to leave behind his mother and older sister, who was in her final month of pregnancy. Noone imagined their separation by necessity would be forever, as the 38th parallel ripped apart Korea into two halves upon the signing of the Armistice on July 27, 1953. My father and his family and millions of others are to this day victims of Communism, longing for reunification.

* In memory of Vasyl Bezchlibnyk.

* In memory of Volodymyr Klish.

* In memory of Roman Malashchuk.

* In memory of Volodymyr Okipniuk.

* In memory of Maksym Wowk.

* To commemorate Polish citizens tortured, killed and deported to the Soviet Union by oppressive Communist regimes.

* In memory of Marianne Wolfe (nee Kemeny). A survivor of the Holocaust, Marianne had a comfortable and sheltered life in Budapest after WWII. The decision to leave after the Revolution was primarily due to the anti-Semitic environment. It had become very difficult to leave Hungary but her father said "leave things to me." He made all of the arrangements and on a very grey December morning in 1956, at the age of 25, Marianne left her parents to go to a pre-arranged rendezvous point with three layers of clothes on and a small backpack stuffed with her mechanical pencils and other tools of her trade as a draftsman. She boarded a transport truck with about 20 other people and made

their way to the Austrian border.

At their destination, they were assisted by country folk who walked with the group over the border and came equipped with bottles of strong Hungarian "palinka" to calm their nerves and keep them warm. Marianne crossed the border on December 10, 1956. Once in Vienna, she received aid from the Hebrew International Aid Society and then stayed with an elderly woman until she was given safe passage to Canada. She arrived in Montreal as a refugee and from there made a new life for herself, leaving behind her beloved parents but also the horrors of living through the Holocaust and WWII.

* In memory of Ernest Goldberger, and his father Edmund Goldberger. In October 1956, large numbers of protestors took to the streets to demand a democratic system and freedom from Soviet oppression. On November 4th, 1956, a national uprising in Hungary was violently crushed by Soviet tanks and troops and an estimated 2,500 Hungarians were killed. An estimated quarter-million Hungarians fled the country.

During that fall of 1956, Hungarian Canadians watched from across the Atlantic. Edmund Goldberger and his son Ernest Goldberger were two of these Hungarians. Jewish survivors of the holocaust, they had made it to Canada after the horrors of the camps and begun to develop lives in their new home country, safe and free. Nonetheless, Edmund directed his son to go back to Europe and help save the lives of family members and close friends that were facing the dangers of Soviet oppression.

Edmund worked from Canada, fundraising for help from public authorities, Jewish agencies, and many private Jewish individuals. Ernest, despite being at the time a father of two very young sons and the operator of the family business, went back to Europe. Using Vienna as a base, he coordinated the logistics for the effort. He arranged and paid for the smuggling of people across the Hungarian-Austrian border to Vienna, where he arranged and paid for hotel rooms. Once everyone was safely in Vienna, he arranged and paid for their boat passage to Canada and finally their train passage to Toronto. Once they arrived in Toronto, with the help of the Toronto Jewish community, places to live and jobs were secured for everyone. Ernest managed to assist over 50 individuals – including young children – to get safe passage to Canada. Ernest never told his sons what he did – they only learned of his selfless acts at the end of his life.

* Dedicated to the hundreds of thousands of Poles who could not return back to a free Poland after the end of WWII, due to the treachery of its western allies.

- * In memory of Endel Ruberg.
- * In memory of Leonard and Wanda Chodkiewicz.
- * In memory of Ivan Starešinic and Franjo Kelemen.
- * In memory of Dubravko Bandula.
- * In memory of Roman and Helena Klajn (nee Grzegorzycz).



* In memory of Polish Brigadier General Emil August Fieldorf "Nil". He was a Polish World War II hero, fighting Nazi Germans at the beginning of the war. From 1942 a commander of Kedyw (special operations executive) of AK (Polish Home Army). From 1944 deputy commander-in-chief of AK. Killed by Communists on 24.02.1953 in Mokotow prison in Warsaw. More information: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emil_August_Fieldorf

- * In honour of my mother Katica Rusko.
- * In honour of my father Vladimir Herjavec.
- * In memory of Rev. Adolfs Cops.
- * In memory of Janis Zommers.
- * In memory of Eleonore Zommers.
- * Dedicated to Gyatso, Tenzin (aka HH Dalai Lama). Tenzin Gyatso is the Tibetan name of His Holiness the

14th Dalai Lama of Tibet. An Honourary Canadian citizen and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, His Holiness was forced to escape Tibet in 1959 after a decade of illegal occupation by Communist Chinese forces. Dialogue and peaceful resolution was attempted by His Holiness and his advisors since Communist China's first foray into Tibet in 1949. When Chairman Mao Zedong said "Religion is poison" to His Holiness, during a Beijing visit, it signaled an end to dialogue and the start of a tragic story for the Tibetan people.

During Chairman Mao's "Great Leap Forward," Tibetans suffered through the Tibetan Cultural Revolution experiencing some of the worst human rights abuses ever known, under the slogan "Smash the Four Olds": old ideas, old culture, old customs and old habits. An estimated 1 million Tibetans died. One fifth of its total population of 6 million died as a direct result of Chinese brutal actions and policies.

Before the Chinese occupation, there were 6,000 Tibetan monasteries in Tibet. After the Cultural Revolution, there remain only six. Hundreds of thousands of Monks, Nuns and civilians were imprisoned or killed for wearing traditional hairstyles and clothing, engaging in traditional song or dance, or voicing their religious beliefs. Rituals such as prostrations, mantras, prayer wheels, circumambulation, throwing tsampa and burning juniper or incense are strictly prohibited. Anything representing the cultural identity of the Tibetan people was targeted for eradication.

Today Tibetan culture is thriving freely in Canada - home to one of the largest Tibetan diaspora communities in the West. Approximately 8,000 Tibetans call Canada home. After finding themselves stateless after fleeing Communist China's illegal occupation of Tibet, Tibetan Canadians are active promoting the shared Canadian and Tibetan values of peace, hard work and community service.

- * In memory of Dr. Myroslav and Lydia Hladyshevsky
- * In memory of Polish and Vietnamese citizens oppressed, tortured and killed by communist regimes. And as a token of gratitude to Canada which has given us safety, freedom, opportunity and hope.
- * In memory of Captain Tara Singh Hayer, Veteran of Indian Army.
- * In memory of the Subocz-Opitz Family.
- * In memory of our dear Tony Beyak, from his loving family.