

Amnesty International the family has taken refuge in Canada. Police arrested two suspects but Lt. Col Ilungu had them released. In continuing violence this last year, two journalists working with the UN Radio Okapi in Bukavu have also been killed.

I first met Maurice Namwira in 2005 after the death of his predecessor. Following Pascal's murder, Maurice was put in prison accused of killing his boss so that he could have his job. This was pure intimidation: a tactic often used by the authorities in the DR Congo to silence critics of the regime. Maurice had just been released when I met him. He spoke of the dangers of his present job as a defender of human rights in the region. He was never sure whether he would make it home alive on any given day. His wife constantly asked him why he persisted in such a dangerous job. He replied that he had only three options: (1) flee the situation; (2) compromise himself to the situation; (3) stand up against the injustice. He chose the third option.

I asked Maurice how he keeps it up. He said, "I firmly believe in a God of justice. Yet, God's justice can only be realized by us, by people seeking His justice. I believe in the power of the word of truth. It may seem pitifully weak, but some day it will triumph even over death." He cited the example of Jesus. Finally he added, "I am ready to die. To die is no great matter for me. The ongoing struggle for justice is more important!"

Recently, a new spate of violence has been perpetrated by military forces against the civilian population in nearby Kabare region. HJ has again spoken out fearlessly against the military violence there. They firmly believe that their best defense is to continue to speak out. Silence for them would be spiritual death. If this is not an example of pure courage in the face of evil, then I don't know what courage is!

Eric Schiller, Ottawa Monthly Meeting

Singing to Freedom

A Journey through Black America/Canadian History via Negro Spirituals Saturday April 4, 2009.

We continue our year-long exploration of the relationship between escaped slaves, free Blacks and the Religious Society of Friends. We are honoured to have Dr. J. LanYe', concert mezzo-soprano, pianist, conductor, composer, and Negro spiritual specialist, guide us through the history, influence, and impact of this unique musical form.

Where: the historic Yonge Street Meeting House in Newmarket. Morning. workshop on the history of the music and lyrics of the Negro Spiritual with an afternoon solo voice and piano lecture recital. In late afternoon the programme moves to Pickering College, for an Underground Railroad-themed dinner, and evening choral performance.

Tickets limited. Partial proceeds support the Canadian Friends Historical Association. To receive a conference flyer, order tickets or to inquire about full-day packages, contact Ruth Jeffery-MacLean at (905) 898-8119 or e-mail: letter.b@sympatico.ca

Testimony to the Grace of God *con't.*

We pray that in the fullness of time there will be a free-flow of forgiveness and healing among ourselves and in the larger community. We take solace in our Quaker founder George Fox's mystical perception of "an ocean of darkness and death" that was overcome by "an ocean of light and love, which flowed over the ocean of darkness". We seek to uphold John's vision of a peaceful society governed by caring and concern of each for all. May we be open to the promptings of the Spirit of love and goodness.

We are filled with gratitude for having had such a good friend. John will always be remembered for his kind and gentle spirit.

Memorial Minute

Submitted by New Brunswick Monthly Meeting