Lessons Drawn:
A Safety Manual for
Political Cartoonists in Trouble

THIS MANUAL WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY A GENEROUS GRANT FROM THE DOEN FOUNDATION, THE NETHERLANDS

CARTOONISTS RIGHTS NETWORK INTERNATIONAL
INTRODUCTION

Cartoonists Rights Network International would like to thank the DOEN Foundation in the Netherlands for their generous support and patience in the production of this Safety Manual for Political Cartoonists.

While many human rights and free speech organizations have produced safety manuals for journalists, they are usually oriented towards the international print journalist traveling in areas of danger. For the political cartoon journalist who may or may not be working as a full-time cartoonist, there is precious little information designed for their situations.

During our 20 plus years of experience working with cartoonists in trouble, we have found one outstanding feature common to many of the incidents of threats, legal charges, digital attacks and illegal attempts at censorship: the cartoonist is usually completely taken by surprise. When the weight of powerful government ministries or fundamentalist religious influences comes crashing down on the shoulders of a poor struggling cartoonist, it can be as emotionally devastating as it is physically threatening. When these things happen, a person's life is changed forever.

Unlike the investigative reporter digging into the truth of a corrupt politician or a war correspondent shot at or injured during a battle or a photojournalist being in the wrong place at the wrong time, cartoonists usually don't expect to be attacked. After all, the conventional wisdom says, “It's just a cartoon.”

It's in the hours, days, and perhaps weeks after either a legal or physical attack that the cartoonist begins to feel isolated, abandoned, and with no idea where to turn for help saving his or her life or protecting the family. The most dangerous enemy during a time like this is the paralyzing fear that emotional trauma can cause. Fear prevents a person from making decisions. It makes seeing one's predicament objectively almost impossible. Most importantly, trauma can prevent a cartoonist from developing a sound, solid strategy of defense. It can prevent a cartoonist from taking action.

Because cartoonists are more isolated and disconnected from the many journalism-helping networks and organizations available to print journalists, the feeling of isolation and abandonment among cartoonists can be much deeper.

This manual is meant as a first source of reference and advice to the individual editorial cartoonist who finds himself or herself in danger. Unlike other manuals that are often written for investigative reporters or war correspondents visiting a dangerous war zone, this manual is written for cartoonists who have spent their lives in the same country that is suddenly turning against them.

We want cartoonists to understand the dynamics of trauma, the need for developing a strategy, and the need to understand and know the resources available to help them in their hour of greatest need.
BEFORE WE GET STARTED

The cartoonist who gets into trouble is usually taken by surprise. He or she understands that the craft uses satire, humor, and in some instances insult, but when the rich and powerful, the corrupt, or the terrorist seeks revenge for being hurt or insulted, it often comes as a shock. Every cartoonist understands the meaning of *crossing the red line*. It turns out, however, that in most cases of attacks against cartoonists, the cartoonist didn't even realize he or she was anywhere near that red line.

The red line that every cartoonist hopes not to step over is always a moving target. In periods before elections, the red line is quite near. In periods of full insurrection or general public criticism of the corrupt regime, the red lines will be even tighter than usual. In order for a cartoonist to avoid attack, he or she must be constantly reevaluating where the red lines are.

It is reasonable to assume that politicians understand what they are getting into when they achieve public office, either through the ballot box or the barrel of the gun. Once in power, they are responsible for implementing the country's constitution, which usually includes some assurance of freedom of the press and basic human rights. Almost every country in the world has signed the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and within it, Article 19, which guarantees the right of freedom of expression and freedom of the press to all people. While it is not unreasonable for cartoonists to expect protection under the free speech articles of their own country's constitution, cartoonists must also be sensitive to the red lines of censorship. Freedom of expression in many failing democracies and tyrannies is often an illusion rather than a protected right.

Most cartoonists in trouble have been accused of some form of insult. Insulting the political leaders, insulting a religious icon or leader, and insulting economic interests are all actions covered by what are commonly known as insult laws. Cartoonists who want to call themselves political cartoonists need to know what their country's laws really say about their freedom of speech. As they say in the game of football, the only rules are those being enforced by the referee at any one moment. In the same way, freedom of expression and other human rights are only those rights that are being honored at any one moment.

Cartoonists must ask and answer how tolerant the various elements in their society are to being criticized or insulted. They need to know which laws protect them and which articles or laws under the constitution are generally ignored. Very often a constitution will have laws that give cartoonists free speech rights, but then have other articles or laws which take free speech away. Cartoonists must know if there are more than one set of laws operating in their country. In many Islamic countries there is the secular law run by the government and based on a non-religious, secular constitution, and, a sharia or religious law implemented more informally.

If you want to be a practicing political cartoonist, your responsibility is to know the law, understand the rules and regulations for journalists, and have at least an outline of an idea on how to protect yourself if you are challenged, either physically or legally.

Traditionally, cartoonists are most often charged under insult laws. Insult laws exist to protect people from unreasonable and untrue slanderous accusations. The usual standard is whether a purposefully untrue statement or a cartoon negatively affects the ability of a person to protect his or her reputation or income. Editorial cartoonists are responsible for making sure that their cartoons reflect accurate, true, and researched assumptions and conclusions. Despite the fact that the world is a very dangerous
place and real justice can often be an illusion, if a cartoonist’s work is based on the truth, then in the long run that truth will serve as the cartoonist’s best defense.

HOW ARE YOU IN TROUBLE?

Any political cartoon that is not objectively researched or based on facts will not stand the test of time or criticism and perhaps will not survive accusations under the law. Unlike the investigative reporter, cartoonists use quite unique tools to accomplish their objectives. Some of these tools are innuendo, satire, humor, and exaggeration. For the tyrant, the most dangerous result of the cartoonist’s toolbox is laughter. Insecure heads of state, leaders of failing regimes, political parties that cannot manage their countries, and very often corrupt religious leaders, do not normally tolerate people laughing at them. Anyone who rules through fear and threats will be the enemy of laughter. A nation of people laughing is a dangerous condition for the tyrant, demonstrating to the world that the people do not fear their leader. Most tyrannies can only maintain their tyranny through threat of harm, up to and including death.

What is the nature of the threat against you? Have you gotten anonymous telephone calls warning you to stop drawing your critical cartoons? Has some religious leader declared a fatwa against you because of a perceived insult to religion or a religious leader? Have you been charged with a crime against the state, such as insulting the head of state or insulting the judiciary? Have you been accused of some kind of sedition causing public disorder, or causing public disharmony between races, religions, or ethnic groups? Have there been demonstrations in the streets of rowdy, violent people calling for your death because of a cartoon they felt was insulting to their ethnic or religious group?

All of these scenarios are quite familiar to CRNI. These kinds of attacks against you as a cartoonist will have some similar elements and may require some very different elements in terms of your response and you developing a defensive strategy.

Twenty years ago the most common threats to CRNI cartoonist clients were charges of insult. These usually came from the state or from an individual minister of state who may have been the subject of a cartoon that had been deemed to have “crossed the red line.”

Today, those wishing to harm cartoonists include failed regimes, tyrants, religious fanatics and drug lords who cannot stand either the general population being informed about their treachery or that population laughing at them. Charges from religious fanatics are complicated by their claims of a right to insulation from criticism because they speak for God. They tend to equate criticism of religion or a religious figure with criticism of God. This is very difficult to defend against.

Probably the reason you are in trouble is because you have overstepped the red line of cartooning when you turned your pen toward some entity that tolerates no sense of humor or criticism.

When you first make contact with CRNI (or any other supporting or helping organization) to report a threat made against you, you must be prepared to explain in a thorough and objective way, the nature of the threats made against you. If you are charged with a particular crime, we must know exactly what crime, and we must know the court from which the charge was made.
The following is a suggested checklist for a preliminary report of an attack against you. Use the most secure form of communication available to you. Our phone number in the United States is 703-543-8727, and our email address is director@cartoonistsrights.org.

- Your full name as it appears in your passport
- What charges have been made against you? Be specific. Identify the actual legal codes that you may be accused of breaking, whether secular or religious.
- Your cell phone number
- Your e-mail address
- Your website, blog, or other Internet addresses
- A good quality copy of the cartoon that got you into trouble
- Name and email address of any professional journalism association in your country
- If you belong to any international cartooning association or syndicate, and if so, the contact information
- A detailed description of any attack against you
- If you been injured, photographs of your injuries
- Copies of any newspaper reports of the attacks against you

Highly detailed information and regular reports to CRNI and other supporting organizations will be a regular theme in this manual. Organizations like ours are helpless to know what is happening to you unless you give us absolutely detailed and highly accurate information. Your credibility as a cartoonist worth defending depends on your being able to articulately describe what's going on around you, including an analysis of the danger and an accurate reading of any formal or even informal charges made against you.

*The strongest force that can help you in times of danger is often public opinion. That is also one of the best tools we have in developing a strategy to help you. We must know exactly why you are in danger, and what the nature of that danger is.*

**Summary:**

- What is the nature of the threat against you? Religious, legal or physical?
- Have you made a detailed report of the actions taken against you and communicated international assistance organization?

**LISTEN TO YOUR INSTINCTS**

Fear is paralyzing. Fear causes a kind of emotional and intellectual paralysis that can keep you from making decisions and seeing your situation objectively. Furthermore, fear for yourself is nothing compared with the fear you will feel for your family. Fear is the most important tool of the tyrant or the dictator. You must be prepared to deal with these feelings when under attack by forces that may seem overpowering and traumatic.

We will deal more with this traumatic fear later in this manual, but related to this fear are what we call instincts. Instincts are often described as "a kind of feeling" that a person gets in situations of high anxiety. "The hair stood up on the back of my neck" is often used to describe the situation when a person's instincts are sending messages to the brain.

Thoughts like, "Do not get into this car," "Do not walk down this street," "Don't go to this meeting with
these people,” “This cartoon is going way over the red line,” and, “Go home with three or four friends around me today,” are all messages that the subconscious part of your brain is trying to send to your conscious brain.

Under normal conditions, we dismiss these instincts or hair-raising messages because we think they may be illogical or overblown. A person who is successfully kidnapped or cornered in a dark alley and beaten, probably dismissed his instinctive feelings. Never ignore your instinctive reactions or your inner voice in times of crisis. It's better for you to be wrong about it and nothing happens than for you to ignore your inner voice or your instincts and walk into a tragedy.

Summary:
- Listen to your instincts.
- Don't let fear paralyze your decision-making.

DEVELOP A NETWORK

A support network begins with your immediate family, and then radiates out to close friends, committed colleagues, your employer, and then institutions like human rights organizations, free speech societies, and professional legal groups. This network should include other journalists ready to write articles about your situation and the forces that are aligned against you. It might include a few friends willing to provide you with a safe house if you are being hunted by the authorities. A wide and diverse support network is one of the best defenses you can have when dealing with the forces working against you. Developing a network is something entirely within your own control. As you develop that network, you will feel empowered and encouraged that perhaps you can get yourself out of the crisis after all.

Use the Internet to connect with your defense network. In your e-mail system develop an address list of all the people in your support network. Even your Facebook page is part of your support network, and if you are going to be drawing cartoons that approach the red line, having a wide and deep defense network on social media is a very important tool that can work in your favor.

Having a number of international helping organizations (See our list at the end of this manual.) as part of your network of supporters and helpers is of critical importance. These networks should be part of your daily life, whether you’re having trouble with authorities or not. Having a strong network oriented towards free speech and human rights is part of your cartoonist’s toolbox as much as a favorite pen and sheaf of blank paper.

Summary:
- Well before you ever get into any trouble, develop comprehensive support networks both personal, professional and legal.

TAKE ACTION: DEVELOP A PLAN

When you have been attacked physically, been arrested, or charged with a crime, you must respond to the threat made against you. After all, a threat made against you is indirectly made against your family as well. Your best defense is a well-thought-out, networked plan of action. Your plan of action must be built around your strategy of what you want to accomplish. Do you want to pressure the government to drop charges against you? Do you want to raise international awareness about what is happening to you? Do you want to stand and fight with even more powerful cartoons?
A plan of action is a step-by-step guideline that all the individuals and organizations that wish to help you can follow to get you out of trouble. After you have filled out and filed the first report (see above), you must start discussing a plan that everyone can participate in and understand. That includes your friends, your lawyers, and the helping organizations that you have chosen. Each player in your plan of action will have specific roles and responsibilities. A plan might include:

- Reporting to international human rights organizations on what is happening to you,
- Instructing your own family on what to do if you are arrested,
- Finding and securing a safe house,
- Seeking the guidance of a good human rights lawyer, and,
- Exploring if some good-faith negotiations with those attacking you might result in the crisis being resolved.

All the players must be trusted, and all the players must know generally the responsibilities of the other people in your plan of action. You are the central piece of this plan, and if you are not in jail or otherwise detained or in the hospital, then you must be prepared to be the leader of your plan of action. No one knows more about your situation than you do.

A plan or a strategy is a pathway out of trouble. The plan will change over time as your adversaries move and take possible new actions against you. Your plan must be flexible and change as your adversaries’ actions change. Everyone in the plan must know about these changes as they happen.

You must have someone close to you who will take over leadership of your plan if you have been detained or hospitalized or if you are somehow not able to direct your plan yourself. Any cartoonist who draws cartoons that could in any way be found offensive to some superior powers must anticipate the need for a plan of action even before anything negative happens. Your family members must be part of your plan. Your lawyers must have a major input on your plan, and the helping organizations outside and inside the country must also be involved and active participants in your plan of action to get you out of trouble.

The first step to a good plan is for you and your family to sit down with your lawyers and evaluate all of your resources and all of your strengths. You should then evaluate what the weaknesses are of those people who seek to harm you. You will find that your resources are very diverse, and that each individual resource, institution, or individual in your network can probably contribute something unique to your plan of action. One of your friends might be a very good journalist who can write articles for a newspaper. Another friend may be a member of a journalism organization that could come to your defense. Your lawyer will be able to identify areas of the law that can be invoked to protect you from the people who would censor your work.

International organizations can write letters to ambassadors, to the head of state, even to the chief justice to ask for charges to be dropped. If you are under contract with a newspaper, the publisher may be willing to uncover why you have been attacked. Traditionally in journalism, the newspaper you work for is ethically bound to protect your free speech rights. If you work regularly with a newspaper or publisher, it must be called upon to come to your aid. Protecting your free speech rights is the same as protecting the free speech rights of your newspaper. Publishers understand that it is in their best interest to protect your rights.

You really have resources all around you. But when you are afraid or when you have been traumatized,
it will be difficult to realize how many resources you have. For instance, friendly religious leaders that you may be associated with might be a resource that you can use.

You are really much more powerful than you ever imagined. When you have been illegally or unfairly attacked and your free speech rights denied, it is time for you to realize this fact of life.

A good plan to get out of trouble is a result of a lot of heads coming together trying to solve a single problem with a good understanding of what all the resources are and what the challenges will be.

 Trying to coordinate the efforts of a number of international institutions, a number of friends, and a variety of local institutions and media outlets is a full-time job in itself. A close colleague or an attorney should be entrusted with managing the message with all these varieties of players who are all working in your support.

Summary:

- Make decisions and take action.
- Develop a plan with trusted members of your support network.

THE EFFECT OF TRAUMA

The most important enemy after an attack from your own government, corporate thugs, or fanatical fundamentalist group may be the emotional mental trauma consisting of mental paralysis and depression. Trauma is an emotional response to having your entire world suddenly turned upside down. An attack from your government or other powerful entity can overwhelm the individual because the resources aligned against you seem so overpowering.

At CRNI over the last 20 years, we have dealt with many cartoonists who have been traumatized by the actions of their government or other illegal entities. Many cartoonists do not even realize that they are suffering from trauma or that it can lead to a more serious case of longer-term Post-traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD.

PTSD can result in a mental paralysis and depression. If this paralysis and depression are not broken, a downward emotional spiral can result that will make your ability to protect yourself and your family practically impossible. When you are emotionally crippled, you become a danger to yourself and your family.

One of the first symptoms of trauma is a feeling of helplessness, that you are alone and there is something wrong with you. You might feel embarrassed to tell anyone about it, you may think that your symptoms are signs of weakness. It is rare that a person can climb out of trauma alone. The reassurance of family, friends, or of psychological counseling are the best treatments to help recover from any traumatic experience.

It is this very feeling of being alone or feeling helpless that can trick an individual into denying that they are having a personal traumatic problem. We are all embarrassed by having to admit that we are weak or that we’re having trouble. Those causing you this traumatic response depend on this phenomenon. It is up to you to recognize the symptoms, break the pattern of trauma, and immediately seek the help of friends, family, and very importantly, psychological counseling.
Some of the symptoms of personal trauma are: being overly irritable by things that would normally not affect you; suddenly blaming others for small mistakes; and, drinking or smoking more than usual. Many people who are traumatized report an inability to have a good night’s sleep. They wake up at the slightest noise. They wake up two or three times during the night without really being aware of why they can't sleep.

Even having moments of affection with your spouse seem impossible. You may experience panic attacks where your breathing becomes shallow. You feel like fainting or your fingers, your lips, or other body parts become numb.

A client of ours who fled to safety in another country reported years of psychological counseling in order to deal with the demons and nightmares that he lived through while struggling with the memories of interrogations and the horrible threats made against him and his family. PTSD can remain active for years, but with proper counseling and a good family support network it can be put into proper perspective.

If you are having any of these symptoms, you must break the pattern and seek assistance to get out of the psychological condition making it difficult to make decisions and take actions. Our comprehensive list of organizations at the end of this manual includes organizations that help you connect with a psychologist in your own country who is prepared to help you as part of a commitment to human rights and free speech.

Summary:

• Your most important enemy may be emotional paralysis.
• Learn the symptoms of emotional trauma.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

In every country you will be able to find some level of legal assistance, usually free, which is ready to help you develop a strategy and begin to build a defensive network around you. You should know the organizations that might provide this kind of legal assistance before anything happens to you. Every cartoonist, whether he or she intends to challenge authority must be familiar with the organizations that are there to help support you in times of trouble. You should know individual staff members of human rights organizations, journalist organizations, support organizations and legal firms that do pro bono (free of any charges) human rights work.

In many countries the legal system is totally corrupt. Because the judiciary has been made afraid of the power of the dictator or the power of the militant fundamentalists, it will have little willingness to challenge those people attacking you.

Even dictators and tyrants need to work in the international arena where they are expected to administer their countries within the guidelines of the United Nations as members of the international community of nations. This works to your advantage. Every dictator is eager to be seen internationally as leading a regime guided by the rule of law. Today, there are examples of former dictators and tyrants being called to the International Court of Justice in The Hague, the Netherlands. At The Hague they are accused and put on trial for such crimes as mass murder, genocide, and even of using rape as a tool of war. It is a reminder that in the long run, the leaders of corrupt, murderous regimes will be called to answer for their crimes. This is where a good, courageous lawyer, who understands international law as
well as domestic law, can protect your free speech rights as a critical part of your plan of action to get out of danger.

Legal pressure on the judicial system to exonerate you or drop charges goes hand-in-hand with a strong local legal team, and, a strong international human rights team bringing public attention to the illegal actions of those who are attacking you.

The international support organizations for legal assistance will either directly pay an attorney or pay you to hire an attorney, so the lack of funds to pay a lawyer should never be a reason to be without legal representation.

Summary:

• Familiarize yourself with the legal assistance organizations in your own country.
• International legal assistance can be a powerful ally.

AN ESCAPE PLAN TO A TEMPORARY EXILE

You should only think about leaving your country as an absolute last resort. If you are in fear of imminent death, if you have been convicted and are being sent to jail unfairly and illegally without due process of law, perhaps seeking safe haven or temporary political asylum in another country might be the correct choice. However, any discussion with a cartoonist who has left his or her country without a proper visa under the worst of circumstances will reveal a person who has gone through a living hell while trying to survive in a strange country. If you have close relatives who will support you in another safe haven country, you will be a step ahead of the game. But if you are leaving your country without any receiving community or network of people or organizations to support you, you’ll be shocked at how cold and unwelcoming the world can be.

Seeking a political asylum entry visa at a friendly embassy can take anywhere from six months to one year. Going to another country on a tourist visa, with the intention of staying and claiming political asylum, means that you have lied on your visa application, a crime punishable by immediate deportation to your original country.

In fairness, some countries will give you a temporary visa while your request for political asylum is reviewed, so long as you can prove objectively that your life is in danger in your own country. You must be able to objectively substantiate the life-threatening risk of being returned to your home country. Immigration authorities often assume that you are lying and that you only wish to enter their country in order to earn a better living. This is called being an economic refugee. Economic refugees are rarely considered for immigrant status. You must be able to show through written records, newspaper clippings, personal anecdotal evidence of objective witnesses, the support of international human rights organizations, and other convincing evidence that you have been accused or convicted illegally under international law, and that your life will be in danger if you are returned home. The countries that most easily provide sanctuary to a political refugee are the northern European Scandinavian countries. The United States, Canada, and other European countries can make life very difficult for a political refugee applicant and should be considered only as a last resort.

When leaving your country, you must have a passport that will be valid for at least another two years. Never leave the country unless you have a valid passport. If your passport is about to expire and it expires while you are still applying for political asylum, the process will become much more
complicated. You must have enough money to sustain yourself at least for six months, and you should leave the country with enough clothing on your back and a small suitcase to sustain you for six months. You must absolutely have good, reliable communications equipment such as a mobile phone or a smartphone in order to maintain communications with your family and with the international organizations that will come to your assistance.

There are specialized international organizations to give you advice on finding a safe haven country. There are safe haven cities in a number of countries around the world who specifically welcome cartoonists in trouble.

Your Internet connections will help you find hundreds of documents and websites about finding safe haven in another country. When you contact any of the organizations in the appendix, ask the staff members for keywords that you might Google to better educate yourself about the risks and problems of finding a safe haven country in times of crisis or danger. One of the best organizations that we have worked with which helps cartoonists and other human rights refugees find a safe haven country is the International Cities of Refuge Network, or ICORN. Their link is below.

Hiding out in a safe house in your own country may be the best alternative to leaving your own country illegally. More often than not, when there is short-term but passionate reaction to your artwork, living incognito and quietly in a friend’s house, might be the wisest course of action until tempers die down and your critics move on to the next big, publicity generating controversy. Fleeing the country and seeking safe haven may actually be an extremely unwise long-term solution to what could be, in reality, a short-term problem.

One cartoonist we continue to work with fled his country because he thought he was going to be arrested. In fact, there was never an effort made to find or arrest him but because he "ran away," he would definitely be arrested if he returned home now. Two years later, he is struggling against terrible odds to maintain himself in his new country.

Most countries receiving political asylum illegal immigrants have programs to maintain them while their investigation is going on. These programs usually involve a very modest financial stipend to maintain a person and pay a very small rent. However, every country is a bit different and most of these programs have time limits on the support that they will give.

Always remember that escaping to another country may seem attractive but this is a very dangerous and very risky action. It should only be considered as an absolute last resort.

Summary:

- A decision to leave your country will be one of the most important decisions of your life.
- Consider leaving your country only as an absolute last resort.
- Readjusting to a new life in a strange culture is almost always professionally and personally difficult.

ON USING INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL ASSISTANCE

There are a tremendous number of institutions and resources all around you. These international and local organizations have a mission to help protect you against human rights and free speech abuses.
You must not underestimate the effect of the combined efforts of even two or three of these international organizations, working in partnership with local organizations. In most cases your own government or even conservative religious organizations or rogue corporations will be extremely sensitive to public opinion. This is particularly true of international public opinion. We often see evidence that many otherwise brutal dictators back away from extreme actions against journalists because of the effect of international public opinion and the fear of international criticism. However, other countries like North Korea and Eritrea seem to care little about international public opinion.

These same international and local organizations can work closely with each other behind the scenes even in your own country bringing resources to bear on your case. Give these organizations repeated and accurate updates about your case. Frequently their efforts behind the scenes are having a positive impact which you may or may not be aware of.

In some cases contacting and engaging with international organizations is dangerous. Your government or your critics may interpret your communications as working against the interests of the state if you are talking to international organizations. Being aware of how your government treats engagement with international players is important.

There are a number of respected human rights organizations that you can rely on. Especially important among them is IFEX, an umbrella organization of intersupporting human rights organizations, including the Cartoonists Rights Network International. A good working knowledge of IFEX and other umbrella "organizations of organizations" lets you find resources very conveniently. Other organizations like ICORN help seriously threatened journalists, cartoonists, and other human rights workers find safe haven outside their own country. Another IFEX member organization, Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), is probably the single most important organization bringing hope and assistance to journalists in trouble. All of these organizations have their own websites you should explore. Being familiar with them is part of being properly prepared.

There is a temptation when working with a number of international institutions to use each one individually. You may think, "If I ask each one of these institutions to help get me a visa or get charges dropped against me, then I will have more staff members and more institutions working on my behalf." Also from time to time you may find that you feel one or another of the institutions are working too slowly. In reality, every one of these institutions is overworked and underfunded and they have other clients who are in as much, if not more, danger than you. When the same organizations begin to sense that there is a lack of leadership and that you are using other institutions to accomplish the same goals, they might lose interest in your case. Organizations that are underfunded and understaffed will want to work with the clients that are the most responsive, the most communicative, and the most helpful in helping them develop and stick to a good plan of action. You must be prepared to help them help you by being a dependable and consistent client.

It is perfectly all right, in fact expected, for you to occasionally remind one of these helping organizations to keep up with your case. Don't feel embarrassed or that you're bothering them by reminding them that you are still there, that things are happening to you and that you would like to see some progress on your case.

Using local institutions has both advantages and disadvantages. Local institutions know local politics the best. They are in a superior position to help you form a plan because they have done the same thing with other journalists and cartoonists many times in the past. However, it is also important to know the politics of the local organizations you plan to work with. In some countries, human rights organizations
attract people and policymakers who may have their own political agendas.

In some cases a local helping organization will be asked to defend a journalist or cartoonist whose opinions and whose cartoons they personally dislike or even abhor. No one is immune to his or her own personal and political preferences. If you feel that the people you are working with in a local organizations have a vested interest or some personal preference not to defend you to the fullest degree possible, you must try to find some other local organizations that will give you good, objective, and unwavering support.

If you are in good standing with all of these organizations and you have developed relationships with them prior to ever encountering any problems, then forming a pathway out of trouble will be much easier.

Summary:

• Working with international helping organizations can be a powerful assistance in your time of need.
• When working with international organizations you must maintain regular, accurate and honest communication with them.

MEMBERSHIP IN GROUPS

Most journalists belong to some kind of professional organization. The professional organizations are there to help defend the profession as well as the economic interests of the members. They may or may not want to get involved in defending human rights cases. If you're considering joining a professional journalism organization, be sure to carefully read its Mission Statement. The Mission Statement is the guiding philosophy that the organization presents to the public. If you are hoping that membership in a professional organization might be helpful if you are attacked in a free speech case, be sure to make this clear with the organization's leaders when you join.

There is safety in numbers. Joining professional organizations is a very important part of your total defensive strategy. Become a member of the local journalists' associations, be registered within a human rights organization as a journalist or cartoonist, and attend meetings regularly so the officers of the organization develop a personal friendship with you. If it is too expensive to pay the membership fees, you can ask international organizations if they can pay these fees on your behalf. It is extremely important for you to belong to as many professional associations in your country as you can afford and you have time for. The networking opportunities of membership might be good for your cartooning business as well.

Summary:

• Be a paid-up member of the local journalists' professional association.
• Be an active leader in any local cartooning organization. If none exists, consider starting one and linking it to CRNI.

ON BECOMING A HARDER TARGET

There are many different kinds of threats that can be brought to bear against the cartoonist. In some cases you will be accused of breaking the law and you will be summoned to go to court to answer
charges. In other cases you might become a political threat to some powerful economic or political interests. In this case, threats made against you may be outside the law. In some cases you might be targeted either for harm or even death. Even if you are a blogger posting cartoons that someone might find offensive, there will be ways for the offended parties to find you and try to harm you or stop your work.

In combination, the strategies in this paper can make you what is known as a hard target. A hard target is a person who has made it difficult for those who would harm that person.

If you are physically well protected, someone who has been sent to kidnap or otherwise harm you will not be able to find you or they will find no opportunity to gain access to you. If you belong to a number of professional organizations, the government might think twice about bringing libel charges against you. If you are already in the good books of some sympathetic religious leaders, religious groups that would want to harm you may stay away from you. If your blog site or your website is very carefully protected and your identity is impossible to trace, then you have become a hard target.

It is not easy to protect yourself from kidnapping or even an unpleasant encounter with a group of thugs who have been given the assignment to frighten you. Governments who use thugs to frighten journalists usually use fairly professional thugs. Normally they know their business of how to get to you better than you know how to protect yourself. However, if you have had some warning that you have crossed some red lines and your safety might be at risk, then you'll have time to make yourself a harder target.

Are you a slave to habit? The newspapers are filled with stories about diplomats, human rights workers, and journalists who were assassinated just meters from their doorways. The assassins had secretly watched them for some time and determined exactly when and where an assassination could be accomplished and a successful escape made. One diplomat was killed because he couldn't change his habits. He left the office at exactly the same time every day, got into his vehicle to go home and traveled exactly the same route. He never varied the time he arrived home. After a period of surveillance the assassins could confidently wait at the nearest street corner, knowing that he would be directly in the sights of their guns at an exact time. Ninety percent of all successful assassinations and kidnappings of individuals take place within 100 meters of their front door. This is usually in the morning. Don't be an easy target if there is any possibility that you could be assassinated or kidnapped.

If you get some sense or even some reports from neighbors that you are being watched or are under surveillance, you must take action to break up your daily routine and the daily routine of your family. For instance, you may start to leave the house at completely different hours some days of the week, or, work from home. If you're walking or taking a bus, don't use the same route every day. If you're driving your own car take different routes to and from your place of work every day. Make it difficult for anyone watching you to predict where and when you will be at any one time of the day.

Since the advent of the Internet, more cartoonists and journalists are working through websites or blogs. Almost everyone has a Facebook page these days. The principles of becoming a hard target are exactly the same for people posting their cartoons and their innermost thoughts and political ideas on social media. While for some years journalists and cartoonists felt that the anonymity of being on the Internet would protect them, this sense of safety has proven to be an illusion. Those governments and violent religious groups who cannot stand, and will not tolerate, criticism have become some of the most sophisticated and knowledgeable Internet users in the world. Some rogue governments pay vast amounts of money to armies of hackers to find and identify critics of their regimes. If you plan to post
photos, cartoons, or politically based comments on your Facebook page that would get you into serious trouble, then you need to disguise your identity on the Internet. Don't post your photo, don't give out any accurate personal information, don't publish any addresses or phone numbers or any other information that can be used to trace your identity or your location. These precautions must be taken if you’re going to be posting any kind of material that any group would use as a justification for violence or legal actions against you. Become a more difficult target to attack.

Summary:
- If you suspect you may be a target of a physical threat, you must become hyper-aware of your environment at all times.
- Start changing the routes to and from your home and office, and varying the times that you leave and come home every day.

HAVE YOU BEEN THREATENED?

In some cases you may get a warning - sometimes even a friendly warning - that your cartoons are becoming too critical and that certain individuals in government would like to see you stop drawing them. One cartoonist was casually warned at a gathering of professional journalists that members of the new ruling party were not happy with his cartoons. When he went home that night he discussed this with his wife, and they decided that the warning wasn’t very serious and they ignored it. He kept drawing the same critical cartoons embarrassing the leaders of the new political party. Not too long after this warning he was kidnapped and murdered. The police, who were most likely in the payroll of the new government, declared that his death was a "hijacking gone wrong." There was plenty of convincing evidence that this was not the case. Clearly he had been targeted for death by a kidnapping squad. He had been warned, he did not take the warning seriously, and he paid with his life.

If the commentary or the cartoons that you, or others, are posting on your Facebook page, are deemed to be offensive, you will likely receive threatening postings. This may be another form of warning.

All of these warning scenarios must result in your taking some kind of action to prevent a warning from turning into an attack, an abuse, a lawsuit, or other kinds of criminal proceedings.

A killing or attack against a journalist or human rights worker in your country is a warning to all other journalists. But cartoonists who are under attack and who, through good strategy and good planning, become harder targets, also become a beacon to other journalists and human rights workers. If you are a hardened target both physically and legally, other cartoonists can use you as an example of how to strengthen and harden cartooning in general.

If you have been threatened you must take countermeasures. First, listen to your instincts and then carefully evaluate the nature of the threat. Protect yourself as necessary and don't forget to invoke the protection of a well-built support network.

Summary:
- Take even casual warnings from friends very seriously. Inform your network every time this happens and keep a record.
- Monitor your Facebook and other social media pages very closely, and take down any material that doesn't represent your point of view.
IF YOU ARE TAKEN IN FOR INTERROGATION BY THE POLICE

If hardening yourself as a target has failed and you are kidnapped or simply just picked up by the police and taken in for questioning, a new chapter is about to open in your life. Every human psychological and physical resource that you have will be needed to help you survive a kidnapping or a police interrogation.

Throughout the history of the human rights movement well-known persons who have been taken suddenly into police custody or even kidnapped by unknown people have usually been released in response to loud, public alarms about those disappearances and detentions. However, most cartoonists will not fall into this category of well-known persons. People who are lesser-known and find themselves kidnapped or taken in for questioning must have their support networks fight for some media attention. If your fate is immediately known to the helping organizations and you have been counted as a missing person, you will have a much better chance of survival. If you are picked up for questioning by the police, your family should immediately contact all of the network members and issue a press release explaining your danger. They should also send letters of protest to both the head of state and to the police station nearest to the incident.

The experience of others who have found themselves in police custody informs us of the importance of conducting yourself in a certain way. Do not get angry. Do not challenge your captors. Answer their questions simply and as honestly as you can. You should never sign anything while in captivity. It will come back to haunt you later. Neither should you reveal the names of colleagues or friends who may be involved in your Facebook network or who are producing cartoons with you or sharing a website with you. Often the purpose of an interrogation is to get you to reveal the names of other people so the police will have a fresh list of people to interrogate. Giving out the names of your friends or colleagues during interrogation means the same horrible fate will probably fall on them.

Keep in mind that this is a temporary situation; typically the police can't hold you forever contrary to the due process of the law. And if this is simply because of drawing cartoons of political figures, there will soon be political pressure brought to bear to get you released. Try to survive as best you can without giving any incriminating statements. Keep foremost in mind that what you are doing as a cartoonist is a job worth doing, it is protected by international law, and that in fact you are deeply committed to your love of country.

Do not get overly talkative. Do not make challenging eye contact or facial movements. Give them absolutely no reason to make them hit you or use other more drastic interrogation techniques on you.

Interrogations usually start very politely and very nicely. They will try to befriend you, try to make you feel safe, and tell you that as soon as you answer a few simple questions they will let you go. You can play along with this. But bear in mind, the questions will soon become more and more threatening as your interrogators fail to get the kind of information from you that they want. Eventually, they may try to get you to confess to something that you probably didn't do. Never confess to anything in response to their promise that once you sign a confession, they will let you go. These interrogators are trained experts and they are convinced that what they are doing is for the better good of the state. They fear no punishment or criticism for what they are doing to you.

As soon as possible have photographs taken of any wounds or bruises resulting from physical beatings. Any evidence of their mistreatment that can later be used in a court of law against the police should be recorded immediately upon your release. If you have to go to a hospital, take pictures of yourself in the
hospital bed. Prominently show any bandages that are wrapping wounds. Be absolutely sure to have copies of the hospital discharge statement documenting your wounds and the doctor’s name.

It is an excellent idea for you to go online and explore search terms like interrogations, surviving interrogation, police interrogations, methods used in interrogations, etc.

Summary:

• Be mentally prepared if there is a tradition of the police arresting and interrogating journalists in your country.
• Be sure that the leader of your support network knows what to do in the event of your being abducted or detained.

CYBERSECURITY

Increasingly editorial cartoons are migrating from print media into the Internet or cyberspace. While still not proven to be a easy source of income, the Internet is a wonderful new source of broad exposure for your work. Many cartoonists who will need this manual are in fact not full-time professional cartoonists, but people whose first love is cartooning. In order to keep food on the table, these part-time cartoonists have other jobs, some of them related to illustration, art or journalism. These part-time cartoonists are discovering what a wonderful and powerful outlet social media is. You can open a Facebook page and in 15 minutes or so have a good number of your cartoons posted for others to view and comment on.

We all like to think that cyberspace allows us to operate with a great degree of anonymity and at a degree of safety. However, the same influences that would have censored you or attacked you for a cartoon published in a newspaper will do the same in cyberspace. If your cartoons are found to be too critical and too unpopular on the Internet, and if the regime you are living under has a habit of censoring newspapers and denying freedom of the press, the same influences will probably follow you right on to your Facebook, Twitter, and other social media pages. Some governments are better than others on finding out who you are and probably where you live. To be safe working on the Internet, leave as little personal information about yourself as possible anywhere on any of your social media, e-mail, Facebook, blogs, or webpages. This is a good practice under any circumstances and is absolutely necessary if you are going to be posting cartoons that are critical or could be found insulting to people who take action against free speech. If friends can find you, so can the regime or the fundamentalists who would want to silence you.

At Cartoonists Rights Network International we also encounter many people from university professors to the amateur teenage cartoonists who are being arrested and charged with crimes because of their postings on social media. Some charges are as serious as sedition. In fact, it would seem that the Internet is more useful to censors, hard-line fundamentalists, and others who would seek to censor thought and expression than it is to those of us who want to make those expressions public in the first place.

Cyber-censorship is one of the fastest growing strategies of both governments and fundamentalists. There are many bloggers who use cartoons to illustrate their writing. They are being charged with crimes and many of them are in jail. The cartoonists who uses the Internet and its social networking tools to promote their cartoons must be ever more aware of the risks that the Internet poses.

Your physical whereabouts and your conversations can be tracked on most modern cell phones. Even
the address book on your cell phone might be copied by a hacker who wants to know who and where your friends are. An old-fashioned landline continues to be the safest way to communicate by phone. The hard drive on your computer can be seized, and even though you have erased everything, the erased files on your hard drive can be recovered and used against you.

Cyberspace is simply a tool. Depending on who is using it, cyberspace is utilized as either a new source of freedom or of repression.

Frankly, we at CRNI can't keep up with the fast pace of change of security issues on the Internet. Internet security is now not only a major industry, but also a new theater of warfare. Because every modern society depends entirely on electronic computing and the Internet to keep its communications industry and even defense alive, Internet security has become the next major battleground for warring parties.

Under additional resources below, we are including a link to essays written on cybersecurity and cell phone and social media safety.
Summary:
• Learn to give as little personal information as possible on your social media sites.
• Learn how to disguise your computer's IP address.