

Nightmare over as family reunited

After fleeing his homeland of El Salvador, Miguel Huezo has spent the last 16 months living in Schreiber. His family was not so lucky. They have spent the last three years living in a nightmare.

In this exclusive feature, the News looks at why this family was torn apart for three years, and how they hope to start a new life in Schreiber with help from the residents.

By Greg Huneault
the News

Miguel Antonio Huezo was thrown in jail for an act of humanity. The El Salvadoran exile and his family have paid a terrifying price for his compassion, but they hope to put it all behind them and start a new life in Schreiber.

It's a long way from their homeland of El Salvador where Miguel tended to his farm, while his wife Dora cared for their eight children.

Until two days ago, Miguel hadn't seen his wife or any of his children in three years.

The family's nightmare began when Miguel found a dead man on his property. It is believed that the victim was killed by the guerreros — a feared extreme right-wing group fighting to gain power in El Salvador.

Miguel explained through an interpreter that there are three major groups recognized as having actual power. The president, Eduardo Duarte, is considered by many to be a mere figure-head

without any real power.

Many consider Roberto D'Aubassin to be the one with a great deal of actual power, despite the fact that he is not an official representative of the ruling government.

The National Guard, Miguel explained, is another group who are considered to wield authority and control.

Kill people as easily as cattle
The Guerreros, who are suspected of killing the man Miguel buried, are an influential group as well, and they've killed people as easily as they've killed cattle.

Political persuasions aside, Miguel was jailed for being a suspected sympathizer of the opposition simply because he wanted the murder victim to have a proper burial.

He managed to escape from jail with the help of "the underground," and made his way safely to the United States. Miguel ended up in Thunder Bay through proper channels, and has made his home in

Schreiber for the last 16 months.

Back home in El Salvador, however, it was a completely different world for his wife and children.

Bill Campbell, chairman of the Schreiber Refugee Committee, told the News that Miguel's family were harassed on an almost daily basis. Dora and her eight children were terrorized, and their house was ransacked. After acts of terrorism were directed at the family, their house was eventually bombed.

"This woman has kept this family together for the last three years," said Campbell as he pointed to the petite and quiet Mrs. Huezo. "She deserves a lot of credit."

Looking forward to new life

Through the efforts of the Schreiber Refugee Committee, and indeed the family members themselves, the Huezo family looks forward to a new and peaceful life.

Campbell told the News that Miguel has been working at odd jobs since he arrived here. "He's very handy and he's not afraid to work."

Miguel, a big smile on his face, conveys through broken English that he has worked in Terrace Bay and Schreiber. All the while, his second-youngest daughter stands closely to him, holding tightly onto his spring jacket as he strokes her curly, brown hair.

After the legal quibbling and political games were over, the fami-

ly was allowed to emigrate to Canada. Miguel might have to pay for the move if he can; a cost which committee member Jack Stokes estimates to be around \$5,000.

In the basement of St. John's Anglican Church on the morning of April 8, Mrs. Huezo and her children met the members of the refugee committee who will help them adjust to a new life in a new culture.

The members of the committee exchanged ideas and priorities for the family's needs as the older children sipped hot coffee and the younger children played with toys that they've in all probability never seen before.

Committee Chairman Bill Campbell asked members to organize all the different things needed to help the family get settled as quickly and as comfortably as possible.

Everything from beds, linen and pillows to medical check-ups must be organized. Rev. Bob Elkin of St. John's Anglican Church pointed out that something as simple as a sharp carving knife can make a big difference in making the preparation of meals much easier.

Mr. Campbell told the committee that it will take a lot of hard work and many people to help the family adjust and adapt to a new

way of life.

"We have a task on our hands. Any friends you can get to help... don't be afraid to ask."

Although the family requires many material necessities as soon as possible, committee vice-chairman Jack Stokes feels it would be in their best interests to receive financial help. He suggests that the family would be able to get what they truly need before getting items of secondary importance.

"Cash donations would be better in terms of us responding to their needs," he told the group.

The Huezo family has been staying in a hotel for the last few days, but will be moving into the upper floor of a building, the space of which was donated by a local Schreiber businessman.

Permanent house sought

"Our priority is to get them settled into some type of permanent residence that they can rent or buy. We need help of any type," noted Mr. Campbell.

Perhaps the family will eventually grow comfortable with the realization that their new home will be more 'permanent' than the bombed-out wreckage they left behind in El Salvador.

If you would like to help the Huezo family rebuild their lives in this area, the Schreiber Refugee Committee invite you to contact Treasurer Verna Leblanc at 4-2976.



Miguel and Dora Huezo will have a big responsibility raising their eight children in a new country with different customs and beliefs. But at least they have a chance to start again. The family suffered through years of pain and terror before being reunited last week. They will rebuild their lives in Schreiber.

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The Township of Schreiber is now accepting tenders for the supply and installation of new asphalt shingles, soffits, fascia and eave-stroughing. The location of the Municipal Offices, 608 Winnepeg Street, Schreiber.

Tender Closing Time and Date is 5:00 p.m., Monday May 2, 1988.

Tender documents may be obtained from the Schreiber Municipal Offices, 608 Winnepeg Street. (824-2711)



The lowest or any tender will not necessarily be accepted.