In Memory: Arnold Amber

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rnold Amber, a visionary journalist, union leader and humanitarian, died on Sept. 4. He was 77 years old.

Amber served as director of TNG Canada from the time it was created in 1995 until his retirement in 2011. He oversaw the organization’s evolution into CWA Canada, which created the country’s only all-media union and forged the strong bond between U.S. and Canadian journalists that exists today.

Martin O’Hanlon, who succeeded Amber as president in 2011, called him “a brilliant man who applied himself with equal discipline and passion to journalism, the labor movement, and defending freedom of the press.”

Professionally, Amber worked as an executive producer and reporter for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, where he won three Gemini Awards for news specials he produced.

Prior to joining the CBC, he was a foreign correspondent for Reuters, serving in Africa and Europe. In 1994, he led an international team that directed coverage by South Africa’s public broadcaster of the country’s first democratic election. He also worked as a reporter for the Toronto Star.

Amber was a founding member of Canadian Journalists for Free Expression, serving as its president for 20 years until 2015. He remained treasurer of the organization until his death.

In 2014, Amber became the first person to receive a lifetime achievement award from the Canadian Committee for World Press Freedom.

NewsGuild-CWA President Bernie Lunzer said, “As a leader, he never forgot where he came from. He was truly a man of substance.”

Amber is survived by his wife, Phyllis, daughters Jeannine and Gillian, and son David.