

Viva Flora (continued from p.1)

issues must be separated entirely? Yet Flora is greeted not simply with courtesy, but with warmth. When her advisers plan to lunch at an outside restaurant to get away from the pressure-cooker atmosphere of the conference, she insists on joining the delegates for their church basement chicken.

One feels the warmth and the hope were direct responses to her sincere convictions and concern. When a delegate from SOS Guatemala describes her personal experience as a refugee coming to Canada and feeling that the interrogation of the immigration officer was just what she had fled in Latin America, Flora's face clearly responds to the distress and terror in the refugee's tale.

Now is the time for sentiment and sympathy to be translated into words and actions.

H.A.

CANADA'S PERIODICAL ON REFUGEES REFUGE

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Resolution of the Standing Conference of Canadian Organizations Concerned for Refugees

(Spring Consultation, May 30, 1985)

RESOLUTION: REGARDING PROCEDURES TO HANDLE THE REFUGEE CLAIMS BACKLOG CREATED AS A RESULT OF THE APRIL 4, 1985 SUPREME COURT DECISION

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that the refugee determination process in Canada does **not** meet the requirements of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms,

AND,

WHEREAS, effective April 4, 1985 all claimants in the process are entitled to a process that does meet the requirements,

AND,

WHEREAS, the estimated 20,000 persons in the process now represent a backlog of major logistical proportions since it could take up to 10 years to handle these cases under existing resource constraints,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Spring Convocation of the Standing Conference of Canadian Organizations Concerned for Refugees recommend that a universal program of special measures be adopted by the government to speedily facilitate a humanitarian solution to all persons in the refugee determination process on April 4, 1985. The special measures should apply equally to all people caught by our faulty process regardless of nationality or ethnic origin. It would be unjust to ask people, many of whom have been in our old and inadequate process for several years, to return to the beginning to start over.

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, that the special measures taken to handle the backlog be done without any modifications to the Immigration Act.

Letters to the Editor:

Dear Editor:

I am writing to you in regard to the article by David Matas entitled "The Plight of Refugee Claimants" which was in the May, 1985 issue of your magazine volume 4, number 4.

In that article Mr. Matas commented on the Legal Aid Plan in Ontario and stated that except in rare circumstances refugee claimants are not issued legal aid certificates. Unfortunately, he did not address the issue of the community legal clinic which is able to supply legal assistance to refugee claimants on a without cost basis.

There are over 45 community legal clinics throughout the Province of Ontario at last count and many of those clinics supply legal services in the area of immigration.

I agree with Mr. Matas when he speaks of a claimant without a lawyer being at a serious disadvantage. While lawyers in

community legal clinics can help in some cases with refugee claims, the workloads necessitate that not all refugee claimants are able to utilize their services. There is a need to have a system financed through the Ontario Legal Aid Plan whereby Duty Counsel is available at the port of entry to assist refugees in the initial processing of their claims. Such a plan would require cooperation between the federal and provincial levels of government in order for it to be successful.

It was an excellent idea to have a special issue dealing with the problems of Sri Lanka. I hope that you will follow such a format in future issues of your magazine.

Yours very truly,

FLEMINGDON COMMUNITY
LEGAL SERVICES
Marjorie Hiley
Director

