

## REFUGE

c/o Refugee Documentation Project,  
York University, 4700 Keele Street,  
Downsview, Ontario M3J 2R6

### Editor:

Howard Adelman

### Managing Editor:

Caroline Stephens

### Editorial Assistants:

Shirra Freeman

Alex Zisman

### Technical Assistant:

Patricia Sandquist

### Editorial Board:

Douglas Cohen, Montreal

Claudio Duran, Toronto

Arie van Eek, Burlington

Daniel Ferguson, Toronto

Michael Pitman, Toronto

Linda Weigl, Regina

### Typesetting and Layout:

Publications Department,

York University

*Refuge* is dedicated to encouraging assistance to refugees, by providing a forum for sharing information and opinion on Canadian and international issues pertaining to refugees. It is published five times a year, in October, December, February, April and June. It is a non-profit, independent periodical supported by a grant from the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission; by private donations; and by subscriptions. It is a forum for discussion, and the views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of its funders, staff or Editorial Board.

All material in *Refuge* may be reproduced without permission unless copyrighted or otherwise indicated. Credit should be given to the author or source if named.

Subscription rates for one year are \$10.00 for individuals and non-profit organizations and \$20.00 for libraries and institutions. Please enclose payment with your order. No discounts can be given for American funds because of bank charges for foreign cheques.

### Logo design:

Dreadnaught Cooperative Inc.,  
Toronto

Second Class Mail Registration No. 5512  
ISSNO229-5113

## To Our Readers

We invite our readers to submit news items or information for publication in *Refuge*.

# Letters

## To the Editor

Please allow me to introduce myself to you: my name is G. William Rubagumya, an attorney in the state of Texas in the USA. I am originally from the country of Rwanda via the refugee camps of Uganda and I have been in the USA for the last 7 years. As you may have guessed, my concern is with the refugees that I left behind both in Uganda and other surrounding countries. Myself and other Rwandans in this country have formed a nonprofit organization, The Tutsi Relief Foundation Inc., whose main purpose is to aid in any way possible, but with primary emphasis on education and relocation of those who are able to adapt to the changed environment.

My purpose for writing is to introduce the organization to you and to solicit assistance in finding homes and educational aid for our youth who would otherwise be denied these basics of life by circumstances beyond their control. The Foundation is now attempting to secure scholarships from various schools.

I must say that the Canadian official who was in charge of the Embassy in Kampala acted with such concern in 1982 and we believe that his actions were the difference between life and death for many of our people, and Canada seems to be the only nation that is actively and genuinely interested in the Rwandese' issue. We commend you all and hope that the leadership there will retain that humanitarian touch in the future.

G. William Rubagumya  
Attorney and Counselor at Law  
Orr and Orr  
906 Sinclair Building  
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-3907  
(Phone: 817-332-3421)

## To the Editor

We in the Immigration Section of the Canadian Embassy in Buenos Aires always read with great interest your periodical "Refuge". A substantial part of our own workload involves refugees and we are always keen to learn of refugee developments and issues around the world.

Given the usual excellence of your publication we were therefore surprised to note a significant error in the editorial comments which preceded the text of the address of the Canadian permanent mission in Geneva to the UNHCR Executive Committee.

The refugee report to which Ambassador Alan Beesley made reference was of course not written by the Agha Khan, but rather by his uncle, Prince Sadrudin, who was the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees before Poul Hartling assumed this responsibility.

This must surely be only one of many letters you will receive concerning this error, however while the Agha Khan has effected many worthwhile activities on his own, surely his uncle's beneficent activities should not be included among them.

Colleen L. Cupples  
First Secretary and Consul  
Canadian Embassy, Buenos Aires

• • •

## To the Editor

An unfortunate misunderstanding has arisen in the printing of my article on the Guatemalan refugee situation in Mexico (Dec. '83), as the result of some errors of fact and judgement made by the editors of *Refuge* and my own over-

### In This Issue

#### REFUGEES FROM SURINAME

by Betty Seboc-Dahlberg . . . . . p. 5

#### ACADEMICS: ANALYSTS OR MESSAGERS OF DOOM

by Howard Adelman . . . . . p. 11

#### MONTRÉAL, TABLE DE CONCERTATION, A REVIEW

by C. Michael Lanphier . . . . . p. 16

WORLD REFUGEE SURVEY . . . . . p. 17



---

sight in not checking more carefully the edited copy sent to me. The misunderstanding is particularly evident in the commentary by Howard Adelman who in his attempt to compare my material with that of Jeremy Adelman presents a very different perspective to the reader from the one I had communicated in earlier exchanges.

The editors who left out important self-explanatory source references from my originally submitted account (presented at a seminar on the subject held at the York University Documentation Centre on Oct. 18/83) assumed incorrectly that my main source of information was COMAR, the official public Commission for Aid to Refugees. Having worked for many years in Latin America I should know what are reliable sources of information, particularly when it relates to such a sensitive and complex political issue as the refugee phenomenon in Mexico. As indicated in my original version and earlier correspondence with Howard, one of my principal sources of information was not a public source but a national vol-

untary body, i.e. the General Secretariat of the Mexican Coordinating Committee of Aid to the Guatemalan Refugees - sponsored by the National Council of Roman Catholic bishops. Their reports were based on an impressive ongoing documentation of refugees' personal testimonies, and a monitoring network of refugee movements. These were corroborated for their accuracy by data I obtained through my personal interviews with refugees and numerous front line Mexican volunteer workers in the settlement areas near the Guatemalan border, as well as research accounts and analysis from academic personnel at the National University of Mexico. I had no contact with the government affiliated COMAR.

In addition to the above, I wish to call attention to a judgement implied in the editor's commentary that I seem to be more concerned with the refugee flow into Mexico than the plight of the displaced indigenous population in Guatemala. My focus in the article on the Guatemala refugees within Mexico should not necessarily imply such an in-

ference. It is also implied that I somehow wanted to exonerate the official Mexican position toward refugees, which seems to be contrary to the spirit of the article. In assessing the total Mexican response to refugees from Central America one has to differentiate clearly between the official position placed within a precarious political, social and economic context and the generous response from Mexican voluntary organizations and private individuals in spite of the Mexican official position.

The editor is correct in pointing out that Mexico is still a non-signatory to the U.N. Convention on Refugees. Further enquiry, by Ottawa UNHCR officials with their Geneva head office, on my behalf, indicates that Mexico can be expected to become a signatory within the next 12 months. Negotiations are apparently going on at executive levels within the Ministry responsible for external affairs.

*Hubert Campfens  
Faculty of Social Work  
Wilfrid Laurier University*

---

## Deportation of Guatemalans

Dear Friends:

The attached letter from the Minister of Employment & Immigration gives an encouraging answer to the concerns you and I have expressed.

It seems, though, that we ought to keep up our encouragement to the Minister to send no more Guatemalans back to Guatemala involuntarily.

*The Reverend Dan Heap, M.P.  
House of Commons  
OTTAWA, Ontario  
K1A 0A6*

• • •

Dear Mr. Heap:

As I promised, in answer to your question in the House on December 14, I have examined the question of deportation to Guatemala to determine whether persons removed to Guatemala from Canada face any danger on their return.

First of all, I would like to confirm that the numbers involved are smaller than

reported by voluntary groups. Only 14 Guatemalans have been removed from Canada this year. The 56 refugee claims rejected on first review so far in 1983 will not result in further removals for some time because of the protracted review and appeal procedures available to these claimants.

In Guatemala, the problems are well known. Unemployment is 40 percent and repression by official organizations and para-military groups has produced flagrant violations of human rights. Naturally, returning anyone involuntarily into this milieu is a very serious matter. Our record in this regard bears out our concern. Fully 75 percent of refugee claims from Guatemalans have been accepted this year on first review and an additional 8 percent of refusals were approved when examined on purely humanitarian grounds. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has acknowledged that, in our approach, we have not only fulfilled our legal obligations, but have exceeded

them. The question is, because of general danger, as is the case with El Salvador, should everyone be offered de facto protection regardless of the merit of his claim.

In this regard, the situation is not so clear. The picture of violence and of widespread economic dislocation argues in favour of this approach. On the other hand, reports from the area also suggest that apolitical people have nothing to fear on return if they have not spoken out or worked against the Guatemalan government.

To deal with this dilemma, I have ordered a full review of the immigration implications of the situation in Guatemala. In the meantime, I will ensure no further deportation orders are handed down. I expect to be able to report further by the end of January.

*John Roberts  
Minister  
Employment and Immigration Canada*