Vol. 1, No. 4 October 1981

CANADA'S NATIONAL NEWSLETTER ON REFUGEES

REFUGE

ISSN0229-5113

A CUDDLE AT TAX TIME

by Thomas A. Rogers

Thomas A. Rogers, an account executive with a major investment firm in Toronto, has developed a concrete proposal to provide ongoing financing for Canada's contribution to refugee assistance. Below Mr. Rogers summarizes his innovative proposal, "The Lifeline Trust".

The Lifeline Trust

The proposal for "The Lifeline Trust" is exciting in its potential, as it provides for the financial participation in refugee assistance of all citizens, through the application of a new tax incentive. It is structured to be attractive not only to the affluent, but also to those of more modest means. Furthermore, it provides a viable route for a refugee who is happily resettled as a productive member of our nation to extend a helping hand to those he left behind and to receive recognition for his achievement.

The derivation of the proposal stems from its author's dismay at witnessing a recently-returned refugee camp nurse who wished to sponsor a family she had worked with in Thailand, having to make the rounds of spent-out sponsorship groups and solicit contributions from their small left-over balances. After his personal experience as part of a sponsorship group in seeing how quickly and effectively a refugee can be brought into full production as a contributing member in a new society, he became appalled at prevalent concepts that aid to refugees is or should be motivated by humanitarian considerations *only*. A motivation, as he so perceptively points out, should also be to take full advantage of the opportunity to activate dormant human assets which are free for the asking to the economic benefit of our country - both in the short term and most certainly in the long run. Any Canadian who believes otherwise denies his own heritage, for we are a nation of refugees creating together in remarkable harmony a multicultural society which is the envy of the world.

For the Public - A Tangible Vested Interest in Refugee Resettlement

The fourteen-page tightly-worded proposal outlines the creation of a "Lifeline Trust" to be administered by a rotating board of directors composed of native-born Canadians and recently-settled refugees, who can contribute the proper balance and vitality to the direction of the Trust.

The public participates in the Trust through the purchase of CUDDLE receipts which will be sold by investment dealers and charitable or religious organizations.

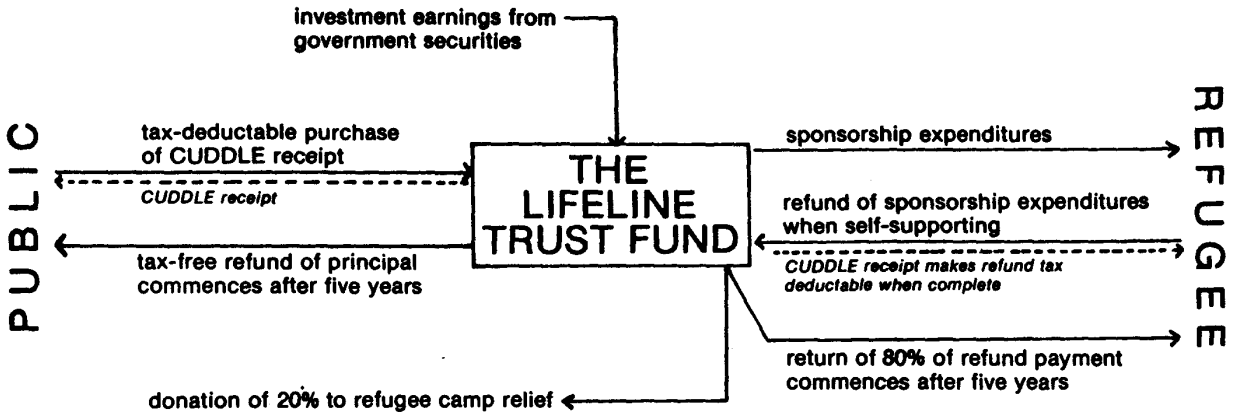
C.U.D.D.L.E. is short for Charitable Use Deemed Donation/Loan Expressed.

"Charitable Use Deemed Donation" means that every purchaser of a CUDDLE receipt would be able to deduct his purchase from his taxable income, in the same manner he currently does with any other contribution to charity.

"Loan Expressed" is recognition that after a five-year period during which the Trust had use of the funds, it would pay back to the CUDDLE receipt holder his principal sum, subject to any minor

REFUGE is dedicated to encouraging Canadian citizen participation in helping refugees, by providing a forum for sharing information and opinion on domestic and international issues pertaining to refugees.

© Thomas A. Rogers, 1981. This open-access work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License, which permits use, reproduction and distribution in any medium for non-commercial purposes, provided the original author(s) are credited and the original publication in Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees is cited.



capital encroachments which may have been necessary. The return of principal would not be taxable as income when paid out. Accordingly, purchasers of CUDDLE receipts will have the opportunity of establishing a tax-free income stream for the future and a tax deduction immediately. All they are asked to do in return is to invest the use and earning power of a portion of their income for a five-year period. During this period, that earning power will be used to turn a portion of the worldwide refugee liability into an asset for Canada.

The creation of this opportunity may require a small amendment to the Income Tax Act to bring it into being. This is certainly achievable given the clearly demonstrable advantage to the government of having the public assume directly and willingly the funding needed for Canada's contribution to refugee assistance. Furthermore, the Trust's capital funds would be invested in government securities as a reciprocal fiscal service in return for the tax concession.

The Refugee Will Refund His Sponsors' Expenditures

Under the proposal, the full participation of the refugee is invited and provision is made for guarantees to enable him to in turn become a sponsor of his relatives should he so wish.

A refugee destined for Canada would be requested to sign a non-binding letter of intent to refund, in time, the funds spent by his sponsorship group on helping him attain earning status in Canada. As an incentive, when he has fully refunded, he will receive a CUDDLE receipt from the Trust and a certificate of Honour and Gratitude. This will be a clear statement to him that his achievement is recognized as a valuable contribution to his new country as well as to remaining refugees. This could be further recognized by granting him membership in a refugee assistance network.

Upon earning his CUDDLE receipt he will be entitled to deduct the full sum from his taxable income and qualify for an 80% payback after five years. The 20% withheld would be a direct contribution effected by the Trust on his behalf to refugee camp relief and would be allocated each year from the cumulative re-cycled refugee contributions.

To enable refugees to sponsor their relatives, for any funds required the Trust will guarantee letters of credit issued by banks jointly to the refugee and the approved befriending group which will guide him in his sponsoring effort.

One additional and very important benefit will surely occur. A great many of the CUDDLE receipt purchasers, while initially attracted by the tax reward, will subsequently wish to participate actively in the refugee endeavour as they will then have a tangible vested interest in ensuring its success. You may be very certain they will spread the good word. So soon, we'll all be CUDDLEing together, in our efforts to end this generation's holocaust.

The balance of the proposal deals with specifics of the administrative framework, based on the author's experience in many facets of the financial service industry. It has been informally presented through Mr. Axworthy to members of the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission for their analysis. It has also been directed to the attention of the Canadian Foundation for Refugees. Comments on the proposal are encouraged.

We are very hopeful that the Lifeline Trust may be brought into being through the positive efforts of all who have suggestions or are able to assist in directing it to fruition. □

If you are interested in receiving a copy of the full proposal for your personal review and comment, copies have been made available through Refuge, *on loan or for $2.00. Comments may be sent to the editor of* Refuge, *who will forward them to the author.*

© Thomas A. Rogers, 1981. This open-access work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License, which permits use, reproduction and distribution in any medium for non-commercial purposes, provided the original author(s) are credited and the original publication in Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees is cited.

NEWS IN BRIEF

THOUSANDS OF POLES FLEE TO AUSTRIA: CANADA INCREASES QUOTA

The dramatic increase in the number of Poles seeking asylum in Austria has prompted Canada to increase its intake of Eastern European refugees. According to the Intergovernmental Committee for Migration (ICM), 5,000 Eastern Europeans arrived in Austria during August, bringing the number of people there awaiting resettlement in third countries to 17,000, compared to around 3,000 this time last year. Around 12,000 of these people are Poles.

In response to Austrian officials' appeal to resettlement countries for help, Employment and Immigration Minister Lloyd Axworthy annouced in July that Canada would take in an additional 1,000 refugees from Vienna. Most of these would likely be Polish. This raises Canada's quota for refugees processed in Vienna from 1,100 to 2,100; and the total quota for refugees from Eastern Europe from 4,000 to 5,000. An immigration task force is currently in Vienna processing applicants, and Canadian officials are watching the situation closely to judge whether further assistance will be necessary.

ICARA

African states have maintained a general policy of resolving refugee problems within the continent wherever possible. But the magnitude of the crisis - in 1980 there were around 5 million refugees in Africa - places an insupportable strain on the countries of asylum, many of which are among the poorest nations in the world.

To address this problem, the U.N. in consultation with the UNHCR and the Organization for African Unity (OAU), convened the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA) in Geneva on April 9 and 10, 1981, primarily to mobilize resources for refugee programmes in Africa. The final tabulation of pledges shows Canada's contribution in relation to those of other major donor countries:

	Refugees/ Returnees	Other humanitarian programmes	Total
U.S.A.	258,200,000	25,200,000	283,400,000
E.E.C.	67,580,000	420,000	68,000,000
GERMANY (F.G.R.)	42,857,143		42,857,143
JAPAN	20,000,000	13,000,000	33,000,000
SAUDI ARABIA	30,000,000		30,000,000
CANADA	18,823,529		18,823,529
ITALY	17,000,000		17,000,000
U.K.	12,159,091	1,704,545	13,863,636
AUSTRALIA	11,627,906		11,627,906
Total raised at ICARA			566,969,472
Total 2-year need estimated by OAU			500 - 800,000,000

Figures represent U.S. dollars.
Source: UNHCR

CANADA-MANITOBA AGREEMENT ON ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

A federal-provincial agreement to assist refugees with special needs, including the mentally and physically handicapped, unaccompanied minors, tubercular persons and others, has been signed by Employment and Immigration Minister Lloyd Axworthy and Manitoba Labour and Manpower Minister Ken McMaster.

The agreement draws together various activities currently conducted jointly or separately under a comprehensive new programme to be called the Special Programme for Assisting Refugees (SPAR). Under the terms of the agreement, the federal and Manitoba governments will jointly work with private groups to plan and follow up on a case-by-case basis the necessary special settlement assistance for refugees coming to Manitoba under the programme - a specific number to be determined each year. The agreement identifies the services and resources that both levels of government and private sponsorship groups will contribute in sponsoring refugees with special needs.

U.S. POLICY HAS IMPLICATIONS FOR HAITIANS, SALVADOREANS

The Reagan Administration recently announced its proposal for a new immigration policy for the United States. Although the proposal concerns only immigration policy and does not alter American refugee policy, certain points that would affect refugees in this part of the world include:

- granting amnesty (legal status) to the approximately three to six million illegal immigrants who have lived in the U.S. since before January 1, 1980 with the restrictions that:
  - they would have to reside in the U.S. for ten years before attaining permanent resident status, and
  - during that period they could not bring their spouses or minor children to the U.S. During that period they would also pay income and other taxes but would not have access to welfare, unemployment insurance and some other social programmes. For Haitians and Cubans the waiting period would be five years. Human rights groups in the U.S. estimate that of over 500,000 Salvadoreans (both legal and illegal) in the U.S., around 100,000 arrived after January 1, 1980 and would therefore not be eligible for this amnesty. Estimates of the rate at which the recent arrivals are being sent back range as high as 1200 a month.
- empowering the Coast Guard to intercept boats carrying Haitians on the open seas in order to return them to Haiti.

© Thomas A. Rogers, 1981. This open-access work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License, which permits use, reproduction and distribution in any medium for non-commercial purposes, provided the original author(s) are credited and the original publication in Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees is cited.

Refugees are not unique to the twentieth century, and refugee resettlement has been a part of Canada's history since its inception. Nonetheless, for geographically isolated North America, institutions and policies reflecting a formal role in the world refugee problem have been a recent development. While countries such as Britain and Denmark have had councils for refugees since the early 1950s, Canada had no such national body until the first meeting of the Standing Conference of Canadian Organizations Concerned for Refugees in 1977, and no long-term legislative recognition of the global refugee problem and her ability to assist through resettlement until the inclusion in 1976 of the sponsorship programme in the new Immigration Act.

As Canada's role as a country of resettlement grows and our policies and practices evolve, it is useful to understand other countries' experiences in refuge resettlement. Of the major resettlement countries around the world (see Statistical Survey, page 8), many differ widely from Canada - Switzerland in its resettlement of handicapped refugees, the Scandinavian countries in their large-scale fundraising, African countries in their dual role as countries of first asylum and of permanent resettlement, etc.

This article is the first in a series designed to give an overview of this variety of resettlement policies and experiences around the world.

FRANCE: A CENTRALIZED SYSTEM

By André Postel-Vinay, France Terre d'Asile

The number of refugees presently living in France is in the order of 195,000. This total includes around 75,000 Europeans, 6,000 South Americans, 95,000 nationals from the former colony of Indochina and 4,000 Africans. Most of the refugees of European origin (Russians, Poles, Armenians, Spaniards and others) have been settled in France for a long time, but more arrive each year. The influx of South Americans dates primarily from the 1973 coup in Chile; that of Indochinese from May 1975; and that of Africans has developed throughout more recent years.

The organization that currently works to settle refugees in France was set up at the time of the influx of Chileans and other South Americans. In 1975 this organization expanded to assist the Vietnamese, Cambodians and Lao who throughout that year were arriving in France at an average rate of around 1,000 per month.

The most notable advantage of the French system of refugee reception is good coordination between the actions of the government and of private associations assisting refugees.

The most important of these organizations are CIMADE (The World Council of Churches), le Comité medical pour la santé des migrants, le Comité national d'entraide, the French Red Cross, France Terre d'Asile (FTDA), le Secours Catholique and le Service social d'aide aux émigrants (SSAE).[1] These associations constituted a special committee for the coordination of their efforts.[2]

Whatever the nationality of refugees, their initial reception and introduction to French life are organized as follows:

The government takes responsibility for the financial support necessary for basic living (accommodation, food, medical care, French language classes, orientation, vocational training, etc.) for a maximum of six months starting from entry into France. However, the government does not concern itself directly with the reception or integration of refugees. It is the private associations that take responsibility for it, with the financial assistance of the government. In general, each association concentrates its efforts in one area of settlement; for example, the French Red Cross handles medical matters, CIMADE language training, etc. Two associations play an especially important role in initial reception: SSAE and FTDA.

SSAE deals with those newcomers who, although still needing social assistance, opt for an "individual solution" and are able to move in with relatives,

[1] *FTDA is the only one of these associations that specializes in the problems of refugees. The other associations cited do not concern themselves only with refugees; they carry out equally important functions in other domains. For example, they almost all intervene on behalf of migrant workers.*

[2] *In general, this organization only works for foreigners who have requested the status of political refugee. This rule involves some exceptions, however, in favour of the nationals from the former colony of Indochina.*

UNHCR

Indochinese refugees in transit centre near Paris

© Authors, 1981. This open-access work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License, which permits use, reproduction and distribution in any medium for non-commercial purposes, provided the original author(s) are credited and the original publication in Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees is cited.

Refugee women learning French

UNHCR

friends, or "guarantors".[3] SSAE is, among other things, charged with ensuring that this category of refugees receives the assistance provided by the government.

FTDA handles the reception of those newcomers who, for lack of connections and resources, must resort to the system of collective reception created by FTDA. These refugees are first lodged in "transit centres" outside Paris, run by FTDA.[4] This stay in the transit centre allows time for compiling a registry of the individuals and their vocational skills, carrying out essential medical exams, distributing information, etc. This first stage lasts around two weeks.

The refugees who have not opted for an "individual solution" (around two-thirds) are then transported by FTDA to the "provisional lodging centres" (CPH) located throughout the provinces. Each centre has an average capacity of around 80 people.[5] Unlike the transit centres, these CPH are not managed by FTDA but by local associations chosen by FTDA and which work together with it. These associations have the responsibility for finding, for each refugee, his first accommodation and first job. This must be done within the six-month period that marks the limit of the financial aid of the government.

When FTDA notices that an association managing a CPH is finding it increasingly difficult to find jobs or housing for the refugees, it relieves the association of this task and searches in another region for another association capable of running a new CPH. FTDA is thus obliged to modify the geographic distribution of the CPH in response to the realistic possibilities for employment and housing. It must also reduce or increase the number of these centres and of transit centres according to the size of the influx.

Thanks to its decentralization and flexibility, this system of reception and integration of refugees has functioned, until now, with remarkable effectiveness, in spite of the unemployment which is rife in France. It is this unemployment - as well as the insufficiency of public housing - that poses the most serious obstacle to these efforts. Until the beginning of 1981 these obstacles were relatively well surmounted: the percentage of cases not settled within the six month waiting period remained in the order of 5%. Often this delay was due to illness or social handicaps.

But unfortunately, since January 1981, the percentage of these cases has begun to increase alarmingly; it has now reached 16%. Admittedly, in cases of this kind, the French government has never yet withheld its financial aid, in spite of the limits it itself fixed. But the maintenance of financial assistance does not solve the essential problem: the continuation of the steady influx of refugees is only conceivable if these refugees can create for themselves, without excessive delays, an independent existence in the country which receives them. The worsening of unemployment thus risks sharply reducing the possibilities of refugee resettlement in France at a time when the troubles, the conflicts and the persecutions from which a great many sectors of the Third World suffer would demand, in contrast, that these possibilities grow. □

[3] However, all refugees who arrive in groups coming from the former Indochina, even if they have the possibility of an "individual solution", must remain two weeks in a transit centre for reasons of public health.

[4] There are currently four transit centres of this kind. Their total capacity is 1,000 people.

[5] There are currently 60 CPH, with a total capacity of 4,519 people.

INTERNATIONAL RESOURCE CENTRE

An International Refugee Integration Resource Centre (IRIRC) has been established in Geneva. Its purpose is to facilitate the sharing of information on refugee resettlement among governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations by cataloguing materials, monitoring research, establishing a network of resource contacts and encouraging them to share data on their work, disseminating information and proposing workshops.

IRIRC is a joint project of the Intergovernmental Committee for Migration (ICM), the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). It is managed by ICVA and housed in the ICVA Secretariat:

IRIRC
13, rue Gautier
1201 - Geneva
Switzerland

© Authors, 1981. This open-access work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License, which permits use, reproduction and distribution in any medium for non-commercial purposes, provided the original author(s) are credited and the original publication in Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees is cited.

RESOURCE EXCHANGE

THAI TRANSIT CAMP NEEDS INFORMATION ON EMPLOYMENT IN CANADA

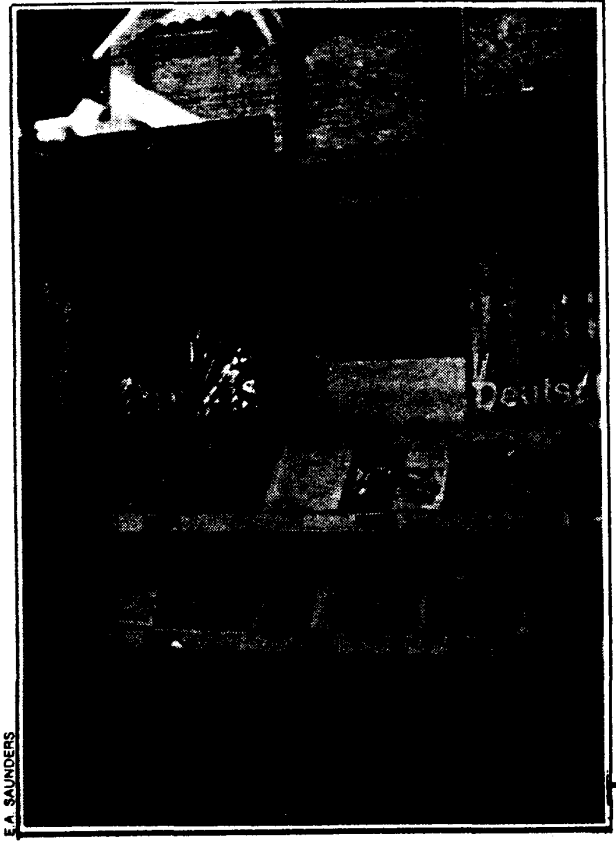
by E. Anne Saunders, Mennonite Central Committee (Bangkok)

In the Refugee Transit Camp at Panat Nikom, 80 kilometres east of Bangkok, Thailand, refugees bound for Canada may wait anywhere from a month to a year, usually with very little to do with their time. The Mennonite Central Committee has used that time to provide cultural orientation to life in Canada. This project is one of several comprising the Refugee Assistance Programme supported by the Mennonite Central Committee,

MCC (Bangkok) is now trying to incorporate a vocational guidance component into this orientation. It is hoped that through this programme, refugee adults will become aware of their responsibility in finding employment in Canada, and that exposure to information while in the refugee camp will prepare them better for this aspect of their resettlement.

Discussions about refugee employment orientation programmes have been held with the other refugee relief organizations involved in cultural orientation programmes. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has expressed a great deal of interest and encouragement in programme expansion in this direction.

Library at Panat Nikom



E.A. SAUNDERS

Employment orientation at Panat Nikom

E.A. SAUNDERS

The Canadian Embassy in Bangkok is also supportive of this programme and has given MCC access to their written, pictorial and audio-visual information. However, much of it is naturally geared towards the tourist, businessman or well-informed and well-educated immigrant.

Refugee workers from various agencies cooperate in their efforts to prepare the refugees for their resettlement countries. While there is a shortage of manpower and resource materials, audio-visual equipment is accessible and interpreters are readily available to help get information across to the people. There is also a very well-used library in the camp. Right now there is a small section for Canada. MCC (Bangkok) would like to see this expanded and would like to set up another section entitled "Employment".

In order to get this vocational guidance programme off the ground, MCC (Bangkok) needs written, pictorial and audio-visual materials; its needs information - general statistics and individual stories about the types of jobs that refugees have found; it needs advice as to what sort of employment information should be emphasized. Much of the resettlement information that has been used with refugees in Canada would also be valuable in the Transit Camp. If you or your organization can share this kind of information, please send it at your earliest convenience and by airmail to:

MCC (Bangkok)
5 Convent Road
Apartment 19
Bangkok 5, Thailand

It is hoped that this vocational guidance programme will make resettlement in Canada a less stressful process - for the refugee, the sponsor, the employment counsellor and the employer.

© E. Anne Saunders, 1981. This open-access work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License, which permits use, reproduction and distribution in any medium for non-commercial purposes, provided the original author(s) are credited and the original publication in Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees is cited.

Contents

A Cuddle at Tax Time

THOMAS A. ROGERST 1

News in Brief

Thousands of Poles Flee to Austria: Canada Increases Quota 3

ICARA 3

Canada-Manitoba Agreement on Assistance to Refugees with Special Needs 3

U.S. Policy Has Implications for Haitians, Salvadoreans 3

Refugee Settlement around the World

France: A Centralized System

ANDRÉ POSTEL-VINAY 4

Resource Exchange

Thai Transit Camp Needs Information on Employment in Canada

E. ANNE SAUNDERS 6