



---

CANADA'S PERIODICAL ON REFUGEES

# REFUGEE

---

Vol. 2, No. 3

February, 1983

## A Letter from the Jungle of Mexico a Few Hundred Yards from the Guatemalan Border. November 27, 1982.

*The following dramatic account of conditions in a refugee camp in Mexico was received from a representative of an international organization working in that country.*

---

**Friends:**

I was totally unprepared for what I found when I went to the refugee encampment in the Mexican jungle a few hundred yards from the Guatemalan border, where nearly 5,000 Mayan Indian men, women, and children have crossed some imaginary line thinking they would find shelter and safety.

In Guatemala, they face an active campaign of genocide. In Mexico, there are doctors, but they do not have medicine to treat the epidemics that rage. Nor cotton, alcohol, or soap. In this past week, at just this camp, the two intern doctors estimate 100 deaths. The newly improvised cemetery has about 30 graves, and the rest are buried near the small gatherings of nylon-tarp shelters.

The cause of death may be malaria, or tuberculosis, or diarrhea or whatever. Nothing is recorded. But the real cause is hunger.

This encampment is one of an estimated 25,000 in this jungle region. All the

refugees are survivors of massacres. Their accounts are vivid and clear. After the massacres, they tried to hide in the mountains, but after watching their children die one by one, some tried to find their way to Mexico. Sometimes they travelled for 15 nights, hiding, unable to cook for fear their campfires would betray them.

Then, like the 86 who were sitting outside the hut in which I was sleeping, they arrive in the encampments. Their feet are blistered and torn. They have their few

possessions on their backs — a few pots, maybe a blanket, whatever they could salvage. Even four-year-old children are carrying something on their backs, their heads bent down with the weight of the tumplines. There they sat until 4 p.m., without water or food.

Their arms are so thin. Yet everywhere one walks, there are smiles. 'Buenos dias!' 'Buenas tardes!' How can they maintain that harmony in the face of what is happening?

*(Continued on p. 2)*

**ALSO FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE** .....

**CANADIAN REFUGEE POLICY, 1983** ..... 3

**RECENT RESETTLEMENT OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN REFUGEES IN FRANCE**  
by Professor C. Michael Lanphier ..... 6

## REFUGE

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

### Editor:

Howard Adelman

### Managing Editor:

Caroline Stephens

### Editorial Board:

Douglas Cohen, Montreal

Claudio Duran, Toronto

Arie van Eek, Burlington

Donald Ferguson, Toronto

James Hathaway, Moncton

Michael Pitman, Toronto

Linda Weigl, Regina

### Typesetting and Layout:

Seagull Graphics Inc.

*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 grants from the Canadian Foundation for Refugees, Operation Lifeline, and the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission; by private donations; and by subscription payments of \$10 a year. 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.

### Logo design:

Dreadnaught Cooperative Inc.,  
Toronto

Second Class Mail Registration No. 5512  
ISSNO229-5113

## A Letter from the Jungle

(Continued from p. 1)

The centre Zunil has 32 families. There is only one infant under one year of age, and only 23 children under 5. The rest did not survive.

No one can say exactly what is the food ration in the camp, because it seems to depend on the whim of the officials. But a family, say 6 persons, receives about 9 kilos of corn every 10 days, approximately. And one kilo of beans. Perhaps a bit of salt.

Understand that these refugees are virtually prisoners. To the south is the Guatemalan border and the Army. To the north is the Rio Lacuntun and hundreds of miles of jungle, accessible only by foot in the rugged terrain. In a few spots there are dirt landing strips. I arrived in a well-used Cessna, squatting on the floor behind the pilot, as the plane bounced into the air and continued at times just above the tree-covered mountains. Then, the clearings the refugees had made, looking like garbage dumps or debris from the tightly-packed black plastic roofs and downed trees and slash. We banked steeply, and hit the strip which the refugees themselves had constructed just days before. The flight cost for four persons: 6100 pesos, or something less than \$100. Supplies can arrive by launch, first by truck to Palenque, then an 11-hour trip by launch pro-

pelled by a 50-hp motor. The logistics alone are overwhelming, not to mention the costs.

This is a difficult time to accomplish much in official Mexico. In just four more days, a new president will take office. What his policies will be, who his cabinet will be, no one knows. In the meantime, in this vacuum, particularly in these isolated areas, everyone is his own boss.

What needs to be done? Each person needs to find some way to exercise his or her human responsibility. There is a need for international commissions of investigation and periodic inspection of the refugee camps. International and diplomatic pressure are required so that Mexico will permit responsible international organizations to provide aid to the refugees. The international press should take note of the situation. Surely the media can manage to send reporters and cameras to the area.

Calls of concern should reach the Mexican Embassies. Write a letter of concern to Miguel de la Madrid, President of Mexico, Mexico City, urging that Mexico allow a non-governmental response to the refugee situation.

I hope that these words will convey to you the desperate plight of these dispossessed people.

Source: A responsible representative of an international organization working in Mexico.

## Letters

### To the Editor:

Dear Sir:

Your "Newsflash" in the September/October issue of "*Refuge*" stated: "The UNHCR has cancelled its agreement of co-operation with the Canadian Foundation for Refugees".

While it is true that the UNHCR and the CFR are no longer parties to a written agreement which made them partners in the areas of fund-raising and public education, it is wrong to say that UNHCR no longer has an agreement to co-operate with the CFR.

The Statute of the UNHCR provides that the High Commissioner may establish "contact in such manner as he may think best with private organizations dealing with refugee questions". We shall continue to provide the CFR with the best advice and support we can offer in

matters of mutual concern, as we do for all other voluntary agencies working in this sector.

Yours sincerely,

*Itshaaq H. Brown*

Representative in Canada of  
the United Nations

High Commissioner for Refugees

Our newsflash said the UNHCR cancelled its "agreement of co-operation" and not any informal arrangements to co-operate. Ed.

### Editor's Note:

*Refuge* would like to publish more articles by individuals working in the field. However, we have experience some difficulties in obtaining such articles. Following is a quote from a letter sent by one such individual:

"Unfortunately I cannot help you in your request for an article for *Refuge* magazine. A number of individuals and agencies here have gotten into big

trouble by writing for external magazines. I feel my first obligation is to the program here. Therefore, I must refuse. I would really like to help you though. I thought of writing a few thoughts down, perhaps anonymously. I feel this is doing the same thing as writing some sort of article so I must refuse totally."

*The Third International Conference on Soviet Jewry will be held in Jerusalem, March 15-18, 1983. The Presidium of the World Conference on Soviet Jewry called for the conference in response to the deteriorated situation of Jews in the Soviet Union. Further information may be obtained by writing to the Canadian Committee for Soviet Jewry, 212 Dunvegan Road, Toronto, Ontario M5P 2P2. (416) 489-7133.*

---

---

## The Minister Writes

---

---

Dear Mr. Adelman:

In recent weeks there have been a number of inaccurate reports concerning government services available to Indochinese and other refugees. The nature and extent of the misinformation currently circulating on this subject have compelled me to address the issue personally. While we all recognize that it is extremely difficult to correct any media misinterpretation of the facts, I am concerned that the media coverage may distort the public understanding of the work of many refugee organizations; such coverage fails to reflect the broad range of joint government/voluntary sector projects and programs which are either proposed or underway to assist refugees in Canada. I also wanted to ensure that you had received information about some recent initiatives in the refugee resettlement field.

You are familiar with the broad range of current settlement programs, such as ISAP (Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program) and AAP (Adjustment Assistance Program). Transportation loans are also available to refugees, and a group of special programs, organized in cooperation with the provinces, assist in the resettlement of those with special needs, such as tubercular and handicapped refugees.

As you may be aware, we are currently reviewing all settlement and integration programs in association with the Secretary of State and the Minister of State (Multiculturalism). Although this review is still ongoing, a major policy issue emerging is the need for extensive consistent and accessible language training across Canada for all adult immigrants, including refugees. While the conclusion of the EIC/SOS review is not anticipated for another few months, I felt I should begin to address the issue immediately.

I recently announced a policy change to ensure that refugees sponsored by relatives and those sponsored by private groups have equal access to language training allowances. This provision should assist a considerable number of refugees and ease the financial burden on sponsoring groups who previously carried all the costs themselves. Without the

restrictive financial strain, I hope that sponsors will encourage the newcomers in their care to sign up for full-time language training courses.

Language training is only one aspect of the resettlement process, and there are many other initiatives being considered, both through the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission and as a result of the joint review. I am very aware of the urgent need to provide more adequate employment services for immigrants, particularly refugees. I hope to study this, and immigrant language training needs during the coming months, and I welcome your guidance and expertise. However, I did feel that there were short-term measures which could be undertaken now. I recently invited all private groups involved with refugees to consider how we might use the CEIC employment development program known as NEED (New Employment Expansion and Development). I hope to launch additional community-based language training components through this funding mechanism. I also plan to make use of PED (Program for the Employment Disadvantaged) to ensure that employers can more easily receive direct wage subsidies to employ refugees.

In the area of guidance and job placement, I am also considering the establishment of separate immigration/employment counselling units in Canada Employment Centres. Alternatively, such units could be operated through the Outreach Program or through ISAP. Again, this will require further study and I welcome your views.

As you know, the refugee plan for 1983 will allow for the resettlement of up to 12,000 refugees assisted through the government funding. An additional unlimited number may be sponsored by the private sector. Although we were somewhat discouraged about the future of private sponsorship at the beginning of 1981, it now appears that private sponsorship continues to make a significant contribution to Canada's ongoing refugee resettlement program. In 1982, I anticipate that over 4,500 people will have been assisted by relatives and private groups. I expect that the long-term aspects of sponsorship will be the

topic of further discussions with you over the winter months, and I again invite your thoughts on this very crucial aspect of our refugee work.

I hope this letter has responded to some of your concerns and corrected any misinformation circulated by news reports. There is enormous potential in the field of refugee resettlement for new ideas. To put these ideas into effect, I look forward to continuing guidance and advice from non-governmental organizations who clearly understand the difficulties refugees face in adjusting to life in Canada.

Yours sincerely,  
*Lloyd Axworthy*

Dear Mr. Adelman:

I am writing in response to your letter of October 16 in which you describe a sponsorship model which would allow us to maintain our refugee intake in a time of economic restraint.

As you know, the refugee levels for 1983 have now been announced and, although there has been a decrease from 14,000 to 12,000, private sponsorship is increasing slightly and we are committed to other humanitarian programs for Poles, Lebanese, and El Salvadorans, as well as family reunification program such as that for Vietnamese. All in all, therefore, we will maintain a significant level of refugee resettlement.

More fundamental changes such as the one you have proposed require changes in financial authorities and the way in which applicants are identified and selected abroad. I would like to approach this kind of change more systematically, following a full airing of the various permutations and combinations of government and private sector inputs, which can be achieved through conferences or other fora. I hope this process can be launched early in the new year.

Thank you for your draft proposal. I am confident we will have an opportunity to discuss it in the near future.

Your sincerely,  
*Lloyd Axworthy*

The government's annual report to Parliament on immigration levels was filed at the beginning of November, 1982. Enough time has passed to analyze the government's changes in refugee policy.

What were the changes? Why were they made? This article will deal with the decrease in refugee intake and the redistribution of the allocation of that reduced figure among the refugee producing areas. Other changes, such as special humanitarian programs, alterations in refugee status determination and reductions in the financial assistance to refugee claimants, will be dealt with in future articles.

The Canadian government's planned refugee intake for 1983 has been reduced from 14,000 to 12,000, but funding has only been approved for 10,000 refugees in 1983. This year, the 2,000 contingency reserve is unfunded; cabinet will be required to approve both the number of places allocated from this contingency and the required funding. Thus, although the planned figure has been reduced by 15%, the budgeted figure has been reduced by almost 30%.

Presumably, the cabinet refused to give a blank cheque for the contingency figure in order, through control mechanisms, to effectively reduce the intake figure by more than 2,000 unless the need was absolutely demonstrated. What is the explanation for reducing the planning figure? "With employment and housing shortages, we cannot absorb as many as when the economy is stronger." In 1938 we kept out refugees because of prejudice.<sup>1</sup> Forty-five years later we reduce the intake because of economics.

One must look at the figures closely to understand just how great the reduction has been. In 1980, the actual intake of government-sponsored refugees was 19,000. For 1981, the planned intake was 16,000 (including a 2,500 contingency reserve of which 1,000 was assigned to Eastern Europe and 200 to Africa). The actual intake was almost 25% below the planned intake. If the same pattern follows through in 1983, the actual intake will only be 9,000 government-sponsored refugees, a decline of over 50% from 1980 and of 25% from 1981.

Perhaps there is less need for Canada to admit more, or even as many, refugees as in 1980 or 1981. If demand declines then it is appropriate that we take fewer refugees.

Demand must be understood by region. The 1979 and 1980 allocations for Indochinese were exceptional, but the planned intake was 8,000 for 1981, 4,000 for 1982 and 3,000 for 1983. The planned intake has effectively dropped by 25% from last year and by 62.5% from the year before without any comparison to the peak years of 1979 and 1980. The explanation is reduced resettlement needs of the refugees left in the camps, reduced outflows of "boat people" from the refugee-producing countries, and a very large intake quota of 170,000 for the U.S.<sup>2</sup> In other words, there are fewer coming in to the camps, large numbers continue to leave (for the United States), and the needs of the residual refugees left in the camps have declined. They have the basic necessities of life and their lives are not in danger.

What are the facts? If we compare Nov. 30, 1981 to Nov. 30, 1982 we find the following figures:

	Nov. 30, 1981	Nov. 20, 1982	% Decline
No. of refugees in camps and processing centres	239,657	194,796	18
No. of new arrivals	99,636 (Dec. 20)	47,115	53
No. of departures	168,501 (Dec. 30)	71,641	56

The decline in departures is occurring at a faster rate than the number of arrivals. The effect is that, although the resettlement plans are keeping pace with intake, the rate of reduction in the residual numbers of refugees in the camps is declining. In other words, the refugees in the camps will have longer and longer waiting periods before they are resettled. Since the psychological and, hence, economic costs increase as the refugees become more and more conditioned to camp life, it is both false economy and inhumane to reduce the intake of Indochinese refugees into Canada. As the number of new arrivals declines, we should be emptying the camps much more quickly and not more slowly. Further, given the actual number of departures for all countries, a high American

quota is irrelevant since the American system depends on the work and resources of private agencies combined with government funding to back up their plans.

Further, by doing less and using as an excuse the fact that the physical lives of the Indochinese are not in danger (though their psychological and social lives are), Canada is offering an open invitation to Thailand to carry out its threats. If Canada increasingly sponsors refugees only if their lives are threatened, may we not expect local governments to begin threatening refugees' lives?

The allocation for Eastern Europe has been reduced from a planned intake of 6,000 to 3,000 because fewer Eastern Europeans (primarily Poles) in Western Europe will need permanent resettlement in 1983. But the Eastern European planned intake for 1981 was 4,000 before the crisis in Poland even emerged. The other reason for the total reduction is

that the Soviet Union has clamped down on the numbers of Jews permitted to leave. Finally, there is a well settled Eastern European population in Canada who can and do utilize private sponsorship, family reunification under relaxed criteria and normal family class programs to bring in Eastern Europeans. The reduction in the Eastern European planned intake thus seems reasonable.

When we move to Canada's admission policy with respect to refugees from Latin and Central America, the problem is not one of planned intake, but rather, of actual numbers admitted. In 1981, the planned intake was 1,000, but only 132 government-sponsored refugees arrived. In 1982 the planned intake remained the same (1,000) but it has been doubled for

# Refugee Policy (1983)

## Location of Refugees

1983 to 2,000. This reflects Canada's leading role (prompted by the Canadian churches) in refugee protection in Central America, and the fact that "Canada is at present the only resettlement country actually engaged in resettling Central American refugees." The Canadian government's intentions for the area must be applauded, although final laudits must await the assessment of actual intake figures.

Planned intakes for Africa and the Middle East have been doubled from 500 to 1,000 and 400 to 800 respectively. The African quota reflects increasing recognition that, for selected refugees among the millions in Africa, local solutions are not feasible if the lives of the refugees in countries of first asylum are endangered. The same explanation for the increased allocation to the Middle East has been offered, with the Baha'is in Iran cited specifically for their endangered position. But the explanation is peculiar since; (1) the Baha'is who have come have been sponsored at no cost to the government by private sponsors in the Canadian Baha'i community and, (2) the Baha'is who are sponsored are ones stranded abroad, for the Baha'is truly in danger cannot get out of Iran.<sup>3</sup> The Other groups specifically noted are Christian minorities and the Lebanese victims of civil war and invasion. In the latter case, the primary victims have not been Lebanese but Muslim Palestinians.

However, no concerted program has been launched to assist in the resettlement of homeless Palestinians in Lebanon who have been refugees for decades and for whom permanent settlement with citizenship seems as remote as ever.

Our tentative report card on the policy and numbers is as follows: The reductions in the East European allocation seem reasonable; the increases for Latin and Central America and for Africa are commendable although we await to see if the actual number of landings are consistent with the plans. The Middle East allocations seem inadequate, even though doubled; and the background explanation given for the targeted group is quite inadequate, suggesting policy on Middle Eastern refugees is confused. The continuing reduction in the government sponsorship of Indochinese refugees seems premature. We would be far better to sponsor more at an early stage investing more monies in proper language and training schemes until the economy improves. This not only provides employment for Canadians now, but prevents more money being spent later on the psychological support services that may well be needed.

*The total allocation should not have been reduced. The planned number of Indochinese refugees should have remained at the 4,000 level. A greater increase should have been provided for*

## Indochinese Refugees Arrivals Decline: Departures Decline Even More

According to United Nations sources, there was a significant decline during 1982 in numbers of Indochinese refugees arriving in Southeast Asia over 1981 figures. As of Nov. 30, 1982, there has been a 30% decline in arrivals by boat and a 78% decline in overland arrivals in Thailand. The reasons cited for the reduced numbers included changing conditions in countries of origin, dif-

ficulties in organizing departures, fear of attacks by pirates and the imposition of stricter asylum conditions.

But the rate of resettlement has fallen off even more sharply — a 56% drop from 1981 totals. As a result, approximately 195,000 Indochinese refugees were still confined at the end of 1982.

UNHCR December, 1982

the Middle East, with particular attention to the Muslim Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

<sup>1</sup>cf. *None is Too Many*, H. Troper and I. Abella. Lester & Orpen Dennys Ltd. Toronto. 1982.

<sup>2</sup>The year is not cited. Presumably the U.S. quota refers to 1983. In fact, the 1983 U.S. intake quota for Indochinese refugees is 64,000. The total U.S. refugee intake quota for 1983 is 90,000. (Figures obtained from the Statistical Analysis Branch of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.)

<sup>3</sup>cf. *Refugee*. Vol. 2, No. 2, December 1983.

### From a Speech Delivered by Lloyd Axworthy, Canada's Minister of Employment and Immigration to the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration, December 2, 1982

"The combined sponsorship of the government and the private sponsors of this country have brought out some 5,000 refugees from that camp (Traiskirchen) alone, which amounts to a total of 10,000 Polish nationals who have been given the right to come to Canada to become citizens. On a per capita basis, we have accepted more Poles than any other country in the world during the past year."

"I have also given an incentive to the private sector to sponsor more refugees. I recently announced measures which will make training allowances available to group-sponsored refugees on language or skill courses sponsored by the CEIC. This will provide an average of 20 weeks allowance per refugee family, easing the burden on sponsoring groups who would otherwise have to pay maintenance and lodging during this time."

"It now costs an average of \$2,633 per refugee to provide the necessary services, an increase of \$646 over the original budget forecast — an increase of \$646 for every refugee receiving assistance through AAP (Adjustment Assistance Program)."

# Recent Re of Southeast A in Fr

by C. Michu

Intake of Southeast Asian (SEA) refugees in France is importantly connected both to its general refugee intake policy and to the history of France's involvement in Southeast Asia over the past century. Of more recent import was the wave of refugees living in Vietnam after the defeat of France at Diem Bien Phu 1954. This stream of migration established an important base of SEA nationals in France at the time of the beginning of the large refugee wave after the fall of the Saigon regime in 1975.

During the 1950s, France created the legal structure to establish the Office française de protection des réfugiés et apatrides (OFPRA), which governs all official decisions with regard to the determination of refugee status within France for every such application. Decisions of the Office of Director of OFPRA with regard to the determination of status of refugee for every such applicant are binding without further governmental intervention. Negative decisions may be appealed to an autonomous body, Commission de Recours, which is composed of three representatives; it is chaired by a member of the state counsel (Conseil d'Etat), a representative of the council of OFPRA, and a representative of the French delegation of UNHCR.

In the case of SEA refugees, the determination of refugee status has occurred categorically, with relatively few such applications requiring direct reference to the office of the Director of OFPRA.<sup>1</sup>

As a result of the interpretation of French legislation, the UNHCR exercises three principal roles with regard to refugee resettlement:

— surveillance, involving both administrative overview of the procedures for handling refugee status claims as well as substantive matters involving the status of the claimant;

— serving on an advisory council to the French government with regard to all matters of the government's role in refugee selection, determination, and resettlement;

— adjudication of all appeals from OFPRA.

The interests of the UNHCR delegation with regard to SEA acceptance and resettlement have been persistent and far-ranging. With regard to refugee selection and quota, the delegation continuously presses for augmentation. A notable recent representation resulted in

a supplementary quota being established for the year 1982, composed of 6,000 Cambodians who have been long-term residents in Thai camps. In an effort to provide refugee arrivals with the rudiments of spoken French, UNHCR has contributed to the establishment of language classes operated by the NGO "Ecoles sans Frontières" at three campsites in Southeast Asia, where refugees attend classes offered daily while they await final clearance for transit to France.

The UNHCR delegation has also succeeded in making joint contributions with the government of France for special programs of assistance to the establishment of small businesses and for emergency assistance to refugees in becoming established, the latter program especially directed to refugees other than those of SEA origin. Of special significance to SEA refugees is the implementation of the delegation's recommendation for a single refugee identity card which permits access to all services including the right to work.

## Selection of Refugees

It has been the policy of the French government to select SEA refugees on the basis of a yearly quota with the following priorities:

1. The unification of families (children, close relatives).
2. Administrative or military service with the French government.

Of less significance but still important has been the knowledge of the French language and possibly some prior acquaintance with French nationals. Since 1975, the quotas established by the government have been set at approximately 12,000 SEA refugees per year. As noted above, the quota for 1982 has been augmented to include a supplement of 6,000 Cambodians of long-term duration in Thai camps. This special supplement is unlikely to be renewed for 1983.

Unofficially, both governmental officials and NGO representatives estimate that the actual number of arrivals to France between 1975 and 1981 should be reckoned between 100,000 and 120,000 persons. The disparity between official and unofficial figures is explained by the inclusion of persons who arrive originally as students or under other auspices who join the refugee community. Furthermore, refugees arrive in France often from intermediate destinations elsewhere in Europe or the Middle East.<sup>2</sup>

While refugees enjoy protected status in France, assured both by the French government and the UNHCR, there is considerable concern both on the part of the French government and of the refugee community, to eliminate the official label "refugee" as quickly as possible. Accordingly, SEA refugees have the unique opportunity (not afforded to other refugees) of becoming French nationals (i.e., citizens), after the first year following arrival.

## Refugee Resettlement System

The French government has arranged a

Origin <sup>a</sup>	Official SEA Refugee Arr by Ethnicity		
	1975-76	1977	1978
Lao	28%	24%	22%
Thai	11	9	1
Hmong	4	15	13
Cambodian	45	32	34
Vietnamese	11	19	29
Chinese <sup>b</sup>	1	1	1
Other	*	*	*
Total	100%	100%	100%
Number	19,128	11,468	12,402

Source: France Terre d'Asile

Notes: <sup>a</sup>Combination of Ethnic and Geographical Origin  
<sup>b</sup>Self-described Chinese. Speakers of other origin counts.

\*Less than one percent.

# settlement Asian Refugees France

by Noel Lanphier

highly elaborate and efficient system of service delivery to refugees immediately following their arrival in France. This arrangement was established in 1975 and has continued with only minor modifications since then.

A national committee (Comité National d'Entraide, Franco-vietnamien, Franco-cambodgien, Franco-laotien), funded by the Secretary of State for social action and the Ministry of Labour, as well as by private sources, to initiate and co-ordinate more activities of resettlement of refugees from SEA origins, hosts governmental bodies with NGOs.

The committee has three principal functions:

1. overview responsibility for the selection of potential refugees to arrive in France;
2. recommending to the French government legal and administrative measures to assist in the resettlement of refugees;
3. co-ordinating the activities of the several NGOs in order to facilitate the re-adaptation process of refugees.<sup>3</sup>

Table 1: Resettlement of refugees in France, 1975-1981, by Origin

1979	1980	1981	TOTAL
14%	20%	21%	21%
2	4	2	5
11	8	5	9
28	38	46	38
45	30	26	26
*	*	*	1
*	*	*	•
100%	100%	100%	100%
5,378	12,001	12,290	82,667

phic  
some Chinese dialect much higher; included

By far, the most extensive activity of the national committee has involved the co-ordination of the reception and resettlement services offered by the several NGOs.

### Resettlement Centres

Most refugees are sent to one of approximately 75 resettlement centres located in 51 different Départements in France, all outside the metropolitan region of Paris. Such assignments are co-ordinated by France Terre d'Asile but result from collaborative arrangements with the centres, each of which is independently directed although funded by the Ministry of National Solidarity.

These centres are all temporary lodgings, converted usually from quarters originally designated for other uses; refugees may spend between four to six months at such a centre, during which time nearly all resettlement services are channelled through those auspices. Orientation and language classes are held either on the premises of the centre or nearby in the local community. Each centre has its own staff of counsellors who provide both initial orientation to each refugee family as well as specific counselling according to the particular needs (the location of family members, eligibility for training programs, plans for employment and permanent settlement elsewhere). These centres provide full meals and the basic requirements for family life. Additionally, each refugee receives a weekly allowance of 20 francs (Can. \$4).

The combination of the administrative need for making room for incoming refugees and the interest of the refugee assuming independent life in France results in considerable pressure for the refugee to vacate the centre after four months' residence. If, however, no one in the refugee family has successfully found employment by that time, the stay may be extended an additional two months. Departures are normally con-

tingent upon the refugee's having secured both employment and housing.

### Individual Solutions

Refugees may opt for joining close relatives or friends upon arrival without entering the resettlement centres. Such arrangements are made after a brief and somewhat informal undertaking on the part of the sponsor to provide orientation and accommodation for the refugee family under his or her charge. These refugees often require considerable social assistance during their initial month of resettlement. They are assisted basically by two organizations: Service Social d'Aide aux Emigrants (SSAE) and Secours catholique (SOS). Each of these organizations is established in nearly every department and is required to assist every refugee who so applies. Thus, each organization has a full array of resettlement services available, including a cash assistance plan keyed to the level of assistance that would otherwise be supplied by the resettlement centre. Officially, refugees may have access to cash assistance and various social services for a period of three months, followed by one such renewal. Both SSAE and SOS are financed by the Ministry of National Solidarity as well as by private donations. Their work is disproportionately concentrated within the metropolitan region of Paris, where some 80% of refugees asking for individual solutions locate.

### Summary

SEA refugee intake has been surrounded with a certain ambivalence. Governments and NGOs intend to respect a commitment which they insist is an integral part of the French tradition of refugee reception. In this context, an augmentation of intake is no less necessary as an expression of this very continuity. At the local levels, the resistance appears as a reaction to the continuation of a refugee influx which was presumed to be tapering. This tension promoted a committee of NGOs to publish a detailed brochure, "... alors ce n'était pas fini?" ("... well, has not all of this already finished?") This brochure, directed to an audience of local governmental administrators, politicians, and public leaders, argues that the persistent pressures in Southeast Asian refugee camps leave France no choice but to revitalize their refugee reception acti-

(Continued on p. 8)

## Recent Resettlement

(Continued from p. 6)

vities: the urgency of resettlement overrides concern over job placement and public resistance.

There is no quick or easy resolution of the issue of rate of refugee intake and resettlement. It is possible for local prefectures and governments to resist effectively alteration of refugee intake in their communities by not allowing resettlement centres to offer the necessary services. With the increased autonomy being allowed local départements under the Socialist government in France, implementation must take the form of persuasion rather than coercion. Yet nearly all refugees arriving in France will be rejoining relatives who are already established; thus the burden for NGOs who were previously the sole providers of resettlement services would be lightened. This "sharing of the burden" is limited, however, as increasing proportions of arrivals have opted for resettlement centres rather than individual solutions for the first 4-6 months following their arrival in France. Still, representations by refugees already established for the selection of their relatives will certainly increase in number and urgency over the coming months. It is apparent that the government's option to stretch out the intake but not to reduce the promised supplement represents the only feasible compromise in a situation that could become increasingly politicized. Such an eventuality is viewed by all parties with apprehension.

France has attempted to integrate refugees into the ongoing structure of French society with a very minimum of accommodation to the cultural particularities of the refugee groups so concerned. Correspondingly, political leaders wish to avoid an escalation of refugee resettlement into a political issue which could divide the French population into ethnic cleavages. Until recently, governments have been rather successful in the resolution of such issues by informal means, thereby minimizing such cleavages. In the present case, however, the delicate and careful treatment of SEA refugee intake in the near future remains a capital challenge both to political leaders and to social agencies in their attempts to assure an adequate delivery of services, especially to new arrivals.

*C. Michael Lanphier is a professor of Sociology at York University. He is associated with the Ethnic Research program at the university.*

## Canada's Aid to Refugees

To	Funds Donated
<b>To UNHCR</b>	
For Pakistan (Afghan refugees)	\$ 5 million
For Thailand (600,000 refugees)	1 million
For Central America (El Salvadoran, Guatemalan and Nicaraguan refugees)	2 million
For Africa:	
Ethiopia (to aid resettlement of returnees)	2 million
Somalia (Ethiopian refugees)	1 million
Sudan (Ethiopian refugees)	1 million
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$12 million</b>
<b>To International Red Cross</b>	
For humanitarian relief programs in Thailand and Africa	
Thailand (for refugee relief programs along the Thailand/Kampuchea border)	1 million
Africa (for civilians displaced as a result of numerous armed conflicts)	1 million
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 2 million</b>
<b>To UNICEF</b>	
For Ethiopia (for expanded immunization program for young children and pregnant women in refugee settlements)	500,000
For Lebanon (for relief supplies — medicines, blankets and the water supply)	500,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 1 million</b>

In addition, Canada is providing \$50,000 to the League of Red Cross Societies (LRCS) for their program of assistance to Vietnamese "boat people" refugees in various Southeast Asian countries. Canada is also granting \$150,000 to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for its program of assistance for political detainees. The funds to LRCS and ICRC will be provided through the International Humanitarian Assistance (IHA) program of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

## Project Inter-Amicos

Project Inter-Amicos, founded in May 1982, is a permanent sponsor group under the aegis of the Ottawa-Carleton Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO) (a non-profit, charitable social service organization). The Project has taken on the task of sponsoring, in a continuous but limited fashion, families from Southeast Asian refugee camps in response to the ongoing need for resettlement assistance for Indochinese refugees remaining in the camps, with family reunification cases from the Hong Kong

camps being the priority. Project Inter-Amicos is presently seeking funds and community support to enable them to expand their operations to support the sponsoring of families from Thai and Malaysian camps.

If you require additional information or assistance, please call or write

Project Inter-Amicos, Ottawa-Carleton Immigrant Services Organization, 425 Gloucester Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1R 5E9.  
Telephone: (613) 238-4256.



---

---

# Canadian News

---

---

## Report on Illegal Immigrants in Canada

"Illegal immigration in Canada is a major problem that is growing every day. Something must be done about it."

The report on illegal immigrants presented to Employment and Immigration Minister Lloyd Axworthy by the Canada Employment and Immigration Advisory Council has found that illegal immigration in Canada is a major problem. The Council was unable to arrive at an exact figure for the number of illegal immigrants in Canada due to a lack of precise data; however, the Council believes that the number 200,000, often used as an estimate, is conservative.

The solutions to Canada's illegal immigration problem proposed by the Council include the following:

1. **Curative Measures:** Illegals presently in Canada should be given legal resident status after a phased, six-year probationary program administered by the government with the help of non-governmental community agencies. The Council feels that such measures would be the most realistic and humane way to deal with illegal aliens in Canada. However, the Council has made a clear distinction between this program and an unconditional amnesty, which it feels is ineffective and counter-productive.

2. **Preventive Measures:** To prevent a further build-up of illegal immigrants, the Council advocates tighter control at points of entry as well as stiffer enforcement measures within Canada as follows: the establishment of an entry and exit control system at border points; the active seeking out of illegal immigrants; and a more strict application of the the Immigration Act for employers who knowingly hire illegals.

Canada. Employment and Immigration Advisory Council. Dec. 8, 1982.

*A Study Document of Principles on the Issue of Undocumented Aliens came out of a conference on undocumented aliens convened by Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service in November 1978 and followed by a lengthy study process. Adopted by the LIRS standing committee in September of 1980, the document provides pertinent background material on undocumented persons or "illegal aliens," a theological framework for discussing the issue and public policy recommendations for improving U.S. immigration law and policy. It can be obtained by writing to the Lutheran Council in the United States of America, 360 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10010.*

\* \* \*

## Canada Makes Unilateral Declaration Against Torture

The Honourable Charles Lapointe, Minister of State (External Relations), announced on December 17, 1982 that the Government of Canada has decided to make a unilateral declaration of its continued compliance with the "Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment".

The declaration, conveyed in a note addressed to the Secretary General of the United Nations, confirms solemnly the intention of the Canadian authorities to continue to act in conformity with the Declaration. This moral commitment entails no change in present Canadian law or practice which continue to be consistent with the principles contained in the Declaration of the United Nations.

The UN Declaration against torture, which was adopted by the General Assembly on 9 December 1975, does not include legally binding obligations for States. To date, over 30 governments, including the Canadian Government, have declared unilaterally that the competent authorities within their respective territories intend to act in conformity with the provisions contained in the Declaration.

The Government of Canada intends, in addition, to continue to work within the UN Commission on Human Rights for the early completion of the drafting of an "international convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (under consideration in Geneva since 1978). Canada believes it is important that the international community provide itself with the legal instruments necessary for the effective suppression of the practice of torture in the world.

\* \* \*

## Minister of Employment and Immigration Appoints Special Advisor

Employment and Immigration Minister Lloyd Axworthy announced on December 21, 1982, the appointment of Mr. W.G. Robinson as a special advisor to study and analyse problems related to people living in Canada without official status, as well as those seeking unauthorized entry into this country. The announcement is in response to the recent report on illegal immigrants prepared by the Canada Employment and Immigration Advisory Council.

\* \* \*

## Vietnamese Community Petitions Canadian Government

Members of the Vietnamese community are planning to get signatures for a petition addressed to the Canadian Government and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to ask the Canadian Government and UNHCR to intervene in favour of Vietnamese refugees now being detained in concentration camps in Thailand so that the Thai Government will grant them the status of refugee (according to the Geneva agreements) and allow UNHCR, the Red Cross, and settlement countries' immigration officers to visit and interview them.

---

## New Films

---

**Sanctuary: An African Epic** focuses on the efforts made by governments and UNHCR to find durable solutions for refugees on that troubled continent. The 28-minute production, shot in 1982 in Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Zimbabwe, is narrated by Orson Welles, and was filmed by Dick Young Productions of New York City.

\* \* \*

**Rwanda Influx** examines the recent exodus from Uganda and outlines the international response to the emergency.

\* \* \*

**Nueva Esperanza** is a look at the Salvadorean refugees in Honduras and their movement away from the border areas. This 16-minute production is narrated by actor James Mason.

\* \* \* \* \*

These films may be obtained by contacting the UNHCR.

### *Life Begins in January* a film

*produced by Jean Dansereau in co-operation with  
the UNHCR  
the International Committee of the Red Cross  
the Thai Red Cross  
and UNICEF*

*Life Begins in January* was filmed in the refugee camps such as Khao-I-Dang (the largest refugee camp in the world) along the Khmer/Thai border. The film reveals firsthand how the refugees would suffer or perish without the massive aid provided by UNICEF, the International Red Cross, the World Food Program and other similar organizations. Transcending the horror of genocide effected by the Vietnamese troops, who in 1979 invaded and occupied Kampuchea and forced the Khmer out of their own country, is the courage of a people who, despite the uncertainty of their future, persist in keeping alive their 2,000-year-old traditions.

16 mm Colour; 58 min. 3 sec.; 16 mm: 106C 0180 049; Video: 116C 0180 049

This film is distributed by the National Film Board of Canada, P.O. Box 6100, Montreal, Quebec H3C 3H5.

### *Seeds of Liberty* a film

*Produced by Catalyst Films for the Maryknoll Order.*

In November, 1980, four North American missionaries were murdered in El Salvador.

Awarded first prize in 1981 by the International Jury in Oberhausen, *Seeds of Liberty* depicts the social and economic conditions that frustrate the people of El Salvador and the role of the army in terrorizing the whole population. The film reveals the people's will and desire to seek and fight for human dignity and a just society.

Bishops, priests, nuns and lay church people both in the U.S. and El Salvador talk frankly of the repression and the U.S. government's support for a corrupt and oppressive military regime. At the same time, President Jose Napoleon Duarte and General Jose Guellermo Garcia offer their solutions to the camera. Murrat Williams, former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador (1961-64), makes a plea for an end to U.S. military support of the Duarte regime and calls for a Salvadoran solution to the current situation.

Available from the Development Education Centre, 427 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario. (416) 964-6560.

### *UNHCR Slide Kits*

The UNHCR now has available three slide-tape kits geared to secondary school students. The three are entitled, "International Assistance — How It Works," "A Trauma of Our Times" and "Refugees — A Historical Perspective." Each package contains 50 to 60 colour slides, a cassette tape to accompany the slides, and a number of workbooks for use by both students and teachers. They are available for purchase at U.S. \$55.00. More information about the slide kits may be obtained from Doug MacDonald, Public Information Officer, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 280 Albert St., Suite 401, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5G8.

## Books Received

The Refugee Documentation Project has recently acquired the following books:

*Transnational Legal Problems of Refugees*, The Michigan Yearbook of International Legal Studies. 1981. Clark Boardman Company Ltd.

\* \* \*

*Struggle and Hope: The Hungarian - Canadian Experience*. N.F. Dreisziger. McClelland and Stewart Ltd. 1982.

\* \* \*

*For a Better Life: A History of the Croations in Canada*. A.W. Rasporich. McClelland and Stewart Ltd. 1982.

\* \* \*

*Global Refugee Policy: The Case for a Development Oriented Strategy*. Charles B. Keely. The Population Council, N.Y. 1981.

\* \* \*

*The Smallest Pawns in the Game*. Peter Townsend. Little, Brown and Co. 1980.

\* \* \*

The Refugee Documentation Project at York University is concerned with acquiring and preserving archival materials pertaining to refugees in and from all parts of the world. (The Project's library is open between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekdays.) Donations of documents, papers, reports or other library materials are encouraged.

If you have worked with refugees or have conducted research on refugees or refugee-related issues, please write and tell us about your work. A function of the Project is to create an index of Canadian individuals and organizations concerned with refugees in order to establish a referral network among people needing information on refugees. Another mandate of the Project is to carry out crisis field research.

Further information may be obtained by writing to C. Stephens, Refugee Documentation Project, York University, 4700 Keele Street, Downsview, Ontario M3J 2R6. Telephone (416) 667-3639.

## World News

### *Statue "Refugee" Unveiled*

The Statue "Refugee" by the Argentinian Sculptor, Adolfo Perez Esquivel, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1980, was unveiled on December 13, 1982 at the headquarters of the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva.

\* \* \*

### *Soviet Generosity*

With one exception, the Soviet Union has never contributed a single kopeck to any of the many international refugee relief efforts.

That exception was in 1971 when Moscow gave some modest help to the UNHCR's aid program for the 10 million Bengalis who fled to India from what was then East Pakistan.

Edward Girardet, from *Christian Science Monitor Reprints*, "Refugee Crisis."

\* \* \*

### *1982 Migration Totals*

In December, 7,570 migrants were processed and moved, bringing the total for the year to 140,500. The number of Indochinese refugees accepted by the resettlement countries declined from 157,900 in 1981 to 86,225 in 1982, but more Vietnamese (9,770 against 8,530) were able to emigrate legally under the Orderly Departure Program. Movements under the other refugee migration programs increased from 43,420 to 49,500, mainly from Eastern Europe.

A slight decrease was also registered in the emigration of nationals from Western Europe (4,800 against 5,700), but the number of persons who went to Latin America was higher, in particular under the Return of Talent program. Migration movements were organized from 88 emigration countries to 106 immigration countries.

Also of note was the drop in departures of Soviet Jews from 9,460 in 1981 to about 2,700 in 1982, and in departures of Armenians and family reunion cases from the USSR from 2,450 to 400. About 2,000 Romanian migrants transited through Italy. The number of Polish asylum seekers resettled by ICM (Intergovernmental Committee for Migration) increased from 5,020 in 1981 to 15,335 in 1982, the latter including 640 under a special program for former detainees authorized to emigrate with their families.

\* \* \*

- 81 Jews from the Soviet Union arrived in Vienna during January, the lowest monthly total since this emigration started in 1971.

- 600 Polish asylum-seekers from Austria, Germany, and Italy moved during January brought to 21,500 the total of Poles who have been resettled since mid-1981.

- 4,600 Indochinese refugees ex-Asia were moved for permanent resettlement; 2,975 others were transferred to the Refugee Processing Centre at Galang, Indonesia (2,530 from Thailand).

- 29 Vietnamese refugees of Chinese ethnic origin transited through Hong Kong en route from the People's Republic of China to final destinations in Austria, France, the United Kingdom and the U.S.A.

- 50 Amerasian children (the fourth group) were moved from the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to the U.S.A.

- 16 handicapped refugees plus 30 family members from Malaysia were moved to Finland, thereby completing the transfer to that country of a total of 21 handicapped refugees and 34 family members.

Intergovernmental Committee for Migration  
*Monthly Dispatch*, Jan. & Feb. 1983.

*Refugees of Concern to UNHCR?*

AFRICA		ASIA & M/EAST		N. AM. & EUROPE	
ALG	167,000	CHINA	268,700	AUL	317,000
ANG	93,600	HK	10,800	AUS	30,000
EGY	5,500	INDIA	4,600	BEL	22,000
BOT	1,300	INDON.	13,500	CAN	353,000
BUR	214,000	IRAN	1,600,000	DEN	1,800
CAM	3,400	JAP	1,900	FRG	100,000
CAR	4,000	LAOS	3,500	FRA	150,000
DJB	31,600	LEB	3,100	GRE	4,000
ETH	11,000	MACAU	1,100	IT	13,500
KEN	4,000	MAL	102,200	USA	1,003,000
LES	11,500	PAK	2,743,000	NETH	13,000
NOR	500	PHIL	14,600	NZ	10,600
NIG	100,000	VTN	28,500	NOR	6,000
RWA	18,000	THAI	182,200	PORT	7,600
SEN	4,000	TOTAL	4,977,700	ROM	1,000
SOM	700,000	<b>LATIN AMERICA</b>		SPAIN	21,900
SUD	627,000	ARG	12,300	SWE	20,000
SWA	5,800	BELISE	7,000	SWIT	40,000
UGA	113,000	BRAZIL	5,400	TUR	1,200
TAN	174,000	CHILE	2,500	UK	146,000
ZAI	325,000	C/RICA	15,000	YUG	1,100
ZAM	58,300	CUBA	2,000	TOTAL	2,262,700
TOTAL	2,672,500	DOMR	5,000		
		GUAT	50,000		
		HOND	29,000		
		MEX	146,000		
		NIC	22,500		
		PAN	1,500		
		PERU	500		
		VEN	500		
		TOTAL	299,200		
Total by continent	10,212,100				
Total other countries	100,000				
Grand Total	10,312,100				

Source: UNHCR

**Editor's Note:**

*The figures contained in this chart are quite misleading. For example, the numbers of refugees cited for Australia, Canada and the United States, among others, include all refugees settled since the Second World War who are now citizens of their adopted countries of residence. On the other hand, some countries such as Israel are not even mentioned. The figures given for Lebanon are inaccurate.*

*When are we going to develop statistics not based on category mistakes, omissions and distorted data? Otherwise the cry that there are ten (twelve? fourteen?) million refugees in the world is a fraud.*