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CANADA'S PERIODICAL ON REFUGEES REFUGEE

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THE HUMAN SCALE OF CANADA'S COMMITMENT

Update on the Host Family Program

C. Michael Lanphier

The Program Structure and Objectives

The following report on the Host Family Program updates data on the pilot projects in London, Winnipeg and Regina while also synthesizing reports issued since August, 1986, by the Policy and Program Development Branch of Employment and Immigration Canada. Included are data received from organizations in Kitchener, Calgary, Vancouver and Quebec City.

A Host Program, operating from an established community organization, is provided with funding to a maximum of \$50,000 for each community. A program co-ordinator is responsible for recruiting and training host groups, matching them with incoming refugees, and then monitoring and supporting their activities.

The objective of the Host Program is to enhance, through community based human resources, the settlement process of those government-assisted refugees and designated persons who qualify for economic and social support under the Adjustment Assistance Program (AAP). The Adjustment Assistance Program currently provides funds to government-assisted refugees including those in the "control" group program. Funding is set at levels similar to provincial welfare

assistance; allowances are paid to acquire basic clothing and furniture; and assistance is available to refugees for a maximum period of one year following arrival in Canada. Funding ceases if at some time during that period the refugee becomes self-sufficient through employment. However, participation in the Host Program may continue, as will the emotional and social support offered through the community organization, its staff and host families.

The host groups are expected to assist refugees in settling more quickly, in learning English (French), in obtaining employment as soon as possible and generally in providing friendship and emotional support. Program co-ordinators are in daily contact with the groups as well as with the community, thus public awareness of the refugee situation is also enhanced.

History of the Program

Authority was granted to transfer funds from the AAP to the host group program in 1985. Host projects were initiated in London, Winnipeg and Regina in March 1985. Since then, seven pilot projects began in Quebec City, Kitchener, Windsor, Saskatoon, Yorkton, Calgary and Vancouver, and there are more now. The present evaluation treats the program only in the seven cities where formal evaluations were undertaken: Quebec City, Kitchener, London, Windsor, Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary and Vancouver.

The purpose of this report is to determine whether the host group program is meeting its objectives. Two sample groups, host group refugees and "control" group refugees, were set up in each of the six communities: Kitchener, London, Windsor, Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary and Vancouver.

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EDITORIAL:

Fostering Cultural Awareness

This edition of *Refuge* brings us once again to the human scale of Canada's commitment to refugees as we present the second report on the Host Family Program. This program, inaugurated early in 1985, is a "Canadian original." It is designed to provide a more personalized introduction to life in Canada for government-assisted refugees, especially those arriving in families, single female or single male household heads, and others with special needs.

CANADA'S PERIODICAL ON REFUGEES

REFUGE

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The Host Family Program is a pilot project shared between the private sector and government. It has been criticized for possibly draining away volunteers from private sponsorship, thus reducing the number of private sponsorships. Others criticize the program for subsidizing an undertaking which they believe should be fully the federal government's responsibility.

The criticisms are misdirected. If anything, the spontaneous comments of representatives of host families are infused with the same spirit of generosity as shown by the volunteers who form the backbone of this program. The enthusiasm from the Host Family Program has already served as a catalyst for sponsorships.

By making contacts with a wide number of local church and other organized community groups, the program has widened the network of groups for recruitment both of host families and private sponsors. As the degree of financial and personal commitment is lighter on individuals, the Host Family Program allows a group to "try out" an experience of contact with newcomers. The results to date indicate that hosts not only feel that they have benefited greatly, but they tell others about this experience. Private sponsorship could have no better publicity agent.

Government circles may justify the Host Family Program on the basis of lowering the cost and spreading the responsibility for government-assisted refugees. Yet the cost "savings" are not great, in comparison with costs sustained for government-assisted refugees without host family experience. The reasons are close at hand: the genius of the Host Family Program is in fostering Canadian cultural awareness. This extends from better and wider acquaintance with English and French language and expression, and by becoming avid consumers in the development of networks of friends and acquaintances among established Canadians.

And the cultural awareness is reciprocal. Host family groups themselves develop cultural sensitivities which cannot be communicated in TV documentaries or classroom drill. They share the swings of

elation and despair, and of the hope and grim reality which fill the first few months of a newcomer's life in Canada. Most of all, they realize that life experiences are common, however tightly bound in different cultural wrappings. As a program, there are still some uncertainties in the Host Family Pilot Project: (1) will the program be as successful in large metropolitan areas with a wide variety of organizations, each with its own reporting line and responsibilities; and, (2) will the promise of spreading the interest in helping the newcomer refugees be realized in the private sector?

While this report points to positive replies, it is clear that the Host Family Program is being evaluated as a government project which has to show not only that specified objectives have been accomplished, but that they have been cost effective as well. The last word is still to come.

C. Michael Lanphier, Editor



Forthcoming

FORCED TO FLEE: Resources on Refugees and Development Canadian Jesuit Centre.

An educational kit which focuses on refugees and development. Contains a User's Guide, "Forced to Flee, A Refugee Story..." Getting Started; Media; Women at Risk; Waiting for a Miracle; "When Someone Asks" and suggestions for action. Due for September 1988 publication. Anticipated price is \$10 plus \$2 postage. Canadian Jesuit Refugee Programme, 947 Queen Street East, Toronto, Ontario, M4M 1J9.

REFUGEES in POLICY and PRACTICE: Report of the Seminar Series.

Written by Robert Krekewich and Noreen Spencer-Nimmons, the document reports on the 1986-1987 and the 1987-1988 proceedings. North York: Refugee Documentation Project. Twenty plus pages, desk-top copy, \$Can 5.00, postage not included.

couver. The sample from Quebec City consists only of host-group refugees due to the problem of having no control group. Therefore, data for Quebec City are sometimes discussed separately, where necessary.

Sample Selection

In each of the six cities, Kitchener, London, Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary and Vancouver the CEC (Canada Employment Centre) created sample groups of 35 host-group refugees and 35 control group refugees (see Table 1). Refugees in the control group portion of the sample were selected from government-assisted refugees who arrived during the same time period as those in the host group. Both sample groups were eligible to receive all the services normally provided to government-assisted refugees in the community.

Indicators of Social Adaptation

1. Accommodation

Most refugees, whether host group or control group, moved into permanent accommodation within the first week in several communities. In Quebec City, Vancouver, and especially Kitchener, the process of finding permanent accommodation took somewhat longer; for example, half of all Kitchener refugees were unable to find permanent accommodation until well after a month had elapsed. Only in Vancouver were host groups effective in finding accommodation for their refugees. In all other communities, either CEC or a mix of other agencies assisted in finding suitable housing.

TABLE 1 - Host Program Pilot Projects: 1985-87

Community	Start Date	Host Groups Matched	Refugee Groups Matched	Refugee Individuals Matched	As At
LONDON	15/04/85	86	86	293	31/10/86
WINNIPEG	15/03/85	155	155	422	31/03/87
REGINA	29/03/85	59	71	181	28/02/87
KITCHENER	29/09/85	95	95	182	01/05/86
CALGARY	01/07/85	142	243	650	01/06/87
VANCOUVER	15/08/85	164	209	540	01/06/87
WINDSOR	01/11/86	40	40	120*	01/03/88
TOTAL**		741	899	2,388	

*estimate

**In Quebec City, between 10 August, 1985 and 1 November, 1987, seventy-four groups of refugees (211 individuals) were matched with hosts.

The two sample groups (host and control) were selected, as far as possible in each community, by matching age range, gender of household head, and mix of geographic origin so that comparisons could be made of two groups from roughly equivalent backgrounds. Overall, more than 80 per cent of the refugees in the study are male. Origins are predominantly Central American and Southeast Asian, with the European region ranking third. In three cities, London, Winnipeg and Vancouver, disproportionately more Central Americans were assigned to the host-group, while Southeast Asians predominated in the control group (See Tables 2a and 2b). Family size is larger in the hosted group, with the control group representing single-person and smaller size families disproportionately (see Tables 4a and 4b).

2. Language Acquisition

Only those government-assisted refugees whose English language facility is judged to be insufficient for employability receive language training in English Canada. This amounts to approximately 80 per cent of both host group and control group samples. In Quebec City, the COFI French-language program is open to all adults. In principle, it was assumed that host groups would reinforce language training through informal conversation and practical experience. Such assistance is particularly an asset as the interval between arrival of the refugee and entry into a language training program could run as long as several months. The host group would in such cases launch the refugee into the rudiments of English or French.

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Notice

Administrative duties as Master of McLaughlin College have imposed a demanding portion of my time and therefore, with this issue I take my leave, both as editor of *Refuge* and as Director of the Refugee Documentation Project (RDP). However, I shall continue to serve the RDP as Research Counsel.

I am most gratified to report that the RDP Board of Directors found a successor, unanimously choosing Howard Adelman. Professor Adelman returns from a highly successful research leave, during which his work on the never-before-accessed UNRWA files has resulted in a complete manuscript for publication and a data base large enough to double the size of RDP's present Resource Centre holdings. Howard will be leading a newly invigorated constellation of qualified researchers and practitioners on a challenging long-range enquiry into the global refugee crisis. This will involve academics and practitioners in a series of colloquia devoted to this topic, according to their area of expertise.

Also with this issue, and due to increasing research duties, Noreen Spencer-Nimmons will take leave as Managing Editor of *Refuge*. Alex Zisman, who served as Features Editor through 1986, will return as both Features and Managing Editor. His experience with refugee situations, especially in the Latin American context, has already been evident in these pages. He will continue the tradition of critical enquiry and faithful reporting which have been engendered by all the RDP and *Refuge* staff through these seven volumes.

I wish to thank the Members of the Board, Guest Editors, and the RDP staff for their indispensable service to *Refuge* this year. I have enjoyed and been inspired during my term as Editor and Director by the work which we have shared together: it has been truly a collective effort.

And most of all in our work together, we thank our readers for their continued interest and support.

C. Michael Lanphier

TABLE 2a - Regional Origins of Host-Group and "Control" Refugees in Kitchener, London and Winnipeg (a)

Region	Kitchener		London		Winnipeg	
	Host.G.	Ctrl.G.	Host.G.	Ctrl.G.	Host.G.	Ctrl.G.
Europe	4	9	1	2	5	9
Middle East	1	1	0	0	0	1
S.E. Asia	18	7	6	15	11	17
C. America	11	4	26	12	16	7
Cuba	1	0	1	0	0	0
S. America	0	0	1	0	2	1
Not Stated	0	4	0	0	1	0
Total	35	25	35	29	35	35

Notes: (a) No control Group in Quebec City. There, regional origins of the thirty-five Host Group assisted refugees were Europe 8, S.E. Asia 15, and Not Stated 2.

TABLE 2b - Regional Origins of Host-Group and "Control" Refugees in Regina, Calgary and Vancouver

Region	Regina		Calgary		Vancouver		Total(b)	
	Host.G.	Ctrl.G.	Host.G.	Ctrl.G.	Host.G.	Ctrl.G.	H.G.	C.G.
Europe	10	13	4	14	14	16	46	63
Middle East	0	3	1	0	3	1	5	9
S.E. Asia	10	19	12	9	6	6	78	73
C. America	4	0	14	6	12	11	93	56
Cuba	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	1
S. America	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Not Stated	0	0	3	2	0	0	6	6
Total	25	35	35	31	35	35	232	208

Note: (b) All seven communities in Tables 2a and 2b

Host Family Update.... Cont'd from page 3

Data on language acquisition show three benefits of the host group program. First, retention in the Language program was higher among host group refugees. Only 4 per cent of the host group dropped out of language training, as compared with 12 per cent of the control group refugees. Most "dropouts" occurred when a job was landed. In the case of host group refugees in Quebec City, there was apparently no dropout, although one refugee's language was judged sufficiently high not to enrol. It may be stated then that in the short run, some control group refugees were more successful in landing employment early. Such success invariably occurs at the expense of longer-term job chances which usually depend upon a certain level of competence in English.

Secondly, somewhat more change in language ability occurred among host group refugees. As indicated in Table 3, about 60 per cent of the host group refugees across five English-speaking communities showed marked improvement (2 levels or greater), compared with 56 per cent among the control group refugees over a 12 month period. In Quebec City, fully 80 per cent of the host-group refugees rose at least 2 levels in

proficiency, according to reports of CEC counsellors. Thirdly, a good command of English (or French) is crucial in the facilitation of both social and economic goals of refugees. English- or French-speaking host groups facilitated learning the language to which host-group refugees aspired. Several control group refugees when interviewed expressed frustration at not being able to advance in their job and economic aspirations because of inadequacy in language skills. By contrast, refugees matched with host groups developed language skills rapidly while sustaining social relationships with their hosts. Such initial successes motivated

TABLE 3 - Language Ability Change of Host-Group and "Control" Refugees First 12 Months (c)

	Host Group	Control Group	Total
No Change	15	18	33
1 LEVEL	40	38	78
2 LEVELS	62	53	115
3 LEVELS	21	16	37
4 LEVELS	0	1	1
Unknown	27	39	66
Total	165	165	330

Note: (c) Kitchener, London, Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary and Vancouver.

refugees to improve their language skills even further. Thus the social benefits of language acquisition through the assistance of facilitator host groups appear to be significant and newcomers gain confidence when approaching other Canadians in job-related or other aspects of daily life.

3. AAP Contributions*

At the end of the one year study of the Adjustment Assistance Program (AAP), almost all clients had exhausted the benefit period. There was only a slight difference in the per-person or per-week contributions according to host group or control group. Overall, a higher percentage of the control group (40%) received per-person payments in excess of \$2600, compared with 32 per cent for the host group refugees. In Kitchener, Calgary and Vancouver, host-group refugees received AAP for longer periods than did control group refugees. But more host group refugees eventually became employed than did control group refugees, so that the net difference in total AAP payments between control and host group refugees in those three communities cancelled out.

Host groups were cautioned not to give or loan money to refugees. Yet Host Group co-ordinators report that host group refugees were given a wide array of amenities: colour TV, kitchen appliances, extra furniture and clothing.

*Quebec equivalent data of AAP not included in the evaluation.

4. Employment

In Kitchener, Calgary, and Vancouver, some control group refugees landed jobs more quickly, but by the end of the 12-month period, 57 per cent more host group refugees overall had landed a first job, compared with 53 per cent for control group refugees, and with considerable variation in the rate of employment across the six local job markets. In Quebec City, only four host-group refugees had landed jobs by the end of the year.

Among those employed, there appeared no differences between host group and control group refugees in sources of job referrals. Overall, about half the refugees in both groups used CEC services as the main job source, although those in Kitchener and Calgary were far more self-reliant in finding their first job. While the direct effect of host groups in locating jobs appears minimal, there are impor-

tant indirect effects. Refugees with host groups received more assistance in developing a concrete and realistic orientation to the job market. In the evaluation interview, they expressed higher levels of employment aspirations as well as a certain optimism about their progress. By contrast, refugees in the control group expressed despair over not being able to land a job or, if successful, over finding some hope of advancement.

5. CEC Involvement

A prime objective of the host group program was to relieve CEC counsellors from day-to-day assistance with meeting the refugees' needs and to conserve counsellors' time for instances requiring sustained and professional intervention. The pilot program overall reveals no clear differences between the host group and control group in terms of the number of visits of a refugee to the CEC (Canada Employment Centre) offices. Most counsellors, however, reported a "positive effect" of the host group experience upon refugees: assistance of the host group was usually sought before approaching the CEC counsellor.

6. Relocation

After the first year, 30 per cent of the control group refugees moved away from London, Winnipeg and Regina, in comparison with only 6 per cent of those in host groups who moved away, primarily to Toronto. By contrast, only about 6 per cent of refugees of either group in Quebec City, Kitchener, Calgary and Vancouver, relocated. The reasons for relocation varied; about half indicated their interest in joining family or friends, while refugees matched with host groups indicated that they had formed close friendships in their communities and were getting settled, especially in the job market.

7. Social Adaptation

Refugees indicated in interviews that difficulties in adjusting to life in Canada continued even after one year's residence. But those refugees attached to host groups expressed much satisfaction with having special assistance in a variety of instances, and ranging from general support to specific assistance in shopping, preparing correspondence and searching out services in the community. Invariably in an emergency, persons in the host group were a principal resource. They would spend many hours in informal counselling or giving direct assis-

TABLE 4a - Family Size of Host-Group and "Control" Refugees in Quebec City, Kitchener, London and Winnipeg

Family Size	Quebec City		Kitchener		London		Winnipeg	
	Host.G.	Ctrl.G.	Host.G.	Ctrl.G.	Host.G.	Ctrl.G.	Host.G.	Ctrl.G.
1	15	-	10	21	2	9	20	22
2	0	-	8	3	5	4	4	2
3	8	-	5	3	8	9	4	6
4	5	-	5	4	3	3	4	3
5	1	-	4	4	12	2	2	2
6+	6	-	3	0	5	3	1	0
Not Stated	2	-	0	4	0	0	1	0
Total	37	-	35	35	35	29	35	35

*No "control" Group in Quebec City

TABLE 4b - Family Size of Host-Group and "Control" Refugees in Regina, Calgary and Vancouver

Family Size	Regina		Calgary		Vancouver		Total**	
	Host.G.	Ctrl.G.	Host.G.	Ctrl.G.	Host.G.	Ctrl.G.	H.G.	C.G.
1	8	25	10	12	10	9	75	98
2	3	3	4	6	4	4	28	22
3	3	4	7	5	9	3	44	30
4	5	3	4	5	9	15	35	33
5	4	0	6	2	3	2	32	12
6+	2	0	4	1	0	2	21	5
Not Stated	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	4
Total	25	35	35	31	35	35	238	204

**All seven communities in Tables 4a and 4b

tance, far more time than could be afforded by any agency counsellor.

The control group refugees felt less well accepted and were less well acquainted with neighbours than were those who had been hosted. Perspectives toward the future likewise contrasted: control group refugees saw little promise and they sometimes despaired. Refugees with host group experience related stories of personal assistance in cases of illness, pleasant interludes of hospitality, and of friendly, unrestrained assistance.

8. Community Awareness

Spontaneous comments by hosts and programme coordinators indicate an important benefit from the host group operation: a positive impact upon the local community in a wide variety of situations. First, the publicity of the program heightens awareness of persons and groups at a slight remove from hosts: e.g., members of the same faith or community group; or friends and neighbours of host families themselves. Consequently, invitations for presentations to local community functions, in classrooms and on community TV all resulted in a wider community awareness of the situation of refugees in general, and of the Host Group Program in particular.

Secondly, members of host groups state that assisting refugees becomes a lesson in appreciation. They witness the sheer difficulties of everyday struggles for

existence among people made suddenly poorer and more dependent on others. The program stimulates positive helping attitudes while the feedback on the process of social amelioration in general has a positive effect on both host and refugee partners.

In London, Regina and Vancouver refugees were matched with host groups within one week of their arrival in Canada, but in Winnipeg, Calgary and Kitchener matched refugees with host groups did not occur for several weeks. In all areas of the study, the impact of the host group could only be diminished, the longer the time period between arrival and matching.

Owing to different times of arrival of refugees and staging of the evaluation, the "after 12 months" evaluation criterion was made more flexible in this report. In Regina and Calgary, the lapse of time between arrival and "year-end" evaluation was far shorter than 52 weeks. In Kitchener and Winnipeg, the period of time between arrival and evaluation was often considerably longer.

All areas of the analysis are thereby affected. Refugees in the "control" group would not have had the same opportunity to show signs of adaptation as would those in the host group condition. Among the differences, a sample group that has been in the country longer will

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show lower average AAP contributions (per-week) than would a group with a shorter stay.

It is particularly unfortunate that focused interviews held in London, Winnipeg and Regina were not also held in other communities in order to shed light on whether the felt-impressions of refugees themselves squared with those expressed by host-group co-ordinators and CEC counsellors. In the communities without such interviews, information on social adaptation is derived exclusively from service workers, not from refugees.

Conclusion

Government-assisted refugees who participated in the Host Group Program showed a very positive trend in terms of language acquisition and frequency of use of the English language. There was also an indication of lower drop-out rate among the host-group refugees. In the longer term, language acquisition was, and is expected to result in higher levels of employment and generally more successful settlement.

Very few in the matched group have relocated to other communities since their arrival. Most of the matched group developed Canadian friends and acquaintances. These factors indicate a higher level of integration into the community for the host group as compared with the control group.

In terms of AAP payments to refugees, differences between hosted and control groups were slight with payments to hosted refugees being slightly less overall, even though the duration on AAP benefits may have been longer. In several communities the proportion of refugees who found employment within 12 months after arrival was greater among those with Host Group experience.

Reports from the CEC's and Host Group co-ordinators illustrate clearly that the Project is increasing community awareness of the refugee situation. This effect will have a positive impact on how all immigrants are accepted by Canadians, which in turn will be reflected in the immigrants' increased ability to integrate into and contribute toward the development of Canadian society. We invite you to share with us some of those reports in a following article, and to consider as you read, the human scale of Canada's commitment to refugees.

A Canadian Concern

Noreen Spencer-Nimmons

Recently we invited the Host Program co-ordinators in organizations across Canada to send statistics, their annual evaluation, and any other information they cared to provide about the program and their work. They sent statistical data braced with substantive human interest "Reflections" or "And next year" items. Overall, we have learned that co-ordinators, staff and volunteers are concerned individuals who are committed both to the Host Program and to its recipients; they follow specific criteria established by the Policy and Planning Division, Settlement Branch of Employment and Immigration Canada; and they receive help from those employed in other government programs which assist newcomers, such as the Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP) and the Adjustment Assistance Program (AAP). Moreover, it was apparent that staff and volunteers in the Host Program frequently add their own ingenuity in terms of 'getting the program started and keeping it going.' Finally, co-ordinators networked with each other about special humanitarian concerns, shared experiences, and pragmatic suggestions regarding both the positive and negative factors affecting either the Program or their work. This article approaches the program from its operational bases in Canadian communities and shares with our readers both the concerns and commitment of those involved.

Refugees and Hosts: Needs and Resources

Refugees endure the trauma of a sudden uprooting from homeland, even as they face the necessary and often formidable task of finding employment, settling into everyday life and adapting to the Canadian culture. Assistance with these needs is given by Host Program organizations and volunteer 'hosts' in cities across Canada. Since 1985, they have been receiving and assisting refugees from diverse ethnocultural, linguistic, religious and national backgrounds. Refugees came from Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Chile, Czechoslovakia, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Hungary, Iraq, Iran, Libya, Nicaragua, Poland, Romania, Uganda, and Vietnam. Their many talents and

skills included: accountant, accounting clerk, bookkeeper, bricklayer, computer programmer, computer operator, child-care worker, dress designer, farmer, keypunch operator, loom mechanic, salesperson, seamstress, tailor, teacher, and typist.

Government-sponsored refugees are met upon arrival by an official from the Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP) who, among other duties, will determine whether a 'host' is needed. Frequently a Host Program Co-ordinator is part of the initial reception procedure. The immediate services with which the newcomers needed assistance were listed by Aleta McKim, Co-ordinator of the Yorkton, Saskatchewan program: housing, employment, English studies, shopping for food and clothing, familiarization with the city and help with transportation, socialization, friendship and support, sponsorship of family members, gardening, and recreational activities. Kitchener Host Program Co-ordinator Anna Czesniak adds: translation at medical appointments, assistance with school registration, budgeting, and learning about Canadian culture.

Welcome Houses or Refugee Reception Residences exist in many communities across Canada. Last year the London group worked to achieve the "Refugee Transition House." In Vancouver, the I.S.S. Welcome House is located at 536 Drake Street (see picture), and in Kitchener, the Refugee Reception House is a gracious old home, purchased by the Mennonite Church and the House Church Assembly. Similar to other Welcome Houses, it is partially funded by the Canada Employment Centre (CEC). Located downtown, it has 11 bedrooms and can accommodate 23 people at a time. In this home, as in others, initial orientation is given. The average stay for refugee newcomers is three weeks, prior to the move into their own apartment or flat.

Matching the newcomers with Host Family volunteers is a process which begins, ideally, between 2 to 4 days after the refugee arrives. Matching is based on the following criteria: need, gender, age, a

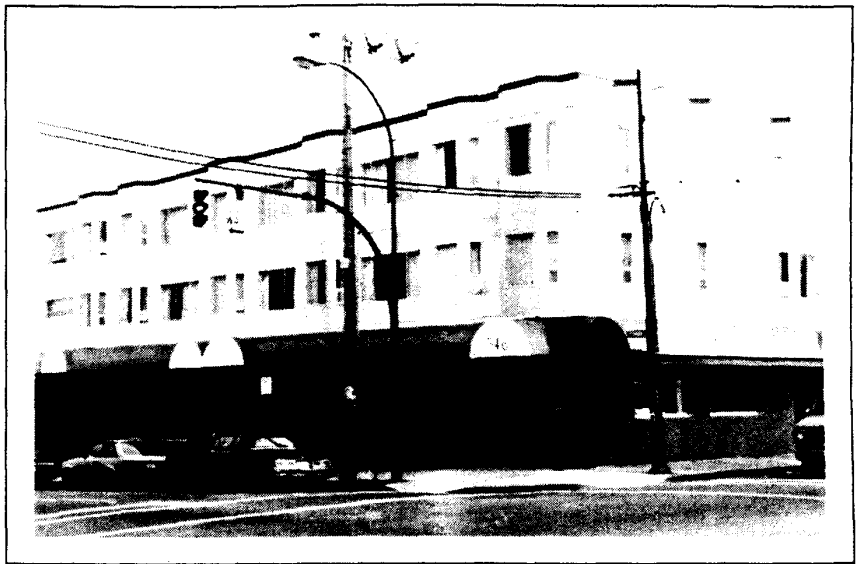
single refugee, a family, and language capabilities. Margery Solomon, Co-ordinator at the International Centre, Citizenship Council of Manitoba, advises that for those refugees who have no contacts in Canada, priority is given first to "families, then to single women and then single men. However, if a request for a host group is made by someone not considered a priority, volunteer hosts are provided." And the needs of a single female household head with children are given special consideration.

But not all refugees need a Host Family to assist in their settlement. This occurs amongst many Polish refugees who are taken immediately into the Polish communities in Canada. And in Manitoba, Margery Solomon, advised us that,

It has been our experience in Winnipeg, that if family or friends are being reunited, volunteers, however well-intentioned, are sometimes seen as intrusive. This can have a negative effect on both the newcomers and the volunteers.

Program co-ordinators listed the following sources from which community support is contributed: church groups, individual volunteers, neighbourhood associations, ethnic groups, people who had hosted before, word of mouth, Universities, College Spanish classes and schools, those who were refugees, volunteer placement services, hospitals, public (media) attention, and the 'Y.'

Volunteer hosts are interviewed, either in groups or individually. They receive background reading material, a job description list, a guide and Refugee Host Family Summary, and they receive training. Awareness and training sessions are conducted by program co-ordinators and their staff. Items discussed in detail are culture shock and 'the importance of learning English as a cure,' and ways in which hosts can help 'create independence,' thereby reducing the newcomer's stress and sense of loss of control over his or her life. Training begins with an orientation on the matching procedure, details of a refugee's settlement, first priorities in settlement needs in the first year and how the host can help. When matching occurs, the refugees receive a pamphlet (written in their language) which explains



the Program; hosts receive a cultural profile of the refugees whom they will be assisting.

The "match-maker" co-ordinator will choose the most appropriate host and introduce the two groups to each other. Co-ordinators stay with the groups and maintain contact because the refugee newcomers are shy and tense. Evelyn Meyer, Host Program Co-ordinator at the Windsor-Essex County Family YMCA states that, "it is important to help create a relaxed atmosphere. Sometimes volunteers feel shy and they tell me they appreciate my presence. Both newcomers and volunteers then feel comfortable about contacting me thereafter." Joyce Kyi, Executive Director of the Immigrant Services Society (I.S.S.) of British Columbia writes:

Two I.S.S. staff members devote full time to the Host Program. They recruit, orient and train Canadian volunteer hosts, and 'match' them with refugee family units or individuals. Every effort is made to match families with families; for example, refugees with young children are matched where possible with Canadian families with young children. When kids get together on a happy basis, the elders often follow suit. Similarly, individual refugees are often matched with individual hosts.

Enlisting Host Family volunteers is an ongoing product of publicity and successful public relations with community groups and individuals. Forms of media presentation, collated from the cross-Canada reports from co-ordinators are: monthly newsletters sent to clients and volunteers; newspaper articles which

include data on the refugee determination procedure, and human interest stories which inform and sensitize the general public; information packages; volunteer presentations at community meetings, Masses and church group activities, and on local and national TV or radio programs.

Everywhere in the Host Program the importance of the co-ordinator's experience was evident, particularly in developing a deeper understanding of the refugee's home country culture and communicating that to volunteers. Co-ordinators work diligently and creatively at the public relations aspect of their work. Sensitizing Canadian children in schools, for example, was found to be an important method of breaking down barriers which impede the settlement process of refugee families, especially that of their children. In London, the Host Family Co-ordinator's teaching background was invaluable for her separately prepared presentations to the Primary (Grades 1-3) and Junior-Senior Levels (Grades 4-8). In the latter group she developed the theme "Who is An Immigrant?" then, listing all of the countries that were represented in the classroom to stimulate discussion, she introduced the title 'Canada is a Land of Immigrants' and asked: "How does a refugee differ from an immigrant?" The students' responses revealed a variety of misconceptions about refugees; these were openly discussed. The life of refugees in London (both those with a host and those without) was also discussed. An innovative idea was introduced to the students:

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form mini-host groups to welcome newcomers who arrive at your schools. The idea received a positive response: "At least 80% of every class want to host." A follow-up with the teachers was planned and, in general, it was agreed that working in the school system to break down prejudices was an important area of public relations.

Benefits and Shared Concerns

Common to all the reports sent in are the perceived benefits of the Host Program: the psychological and practical support which refugee newcomers receive; cultural insights gained by both refugees and host volunteers; and a more sensitive and informed public.

In Vancouver, Co-ordinator Joyce Kyi reports that "friendly contact ...and a feeling that one has a friend to give advice and sympathetic understanding can go a long way to relieving the sense of loss or the depression that is so often felt by refugees...and friendly advice (on priority needs) can alter the outlook of many a bewildered soul."

The Windsor-Essex County Co-ordinator of the Host Program adds that the Federal Government recognizes the potential for better-adjusted and quicker settlement for newcomers through this Pilot Project Program. The role of Host Family group volunteers is essential to the program particularly because of the exclusive attention which they can give to a refugee individual or family.

It is true that hosts can help with job contacts and provide a non-threatening audience for language practice. In one case, a host volunteer provided a job in his factory for the Cambodian man he hosted. In all other cases I am aware of in Windsor, host support was equally important but less direct. Hosts gave newcomers help in preparing resumés, filling out job applications, and by identifying factories and firms in the community who were accepting applications, etc. Success in getting a job was aided by the advice hosts gave for creating a good impression with potential employers: be on time, dress appropriately, shake hands, make eye contact, shave (only Don Johnson can get away with the two-day's stubble look,) and show yourself to be interested in work and eager to work diligently. Volunteers also give emotional support and friendship of a social nature.

Evelyn Meyer, Co-ordinator

In Winnipeg, Margery Solomon reported that:

We have no doubt that the friendship and assistance of their host group makes the transitional period much easier for newly arrived refugees. Almost as important is the first-hand knowledge gained by volunteers of the hardships and difficulties which the refugees have faced. It is extremely important that mutual understanding is achieved between newcomers and the communities in which they will settle. The Host Program is an excellent vehicle to help promote this understanding.

Unmet Needs and Fears

The unmet needs of refugees and the fears of the hosts present problems to be resolved. It is not unreasonable to expect that problems would exist, given the sudden uprooting of peoples and the urgency of their settlement needs, the compressed time factor in 'forced or involuntary migration' today, as compared with the slower pace of receiving past 'immigration groups,' and because of the diverse ethnocultural, linguistic and occupational backgrounds of both host volunteers and refugees. But problems are continually under review and solutions sought. Persistent striving toward success has become a testimony of the mutual concern of the government and private sector Program staff and volunteers, and of the refugee newcomers to Canada.

Of immediate concern to refugees as the most difficult aspects of adjustment, according to the Kitchener survey, were: lack of English, lack of money, homesickness, housing, adjusting to culture, unemployment, climate and 'feeling like foreigners.' Other co-ordinators added to this list: problems of communication, the unanticipated expectations of refugees, dealing with their sense of loss of control, and their basic need to 'settle down.' Reducing these fears and needs is a priority concern for both the government and private sector enablers.

One of the most important needs is getting a family settled. Consider, for example the case of a refugee family with children ranging in age from 5 to 15 years who have been 'in orbit,' mistakenly placed in detention, then been long in transit, and finally, upon arrival placed in a 'temporary hotel.' Parents and volunteers alike search for a positive answer to the children's plea: "Mama, WHEN can we unpack?"

Getting a job, particularly one for which their talents and skills are suited, is a fear experienced by most refugees. In many cases suitable employment remains an unmet need for both the refugee and the Host Family volunteer. In Vancouver, for example, it was reported that,

Hosts are able to help in most areas of settlement [except] to find employment during the first year in Canada. A reason for this is that there is a waiting period of approximately three to four months before they can enrol for English language training. The course itself occupies five months, so that only about three months remain of the first year in which Hosts (or Settlement Agencies) can help refugees to find employment.

The Manitoba Program staff experienced the problem that "no philosophy existed as to how matches should be made. Refugees were introduced to host groups as they became available with very little investigation of need. Another concern was that matches were often made several weeks after the newcomers arrival, leaving them without a community contact [personal support system] during the period when they needed it most."

In Yorkton, Saskatchewan, despite the best intentions of both groups, a breakdown occurred between the newcomers and hosts. Invited to a barbecue supper, the newcomers stated: "I am meeting you." This was interpreted by the Host Family volunteers to mean that they would all meet at the party. In fact, the refugee family was very proud to have purchased a second-hand car and intended to meet their hosts and drive them to the party. The refugee family arrived late and frustrated.

Sometimes the expectations of refugees can be frustrating to hosts, as the following report indicates:

Often clients feel that their Canadian hosts will be able to ensure that family members will be brought to Canada to join them. They do not realize that the procedures are the same for Canadians and immigrants...and that we can't do anything about it.

Compassion fatigue, the conflict of government assistance programs versus government refugee determination processes [and bills], and conflict amongst the volunteer sector should be added to the list of problems for which resolutions are sought. Joyce Kyi reported from Vancouver that recruit-

ment for volunteers was not easy at first,

one reason for this was that church groups in particular, and other community agencies, had expended much effort over the Vietnamese 'Boat People' and needed time for respite and renewal of resources. Later, the adverse publicity generated by the arrival in Canada of "illegal claimants" to refugee status somewhat soured public opinion. The I.S.S. Host Program set out to counteract these factors by special efforts to educate local communities to the need of helping Government-assisted refugees, and to explain the definitions of "refugee" and "refugee claimant" and to outline the screening process for those accepted by Canada.

Across Canada, Community Coordinators reported that "the ongoing debate and protest of Canada's latest refugee policies is having a direct effect on the Host Program." Further, the advent of Bills C-55 and C-84 created an unanticipated backlash which affected refugees and volunteers alike. Community coordinators reported that when these Bills came under fire, volunteers were divided into 'camps of those for... and those against' and this means either refugees or the government in general; but it is the Host Family Program in particular that suffers.

Canadian immigration officers were presented as unsympathetic and incompetent to ascertain who is a real refugee...and several people in this public open forum included people who are a hindrance to the Host Program...this affected host groups who recently told me that they were 'putting everything on hold' because they intend to get involved in sponsorship...and the Host Family Program statistic will no longer be important.

A few parishes or congregations who were once involved in the Host Program have stated that since the advent of the Bills they will now only be involved in sponsorship programs because they perceive this to be the only necessary government project. Yet, as one staff person stated, 'those advocates of accepting at least 40,000 refugees a year and similar suggestions should also be in the front lines helping secure housing, jobs, and moral support. Talk is cheap...action is vital.'

One community reported that volunteer support has come almost exclusively from Church contacts and that other social groups tend to need volunteers for their own charity projects.

The Council is fragmented and not a unifying or supportive presence. The ethno-cultural groups have not been approached about the Host Program because local council jealously guards the names of contact members...I do not know if the established groups would respond to the program...and take newly arrived people under their wings.

Determination and fatigue are sensed in reports from other communities. A first attempt at having Canadian host group families board single refugees was not as successful as had been hoped, "but [we] will try again...because the housing problem would be eased and socialization would be increased if we could get the idea across." Another community stated,

the biggest complaint I hear is 'what do we do about volunteers who don't stay involved in visiting the family after the first few months. The newcomers interpret this as personal rejection'...and another person involved in the program added that 'other people in my group go to visit or whatever if I call them but I'm tired of having to remind them all the time.'

The Future

All the letters and reports received from Host Program Co-ordinators across Canada addressed the future, and they substantiated the fact that only a committed 'community' will assess unmet needs and concerns and be flexible enough toward their resolution, for the future benefit of all parties involved in the settlement process. The Host Program is uniquely Canadian in terms of the symbiotic relationship that does exist between the government and the private sector for settlement assistance to the refugee newcomers.

In Kitchener, Jonquil Bruner, Director of Newcomer Services, stated that the community was responding well through meaningful volunteer involvement, and that:

Challenges ahead include organizing service and member-based clubs to consider the Host Program as an avenue for community service. Re-energizing past hosts and linking settled families with new arrivals will continue to be part of the work. The program provides a model in volunteer development and has made profound changes to the lives of many Canadian families. The most obvious benefit of the program is the qualitative improvement in the settlement of newly arrived government-sponsored refugees.

Vancouver reported that the efforts of bringing volunteer hosts into the refugee newcomer's settlement process had produced lasting relationships, and a growing knowledge and appreciation of other cultures among Canadians as well as in the adaptation of the newcomer to our 'way of life.'

The success of the Host Program should be measured in human terms, and not in quotable figures...in this third year [of our Host Program involvement] the mandated 100 "matches" was greatly exceeded: 164 hosts were matched with refugee family units.

London and Windsor stated that "the future prospects for the Host Program will always include a core of extremely dedicated volunteers who come from churches." And it will be necessary to find a way to unite various groups who are separately helping refugees. "Co-operation rather than competition could result in a more productive settlement rate for the refugees because the Host Program remains a very worthwhile and important project."

Combatting racism and protecting 'new' refugee groups in the future was realistically addressed in one community when it was felt that "arrivals in April of this year verify the expectation that refugees from Africa will be the majority for the foreseeable future. Host groups will be required to give a much greater degree of support for these 'visible' refugees and their commitment to the program will be tested." Still, concern was positive:

We have no doubt that the friendship and assistance of the host group makes the transitional period much easier for the newly arrived refugees. Almost as important is the first-hand knowledge gained by volunteers, of the hardships and difficulties which the refugees have faced. It is extremely important that mutual understanding is achieved between newcomers and the communities in which they will settle, and the Host Program is an excellent vehicle to help promote this understanding. However, care must be taken to ensure that both the volunteers and the newcomers have a positive experience if we hope to continue to find a sympathetic response to the program in our community.

Elsewhere in Canada, Co-ordinators or Executive Directors reported that their programs had grown steadily in strength and that they were certain of its usefulness, not only in aid of the refugees, but

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Book Review

in the long term, "it will save Adjustment Assistance Program (AAP) funds." Still,

despite the success of the Host Program in general...it has remained a pilot project...if it is conceded that the project is successful, consideration should be given to increased funding, enlargement of staff, and program expansion.

The comments recorded above highlight the realism of settlement issues for refugees in Canada and the realistic problems encountered by both hosts and the hosted. Assistance to the many peoples who have been forced to flee their homelands and to settle here is given in many ways, by many Canadians, through organizations, community groups or individual commitment.

We salute the dedicated Host Program staff and the hundreds of volunteers from the private sector for making their dedication a Canadian concern.

And we commend our Canadian newcomers for their persistent struggle to rebuild their lives, to adjust to their new 'way of life' and for their cultural contributions to our multicultural society.

Most of today's refugees will become citizens; as 'Coming Canadians' they will, in time, enter the annals of Canadian history as 'immigrants' and share with those who came before them that,

they will vary in their wants and aspirations, their fears and hostilities, from group to group, within groups, and from region to region within Canada. But everywhere they are significant parts of the population to which attention must be paid.¹

Endnote

¹Jean Burnet with Dr. Howard Palmer: "Coming Canadians": An Introduction to a History of Canada's Peoples. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988, page 54.

[Noreen Spencer-Nimmons is a Doctoral Fellow and Research Associate of the Refugee Documentation Project.]



Uprooting, Loss and Adaptation: The Resettlement of Indochinese Refugees in Canada. Kwok B. Chan and Doreen Marie Indra (eds.) Ottawa: Canadian Public Health Association 1987.

Marilyn Walker

Uprooting, Loss and Adaptation is an important collection of articles by ten different contributors on the Indochinese immigrant experience. The contributors have many years of experience in refugee related areas. Indra, for example, has been working in the academic as well as the practical field since 1975. Two of the contributors are themselves refugees. The volume includes a survey of existing research, considerable new and valuable information, a comprehensive bibliography, and suggested directions for future theory and research.

It is only since 1978 that Indo-Chinese peoples have entered Canada in large numbers, making them among Canada's newest ethnocultural groups, and one of the most significant groups in Canadian immigration history. Most of the Indo-Chinese entered as refugees following the political turmoil of the 1970's. The 'new' refugees, as Nguyen describes them in chapter 4, have arrived from the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Their backgrounds, language and needs are radically different from Canada's 'traditional' European refugees.

Uprooting provides an excellent profile of this unique group of immigrants, their backgrounds and problems of settlement in Canada, as well as the history of academic, government and public response. With authority, academic rigour, and sensitivity, the book treats the refugee experience essentially as a human one. The Indochinese have been disaggregated into their separate countries of origin - Vietnamese, Khmers, Laotians, and Chinese Vietnamese. While past research has focused on the Indochinese as refugees and assumed a certain homogeneity, Indra suggests that "future research strive to focus on the differences brought on by the variables of age, gender, social class and country of origin."

Separate chapters include a historical review of the Canadian research literature and its deficiencies, beginning with

the first phase of research which, because of the sudden arrival of the refugees, centred on the immediate provision of services and the settlement process. Ten years later, Indra points out, we are still lacking information in a number of key areas. Most research has focused on the Vietnamese and Chinese Vietnamese, and almost none on the Lao and Khmer. As Indra points out earlier, it is intriguing that Canada was reluctant to accept Lao and Khmer. Perceived as rural people, it was thought that they would not adjust well to life in Canada. And we still lack information on such areas as gender, which Indra sees as "clearly a fundamental factor in the whole temporal process — in becoming a refugee, in flight, in the camps, in resettlement and adaptation." Nor has any work been carried out by the respective 'new' refugee communities.

Other chapters discuss the psychological problems of Chinese refugees in Quebec; economic and socio-economic adaptation; and the interface between the Indo-Chinese immigrants and Canadians, including a discussion of the government vs. private sponsorship program. These authors contend that the private sponsorship program does not necessarily prove to be superior.

A particularly interesting chapter looks at the importance of the Chinese Vietnamese family in dealing with difficult economic and social conditions, as well as the emerging strains on the family from the migration process. The sense of loss about family members left at home, and a feeling of uprootedness from one's place of birth and from neighbours and friends, are major factors in feelings of loneliness and marginality in the new environment. Chan and Lam find a resulting preoccupation with the "eternal and omnipresent past in Vietnam adaptation to their immediate situation."

In the chapter following, Nguyen proposes the use of a theoretical framework as a way of understanding both the refugee/immigrant situation, and factors of eventual adjustment. The refugees find themselves in a new situation where the skills, knowledge, values, attitudes, etc. are no longer appropriate. The support system provided by the old situation has been largely lost. Nguyen outlines

certain basic needs that have to be met at each stage of the resettlement process if the immigrant is to adjust to the new environment. In this model, adjustment phases are intended to provide a basis for social service programming "which will provide need gratification at the appropriate time and thus facilitate adjustment."

Repetition is a distraction in this volume, most noticeably within the chapters on psychological and economic adaptation, but it is understandable, given that the two areas are so often interdependent. A section on dreams, though interesting enough, doesn't do as claimed. It promises a 'systematic analysis' of dreams to provide important clues to unresolved psychological and emotional problems; in fact, the dreams seem to have been used more to confirm or illustrate the previous findings.

These minor problems do not detract from the value of *Uprooting*. In fact, the book should be of particular interest to a wide range of researchers, from students newly engaged in refugee issues or to anyone working in the field. Indra's excellent bibliography provides a comprehensive listing of available books, articles, reports, papers, and unpublished manuscripts. The book is particularly useful, given the recency of this field of study and the problem of locating scattered or difficult to locate background and historical information. Although the content focuses on the Indochinese, it contains much to inform and update those working with other immigrant or refugee groups.

[Marilyn Walker is a Doctoral Candidate in Anthropology, Faculty of Graduate Studies at York University, and a Research Associate of the Refugee Documentation Project.]



New Book Recommendation

The Refugee Documentation Project recommends the recent publication of Dr. Jean Burnet with Dr. Howard Palmer: *Coming Canadians: An Introduction to a History of Canada's Peoples*. Soft cover paperback, 253 pages, includes Tables, 32 pages of photographs representative of Canada's multicultural society, bibliography and index; \$12.95. Published by McLelland and Stewart in association with the Multiculturalism Program, Department of the Secretary of State.

Part One is devoted to immigration and settlement in two segments: to 1880, and from 1880-1980. Part Two deals with Canada's major institutions; Part Three with other institutions and the maintenance of identity. The authors are erudite exponents of ethnicity in Canada in general, and of Canadian multiculturalism in particular. References to refugees include the historical background of their forced displacement from one culture to another, cross-cultural analyses of

discrimination from host country policy and peoples, as well as across other groups, and within their own ethnocultural groups. And like other 'Coming Canadians,' acknowledgement is given to the past and present refugees' professional and cultural contributions to the Canadian economy and society.

Noreen Spencer-Nimmons

New Publications

Immigration and Ethnic Conflict. Anthony H. Richmond. 1988, 184pp, 216 x 138mm, tables and figures; hardcover. Distributed in Canada by McClelland & Stewart, Toronto.

Southeast Asian Refugee Youth: An Annotated Bibliography. Compiled by Ruth E. Hammond and Glenn L. Hendricks. Number six in a series of occasional papers. 1988, 143pp, Introduction, Abstracts by subject, and Author Index. Published by Southeast Asian Refugee Studies Project. Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, University of Minneapolis, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Refugee Women Workshop Weekend

On June 17 - 19, 1988, at the Glendon College campus of York University, a unique and highly successful multicultural event occurred. The event was unique because it brought together refugee women from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds to work at the 'grass roots' level on issues of adjustment and adaptation to Canadian society. Refugee women from around the Province of Ontario were invited to address the gaps and inadequacies in present service deliveries, from their perception of the situation. At an opening session, the women wrote the agenda for the weekend. The women were subsidized to attend, as were their children. Daycare and children's programmes were provided and a special cultural evening was included in the Workshop Weekend. The refugee women presented their recommendations for alternative solutions, networking, and self-help mechanisms at the final plenary session on Sunday afternoon.

The Workshop Weekend represents Phase I of the ongoing "Refugee Women in Canada Project" which is co-sponsored by the Refugee Documentation Project,

the Working Group for Refugee Women (a sub-group of the Canadian Council for Refugees), and the YWCA Metropolitan Toronto Refugee Committee. Funding for Phase I was contributed by the Ontario Women's Directorate, the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission, and by Levi Strauss (Canada) Inc. Funds are presently being sought for Phase II, the major research component of the project.

In Phase II, refugee women will be invited to participate in 'team' research. It is hoped that the Project will conclude in Phase III with a national conference during which a full report based on the work of Phase I and II will be presented.

We welcome the input of refugee women who would wish to participate in the 'Project' and encourage them to contact us. The co-sponsoring groups respectfully invite potential funders to respond to this important work. Please contact the Refugee Documentation Project, York University, 4700 Keele Street, North York, Ontario, M3J 1P3, or telephone (416) 736-5061.

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Call For Papers: Special Issue

SOUTHEAST ASIAN JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

The Editors of the *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science* currently invite article-length manuscript submissions for a special issue on the theme of 'Indo-Chinese Refugee Experience and its Asian Response'. It is intended in the issue to develop an 'Asian' perspective on the Southeast Asian refugees phenomenon. The focus will be primarily on the plight of refugees in transit camps in the Southeast Asian region, as well as those already resettled in other parts of Asia (e.g. China and Japan) and Australia.

The Journal being multi-disciplinary in nature, we welcome contributions from sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, political scientists, geographers,

historians as well as legal scholars. Contributors, among others, may want to submit for publication consideration papers on: problems in definition of a refugee; refugee camps in countries of first asylum in the region; refugee resettlement in host countries in Asia; comparative analysis of refugee and external affairs policies in various Asian countries; legal analysis of national as well as international laws, statutes and conventions pertaining to the Southeast Asian refugees; implications of the Southeast Asian refugees phenomenon for human rights in Asia; and assessment of the theoretical and practical possibility of repatriation, and its consequences.

The special issue is targeted for publication in September, 1989. The deadline for article submissions is March 30, 1989. All submissions should be in duplicate and typed double-spaced. The recommended manuscript length is approximately thirty pages, including notes and references.

Manuscripts and inquiries should be directed to:

Dr. Kwok B. Chan
Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science
Department of Sociology
National University of Singapore
10 Kent Ridge Crescent
Singapore 0511

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I wish to become a friend of the Refugee Documentation Project for the 1988-1989 academic year. I understand that all friends receive *Refuge* as well as information on the research activities of the RDP. My cheque for \$25 (or) made payable to the Refugee Documentation Project is enclosed.

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