

parts of Canada, of course, is not a nightmare but simply readjustment to a normality that is life in a foreign land. Certainly they need help in the form of financial support, educational reinforcement, medical treatment, even psychiatric counselling. That is hardly surprising for people who have endured so much. Above all they now need understanding and friendship, just as all other Canadians do in their ordinary lives.

This is perhaps a little harder for the Canadian media to handle than it was to report the obviously more dramatic and emotional events of the boat people's flight across the South China Sea. In a way, the news media are geared more to handle drama and turmoil than to report on the blending of a large group of Southeast Asians into our society. Surely all this talk of nightmare shows a lack of sophistication in the Canadian media.

But it also shows that the media have a conscience, and that they believe the public at large has a conscience, too. There's no nightmare for the boat people in Canada. But the use of that term does show that a lot of people here are still worried about the fate of the boat people who have come into our midst, and that there's a lot of frustration among those who try to lend a helping hand to our newest Canadians.

More importantly, though, I think we mustn't lose sight of where the real priorities lie. Canada has been able to save tens of thousands from the seas and from the rigors of refugee camps and transport

them to this fortunate land. And we should not forget that these Southeast Asians fled not just away from oppression, but toward freedom. And they believed that freedom was what we stood for.

There is something about freedom I have learned in years of knocking around the world. Freedom is not something you can enjoy yourself and deny to others. The very essence of freedom is that it is something you must share with others who seek it. The true nightmare the boat people would face in Canada would be if they discovered Canadians believed freedom was something that only certain people should be allowed to enjoy. But I know they have not found that. I know, because I have a few Vietnamese acquaintances here, that they have come to cherish our freedom very much, and that if they feel any anguish it is because their loved ones who stayed behind are not free.

That, I think, is the real lesson of the boat people for Canadians. Through them we have been able to expand our idea of freedom. It is not so many years ago that we locked up our Japanese. Today such a thing would be unthinkable in Canada. As I walk down Yonge Street, I see slight Vietnamese youths rugged up against the cold. They have problems, of course, about language and jobs and dental work, and we older Canadians should help them with these things. But I know they do not dread the loss of their liberty. It is the most precious of our possessions and we have been able to share it with them.

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## RESOURCE EXCHANGE

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### International Social Services

A teenage Vietnamese refugee in Canada became separated from the rest of her family, who went to Australia. The family members in Australia requested the assistance of ISS in trying to have their sister, who was terribly lonely, united with them. At the request of ISS the Manitoba welfare authorities studied the situation and recommended that Australia consider allowing the girl to join her family.

Many refugees who have settled in Canada may have personal or family difficulties, the solution of which requires coordinated actions in two or more countries. ISS is a voluntary, non-sectarian, non-political organization which tries to solve these kinds of problems by working with government departments and voluntary organizations around the world.

ISS Canada is funded largely by a grant from Health and Welfare Canada.

International Social Services  
55 Parkdale Avenue  
P.O.Box 3505, Station C  
Ottawa, Ont. K1Y 4G1

### Funding Sources

*Assistance Directory for Ethnocultural Communities in Canada* published by the Multiculturalism Directorate of the Department of the Secretary of State lists programmes of foundations, corporations, municipalities, provincial and federal governments, federal cultural agencies and labour groups which may be able to provide financial assistance. It summarizes:

- amounts available
- kinds of projects assisted
- criteria for eligibility
- whom to contact

Multicultural Directory  
Secretary of State Dept.  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0M5

**THE STANDING CONFERENCE OF  
CANADIAN ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNED  
FOR REFUGEES**

**5, 6, 7 JUNE, 1981**

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