

## APOLOGY

Due to a printing error, the guest editor of **REFUGE** Vol. 7, No.1, October 1987 was incorrectly listed. The publisher and Refugee Documentation Project staff apologize to Mr. Daniel C. Levy who was the Guest Editor of that edition. Barbara Harrell-Bond was Guest Editor of Volume 6, No.4 only. We regret any embarrassment this may have caused either party.

CANADA'S PERIODICAL ON REFUGEES

# REFUGE

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## EDITORIAL: A Call to Order

In this second edition on refugee protection in North America, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) call the modern Canadian state to order by pointing an accusatory finger at its presumptive legislative powers. The impending Parliamentary Bill C-55 on refugee determination and C-84 on security measures presently await review of a skeptical and unusually assertive Senate. Senators, no less than the NGO representatives in this issue, are querying what powers legislation should accord to the state when individual rights are thereby infringed. It is a perennial question in academic political science and sociology debates. But this "chestnut" has fallen against the hard surface of restrictive practices such as categoric exclusion of refugees without individual examination, and peremptory arrest and detention upon suspicion.

Resultantly, Canadian NGOs have moved one step closer to confronting the very government upon which they depend for their own protection or funding, or both. Not a pleasant spontaneous reaction. After internal deliberation, NGOs have opted for confrontation instead of cooperation, upon accusation instead of acquiescence. This is a risky course. Canada's highly respected record of government-NGO collaboration knows few international peers. Yet mutual respect has given way to suspicion and discreditation.

Clearly, NGOs perceive that the state is legislating administrative convenience under the guise of efficiency. The articles in this edition detail cutting the cornerstone of refugee protection. Presumably, if restrictions on accessibility are not introduced, Canada's shores and borders will be flooded with claimants whose motives combine to "clog the system" while taking advantage of Canada's social welfare.

And so it is up to NGOs to remind the government that refugee concerns are above all concerns of the individual who by definition is fleeing because of persecution, past or future. A government such as Canada can neither afford the luxury of corner-cutting when individual lives may be imperiled nor arrogate to itself an otiose power to commandeer undesirable suspects upon discretion of categoric presumption.

The modern state is the most powerful instrument yet created by mankind. It behooves Canada in its very modernity to recall the *raison d'être* for legislation: to protect the individual. At state's greatness can be measured, not by its restrictiveness, but by compassion for its weakest individuals, thus bringing order into the disorderly world of the dispossessed in flight.

C. Michael Lanphier, Editor

### Government of Canada refugee plan 1988 allocations by world area, compared with 1987 allocations

	1987	1988
Eastern Europe	3,100	3,400
Southeast Asia	3,200	3,000
Latin America	3,200	3,400
Africa	1,000	1,000
Middle East & West Asia	900	1,800
Other World areas	300	100
Funded management reserve	300	300
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>12,000</b>	<b>13,000*</b>

\* In addition to these government-assisted refugees, the government will also admit *without limitation*, refugees sponsored by Canadian volunteer groups (private sponsors). It is estimated that there will be about 6,000 such private sponsorships in 1988, an increase of 1,000 over 1987.

Government of Canada. *Annual Report to Parliament on Future Immigration Levels*, Ottawa, December 1987.