

refugee claimants in Canada's name.

A second objective is reform. The faults in the system cry out for reform. Many of them, once set out, suggest their own reform. Reform, when it occurs, will have to occur through Parliament. Before reform can occur, there has to be a general public awareness of the problem and the need to act.

A Parliamentary committee in June was holding hearings about people in danger in Lebanon applying for protection from Canada through the visa office in Nicosia, Cyprus. This focus of the Parliamentary Committee, right now, is typical. The focus is on the particular, rather than on the general.

In a particular area, the failings of the system become manifest, and political concern is generated. There is not yet a widely shared perception that the particular problems are generated by general failings. The purpose of the task force would be to draw attention to the underlying structural flaws in the whole system.

Since the purpose of the task force is advocacy and reform, the proposal is to have the task force operate in as public a way as possible. The plan is to have a series of public hearings across Canada where sponsorship groups and refugees in Canada can tell their stories about the system abroad.

The task force itself will consist of a small number of people appointed nationally, three or four. In addition, there will be regional components to the task force, to preside over these public hearings in each of the regions of Canada. We are asking the regionally based components of the Canadian Council for Refugees to assist the working group in approaching people to form the regional components of this task force.

The plan is to have the first national public hearings of the task force at the next meeting of the Canadian Council for Refugees in late November in Montreal. The Working Group intends to invite the representatives of the various ethnocultural communities in Canada which have been actively involved in sponsorship abroad, to come to that meeting and report on their experiences.

*David Matas is Chairman of the Working Group on Overseas Protection of the Canadian Council for Refugees.*

## Film Review

### *Who Gets In?*

**Barry Greenwald**  
(Canada 1989, colour,  
52 minutes)

*Reviewed by Howard Adelman*

At the second screening of *Who Gets In?* at the Royal Ontario Museum during the Festival of Festivals in Toronto, the audience applauded at the end, just after Ann Medina, the narrator of the film, answers the question asked by the title of the film. They were not applauding the policy, but the clear condemnation of that policy intended by the filmmakers. Perhaps they were also applauding the skill with which that policy was condemned while arousing the audience's sympathy for those who were not allowed to get in.

However, the answer given jars. First, the film is most powerful and effective by letting the Immigration Department reveal to the audience the criteria set without any evident intruding castigations or judgments, but then ends up castigating the Department. Secondly, the answer Ann Medina gives, suggests class and money decide whether you can get into Canada, but we see a Filipino nanny in Hong Kong admitted and are told at the beginning of the film that most admittees are sponsored by family members, suggesting the castigation is unwarranted by the verbal evidence presented. But films speak through images, more than words. And the selection of what is recorded provides one message only — of rejection for those in need.

The film is a documentary in the advocacy journalism tradition. The filmmakers are clearly critical of Canadian immigration policy. Yet the point of view of the film is told from the perspective of the Immigration Department. The immigration policy is condemned by their own spokesmen — not that they intended to be critical. The juxtaposition of what we see and most of what we hear condemns that policy in the minds of the audience watching the film as the spokesmen present an articulate and strong defence of that policy.

Mike Malloy is the "star" of the film. Previously stationed in such hot spots as Damascus, Beirut and Bangkok, he was the

chief Immigration Officer in Nairobi when the film was made. (He has since returned to Ottawa to become Director of Refugee Policy and Planning.) It is Mike who utters the quintessential line in the film: "It is our job to keep the rascals out; we have enough rascals of our own."

But it isn't rascals who we watch Mike reject. We observe Mike interview an ex-career soldier from Zaire and we hear Mike conclude that the ex-soldier is both credible and very bright. (He learned English sufficiently to become fairly fluent in the six months he was in the camp.) The soldier determined his own fate when he assisted in the escape of 15 political prisoners arrested for trying to organize a democratic opposition just before they were to be executed. Yet we learn from the narrator that Mike rejected the refugee claimant on the grounds that he was personally unsuitable.

Another refugee claimant that he interviews in Dar es Salaam is rejected for being "politically unsuitable". He was a student activist protesting the repressive policies of the Kenyan government. But we hear Mike say he was asking for trouble given the Kenyan government of the day. And, after Mike Malloy explains to a UNHCR officer who prescreens refugee applicants that a lenient policy will develop into a "pull" factor encouraging a larger refugee flow, the officer is heard to agree to make the mesh on the screen finer. And when Mike does admit a refugee couple who have university degrees and are former but disillusioned activists with SWAPO in fear of their lives from their former comrades, the narrator informs us that the husband was rejected by CSIS (Canada's Security and Intelligence Service). And Mike moves onto the next case; he can't afford to become emotionally involved.

We are not told how many refugee hearings were filmed. But it does seem odd that none of the refugee claimants on film were successful. Did the successful claims end up on the cutting room floor?

It is Mike who explains the basis of Canadian immigration policy. It is Canadians who determine who shall be allowed to become Canadians — no one else. (This is somewhat contradicted, of course, by the fact that we have an inland refugee determination system that allows refugee claimants who arrive in Canada to go before a quasi-judicial tribunal to assess the refugee claim on the basis of establishing whether the claimants are

valid refugees without any consideration of whether they will be useful to Canada; one of the refugees Mike is presumably about to reject avoids that fate by getting on a flight direct to Canada.) Further, the principle of such determination is the metaphor of the neighbourhood. An ethnic Asian in Uganda is given a visa to immigrate after she demonstrates not only that she has a needed skill, but has pluck, determination and the ambition to get ahead. Canadians want other Canadians who will be good neighbours. And Ann Medina notes that in a continent with 5 million refugees, there are only three immigration officers to serve the whole continent. And she further notes in passing that only three hundred applicants were accepted from Africa in one year, though she does not cite the year to which she was referring.

The contrast with Nairobi and Dar es Salaam is Hong Kong, with its large contingent of immigration officers and education, rich and skilled throngs applying to get in. Hong Kong also has appalling refugee camps holding the Vietnamese. The officer is shown rejecting one of the applicants who has been in a camp since 1985 and who has a great deal of difficulty being articulate and comprehending what he is being told. Who Gets In? Rich entrepreneurs — a long haired advertising executive who handled the Coca Cola account and has the equivalent of \$400,000 Canadian in the bank — gets in, though one of Mendel Green's 68 clients, presumably well off since they pay fees of \$8,000 according to the narrator, is referred back with the suggestion that he be advised to convert some of his real estate assets to liquid cash since he only has \$30,000 in the bank.



Mike Molloy

But contrary to Ann Medina's conclusion that it is class and money that determines entry, a Filipino nanny in Hong Kong, who speaks excellent English but has not been able to advance her skills because she works 12 hours a day six days a week, gets in. But then, according to the narrator, she will end up working a 60 hour week in Canada and then will be on probation and have to apply to Immigration two years later.

The assertion of the 60 hour work week may fit in with the knowledge that many domestics are exploited and many others work illegally on weekends to send extra money back home and/or save up more money to show how well they have done when they come up for their review by the Immigration Department, but the fact that employers are required to sign a 44 hour week contract is omitted. The implication of the film is that exploitation

is officially sanctioned.

Further, the conclusion that class and wealth are the basis for entry jars with the scene of admission of the Filipino domestic. It also jars with the opening statement of the film that most newcomers come under the family sponsorship category. It is these inconsistencies and factual errors or omissions which mar and perhaps enable the film to be used as a powerful indictment of the inequities inherent in the immigration policies and practices of the Canadian government.

The commentator who characterized the film for *Now* magazine stated that, "Greenwald's point is simple, but potent". The problem is that it is potent because it is simple, too simple to sort out the inconsistencies lest the more variegated truth detract from the film's power.

Howard Adelman is the Editor of *Refugee*.

## New Publications

- *Current Sociology*, the official journal of the International Sociological Association, has published a Trend Report on "The Sociology of Involuntary Migration". Contributions include: Barbara E. Harrell-Bond, "The Sociology of Involuntary Migration: An Introduction"; Anthony H. Richmond, "Sociological Theories of International Migration: The Case of Refugees"; Gertrud Neuwirth, "Refugee Resettlement"; Robert E. Mazur, "Refugees in Africa: The Role of Sociological Analysis and Praxis"; Pierre Centlivres and Micheline

Centlivres-Demont, "The Afghan Refugees in Pakistan: A Nation in Exile"; Laura O'Doherty Madrazo, "The Hidden Face of the War in Central America"; and Janet L. Abu-Lughod, "Palestinians: Exiles at Home and Abroad". The issue can be ordered from Sage Publications Ltd., 28 Banner Street, London EC1Y 8QE, England.

- Josephine Reynell, *Political Pawns: Refugees on the Thai-Kampuchean Border* (Oxford: Refugee Studies Programme, 1989). Looks at the makeshift camps on the Thai/Kampuchea border from the point of view of the quarter of a million

people living within them, and speculates about their future prospects.

- *The West Bank and Gaza Strip, Journal of Refugee Studies: Special Issue*, Vol.2, No. 1 (1989). This special edition is specifically addressed to research and analysis of the conditions of Palestinian refugees since the inception of the intifada and the profound changes which this has brought to the Palestinian issue. Available from the Refugee Studies Programme, Queen Elizabeth House, 21 St. Giles, Oxford, OX1 3LA, England.

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## The Kelly Award to be Presented at the CRS Annual Dinner

The 1990 annual dinner of the Centre for Refugee Studies (CRS) at York University will honour the first recipient of the Kelly Award, named after the late Vince Kelly, a lawyer active in refugee issues. The Kelly will be awarded annually to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to refugee studies.

Friends and Patrons of the Centre are invited to share in this occasion. Together with other readers of *Refuge* they are also asked to participate in the selection of the first recipient of this award by submitting names in writing to the Director of the CRS before December 30th. Nominations should include a brief description of the individual's work, and his or her current address and telephone number.

This year's dinner will be held on Thursday, February 8th 1990, at 7:00 pm, at the China Town International Restaurant, 421-429 Dundas St. West, 3rd floor, Toronto, and will feature a ten-course Chinese banquet. A vegetarian meal will also be available. Both will be MGS-free and the latter will also be egg-free.

The regular menu includes: Spring Roll, Roasted Duck and Pork Combination; Spicy Shrimp and Cashew; Beef Tenderloin Chinese Style; Hot and Sour Soup; Roasted Crispy Chicken; Pan-fried Mixed Vegetables; Baked Lobster in Ginger and Onion; Steamed Fish in Soya Sauce; Fried Rice with Shrimps and Pork, and Stewed E-Fu Noodles; Almond Jelly and Chinese Cookies. The vegetarian

menu will be: Vegetable Spring Roll; Sweet Corn Soup; Braised Bean Curd; Sauteed Black Mushroom and Broccoli; Spicy Eggplant; Pan-fried Mixed Vegetables; Deep-fried Yam Cake; Mushroom Mixed Rice; Almond Jelly and Chinese Cookies.

The dinner will be an opportunity to join with the members of CRS to celebrate the success of the Centre's work in the past year and to be updated on the plans for the future.

Further information about this event will be mailed out to all past Friends and Patrons. Anyone who is interested in becoming a Friend or Patron of the CRS and would like more information, please contact the Centre for Refugee Studies, Suite 234, Administrative Studies Building, York University, 4700 Keele Street, North York, Ontario M3J 1P3, Tel.: (416) 736-5663.

## Jazz and Classics Benefit Concert

A special benefit concert featuring some of Canada's best known jazz and classical artists will take place on Thursday evening, May 10, 1990. The evening will feature Phil Nimmons, the "Dean of Canadian Jazz", with Gary Williamson, Barry Elmes, Steve Wallace and special soloists Moe Koffman, Guido Basso, Ed Bickert and Don Thompson. Classical

musicians include Patricia Parr, James Campbell and Nexus, and the Orford Quartet. The musicians are contributing their talents in support of the Centre for Refugee Studies' research program concerning the protection and rights of refugee. Watch for the next issue of *Refuge* for further information.

## Hocke Forced to Quit UNHCR Post

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Jean-Pierre Hocke, was forced to resign on October 26 under a cloud of controversy following persistent complaints by his staff and donor countries about his regal behaviour

and mismanagement of funds at a time when the UNHCR was hard pressed to fulfill its commitments to the world's close to 15 million refugees. The Swiss official, appointed in 1986, will be replaced by an Austrian, Gerald Hinteresser.