

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### THOUSANDS OF POLES FLEE TO AUSTRIA: CANADA INCREASES QUOTA

The dramatic increase in the number of Poles seeking asylum in Austria has prompted Canada to increase its intake of Eastern European refugees. According to the Intergovernmental Committee for Migration (ICM), 5,000 Eastern Europeans arrived in Austria during August, bringing the number of people there awaiting resettlement in third countries to 17,000, compared to around 3,000 this time last year. Around 12,000 of these people are Poles.

In response to Austrian officials' appeal to resettlement countries for help, Employment and Immigration Minister Lloyd Axworthy announced in July that Canada would take in an additional 1,000 refugees from Vienna. Most of these would likely be Polish. This raises Canada's quota for refugees processed in Vienna from 1,100 to 2,100; and the total quota for refugees from Eastern Europe from 4,000 to 5,000. An immigration task force is currently in Vienna processing applicants, and Canadian officials are watching the situation closely to judge whether further assistance will be necessary.

### ICARA

African states have maintained a general policy of resolving refugee problems within the continent wherever possible. But the magnitude of the crisis - in 1980 there were around 5 million refugees in Africa - places an insupportable strain on the countries of asylum, many of which are among the poorest nations in the world.

To address this problem, the U.N. in consultation with the UNHCR and the Organization for African Unity (OAU), convened the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA) in Geneva on April 9 and 10, 1981, primarily to mobilize resources for refugee programmes in Africa. The final tabulation of pledges shows Canada's contribution in relation to those of other major donor countries:

	Refugees/ Returnees	Other humanitarian programmes	Total
U.S.A.	258,200,000	25,200,000	283,400,000
E.E.C.	67,580,000	420,000	68,000,000
GERMANY (F.G.R.)	42,857,143		42,857,143
JAPAN	20,000,000	13,000,000	33,000,000
SAUDI ARABIA	30,000,000		30,000,000
CANADA	18,823,529		18,823,529
ITALY	17,000,000		17,000,000
U.K.	12,159,091	1,704,545	13,863,636
AUSTRALIA	11,627,906		11,627,906
<b>Total raised at ICARA</b>			<b>566,969,472</b>
<b>Total 2-year need estimated by OAU</b>			<b>500 - 800,000,000</b>

Figures represent U.S. dollars.

Source: UNHCR

### CANADA-MANITOBA AGREEMENT ON ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

A federal-provincial agreement to assist refugees with special needs, including the mentally and physically handicapped, unaccompanied minors, tubercular persons and others, has been signed by Employment and Immigration Minister Lloyd Axworthy and Manitoba Labour and Manpower Minister Ken McMaster.

The agreement draws together various activities currently conducted jointly or separately under a comprehensive new programme to be called the Special Programme for Assisting Refugees (SPAR). Under the terms of the agreement, the federal and Manitoba governments will jointly work with private groups to plan and follow up on a case-by-case basis the necessary special settlement assistance for refugees coming to Manitoba under the programme - a specific number to be determined each year. The agreement identifies the services and resources that both levels of government and private sponsorship groups will contribute in sponsoring refugees with special needs.

### U.S. POLICY HAS IMPLICATIONS FOR HAITIANS, SALVADOREANS

The Reagan Administration recently announced its proposal for a new immigration policy for the United States. Although the proposal concerns only immigration policy and does not alter American refugee policy, certain points that would affect refugees in this part of the world include:

- granting amnesty (legal status) to the approximately three to six million illegal immigrants who have lived in the U.S. since before January 1, 1980 with the restrictions that:
  - they would have to reside in the U.S. for ten years before attaining permanent resident status, and
  - during that period they could not bring their spouses or minor children to the U.S. During that period they would also pay income and other taxes but would not have access to welfare, unemployment insurance and some other social programmes. For Haitians and Cubans the waiting period would be five years. Human rights groups in the U.S. estimate that of over 500,000 Salvadoreans (both legal and illegal) in the U.S., around 100,000 arrived after January 1, 1980 and would therefore not be eligible for this amnesty. Estimates of the rate at which the recent arrivals are being sent back range as high as 1200 a month.
- empowering the Coast Guard to intercept boats carrying Haitians on the open seas in order to return them to Haiti.