No Exit for the Boat People

Excerpts from
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STATISTICS: Hong Kong Boat People

1983 Arrivals Thus Far:

- 46% from North Vietnam
  - (20% in 1982
  - 30% in 1981
  - 14% in 1980)
- 98% of the arrivals are ethnic Vietnamese
  (in early 1979, only 27% were ethnic Vietnamese)

Arrival Numbers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Boat Cases</th>
<th>Ship-rescue Cases</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan–Dec 1980</td>
<td>5,908 in 200 boats</td>
<td>880 in 20 ships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan–Dec 1981</td>
<td>6,642 in 235 boats</td>
<td>1,796 in 34 ships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan–Dec 1982</td>
<td>7,407 in 263 boats</td>
<td>433 in 7 ships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan–Aug 1983</td>
<td>2,844 in 124 boats</td>
<td>331 in 6 ships</td>
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Resettlement Figures

The rate of resettlement has been falling — 37,468 in 1980, 17,818 in 1981 and 9,247 in 1982. Only 2,574 have been resettled so far this year.

On September 1, there were still 13,606 refugees awaiting resettlement overseas; 4,474 (33%) have already spent more than two years here and 3,259 (24%) more than 4 years.

Relation to Other Southeast Asian Countries of First Asylum

Hong Kong continues to have the highest boat refugee population in the region, with 13,366 (28%) out of a regional total of 47,546 as at July 31, 1983.

Distribution in Hong Kong

The distribution at September 1, 1983 was:

- UNHCR Centres 7,649
- Kai Tak Transit Centre
- (HK Red Cross) 4,880
- Chi Ma Wan Closed Centre 4,450
- Other Closed Centres 1,423
- Other Government-controlled Centres 84

Financial Cost to Hong Kong

Since 1979, the total cost of the Government of establishing and running refugee centres, and feeding and transporting refugees has been HK$387 million (US$69 m). The major voluntary agencies in Hong Kong have also spend about HK$50 million (US$9 m) on providing services to the refugees which have involved over 400 workers in their agencies.