

REFUGE

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The Canadian Jesuit Missions have announced the donation of Rs. 10,000 for relief work among Bengali refugees in Assam, India. * * *

New special measures will allow Iranian visitors and Minister's Permit Holders in Canada to apply for permanent residence without leaving the country.

About half of the 2,000 Iranians expected to benefit from these measures are students whose funding has been cancelled by the Iranian government. "Many of these students have had their passport renewals denied, and fear reprisals or even death if they return to their homeland," Canada's Employment and Immigration minister said.

Iranian visitors, students and Minister's Permit Holders, will be allowed to apply for landing if they have relatives here who will assist them or if they have been here twelve months and can demonstrate their ability to settle in Canada successfully.

Landing would be granted by Order in Council from within Canada. As permanent residents, these Iranians could apply to sponsor their dependants in Iran, and thus meet the goal of reunifying families. * * *

Resettlement: Indochinese in Transition

A symposium on aspects of refugee resettlement will be held at the University of British Columbia, July 15 - 18, 1983. The symposium is being co-sponsored by the Refugee Resettlement

Project (UBC), the World Federation for Mental Health and the Canadian Mental Health Association. For further information please contact Morton Beiser, M.D., Room 2C7, 2255 Wesbrook Mall, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C., V6T 2A1 * * *

Employment and Immigration Minister Lloyd Axworthy announced on February 2, 1983 that persons receiving Unemployment Insurance Benefits will be allowed to take full-time language training if the training is required to obtain employment. The new policy applies equally to all unemployed Canadians who need language training to find work. Benefits will be provided during training and for up to six weeks following the courses while employment is sought.

It is expected that about 15,000 Canadians could qualify under the new policy and that about 5,000 persons a year will take advantage of the change, which will cost about \$2 million annually.

Language training under the National Training Act is provided to immigrants, refugees and Native persons who are not fluent in either official language. Canadians moving from one province to another are also eligible when lack of fluency in one of the official languages prevents them from finding employment. Prior to this announcement, however, Canadians who did not move from one province to another were not entitled to collect unemployment insurance while attending full-time language training classes.

Letters

To the Editor:

I was pleased that The Honourable Charles Lapointe, Minister of State (External Relations) announced that Canada believes that it is important that the international community provide itself with the legal instruments necessary for the effective suppression of the practice of torture in the world. ("Canada Makes Unilateral Declaration Against Torture" *Refuge*, Volume 2, No. 3. February, 1983) The Minister further announced that Canada has made a unilateral declaration against torture in the United Nations which constitutes a moral com-

mitment entailing no change in present Canadian law or practice.

The United Nations has also created the Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture. A General Assembly resolution was passed urging members of the United Nations to contribute generously to the Fund. Canada has voted in favour of this resolution but has not yet contributed any money to the Fund. Denmark, Norway, The Netherlands, Sweden, Finland and Cyprus have contributed to date.

A moral commitment by the Canadian government against torture is important but a financial commitment is even more important. I would ask the Honourable Minister to use his good offices to encourage the Canadian government to

contribute financially to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture. Canada's contribution to the Fund might encourage other members of the United Nations to contribute. This would be consistent with the policy against torture of the Government of Canada and with the resolution in the General Assembly calling for financial contributions which the Canadian government supported. The effective suppression of the practice of torture in the world needs more than a moral commitment from the Canadian government.

Michael S. Schelew
Vice-president
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