Letters

To the Editor:

Dear Sir:

Your “Newsflash” in the September/October issue of “Refuge” stated: “The UNHCR has cancelled its agreement of co-operation with the Canadian Foundation for Refugees”. While it is true that the UNHCR and the CFR are no longer parties to a written agreement which made them partners in the areas of fund-raising and public education, it is wrong to say that UNHCR no longer has an agreement to co-operate with the CFR.

The Statute of the UNHCR provides that the High Commissioner may establish “contact in such manner as he may think necessary” with private organizations dealing with refugee questions”. We shall continue to provide the CFR with the best advice and support we can offer in matters of mutual concern, as we do for all other voluntary agencies working in this sector.

Yours sincerely,

Ishaaq H. Brown
Representative in Canada of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Our newsflash said the UNHCR cancelled its “agreement of co-operation” and not any informal arrangements to co-operate. Ed.

A Letter from the Jungle

(Continued from p. 1)

The centre Zunil has 32 families. There is only one infant under one year of age, and only 23 children under 5. The rest did not survive.

No one can say exactly what is the food ration in the camp, because it seems to depend on the whim of the officials. But a family, say 6 persons, receives about 9 kilos of corn every 10 days, approximately. And one kilo of beans. Perhaps a bit of salt.

Understand that these refugees are virtually prisoners. To the south is the Guatemalan border and the Army. To the north is the Rio Lacuntun and hundreds of miles of jungle, accessible only by foot in the rugged terrain. In a few spots there are dirt landing strips. I arrived in a well-used Cessna, squatting on the floor behind the pilot, as the plane bounced into the air and continued at times just above the tree-covered mountains. Then, the clearings the refugees had made, looking like garbage dumps or debris from the tightly-packed black plastic roofs and downed trees and slash. We banked steeply, and hit the strip which the refugees themselves had constructed just days before. The flight cost for four persons: 6100 pesos, or approximately $10 a year. It is a forum for discussion, and the views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of its funders, staff or Editorial Board.

All material in Refuge may be reproduced without permission unless copyrighted or otherwise indicated. Credit should be given to the author or source if named.

Refuge is dedicated to encouraging assistance to refugees, by providing a forum for sharing information and opinion on Canadian and international issues pertaining to refugees. It is published five times a year, in October, December, February, April and June. It is a non-profit, independent periodical supported by grants from the Canadian Foundation for Refugees, Operation Lifeline, and the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission; by private donations; and by subscription payments of $10 a year. It is in forum for discussion, and the views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of its funders, staff or Editorial Board.

A responsible representative of an international organization working in Mexico.

Source: A responsible representative of an international organization working in Mexico.

The Third International Conference on Soviet Jewry will be held in Jerusalem, March 15-18, 1983. The Presidium of the World Conference on Soviet Jewry called for the conference in response to the deteriorated situation of Jews in the Soviet Union. Further information may be obtained by writing to the Canadian Committee for Soviet Jewry, 212 Dunvegan Road, Toronto, Ontario M5P 2P2. (416) 489-7133.