

# Refuge for Refugees

By Lenzi Latif Aziz

## Who are refugees?

Refugees are people who flee their homeland because they fear persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. Once outside their country, these people are no longer able or willing to avail themselves of the protection of their country.

There are 10 million refugees in the world, and this number is increasing. There seems to be no hope with the present situation. No one can blame any specific political ideology as the reason for this phenomena. Refugees are not figures or graphs, they are people with a lot of problems. They have lost their homes, left behind beloved ones and took risky routes to get out of their country.

Many have painful memories of the past, memories that are too hard to forget and too much to forget. The problem of refugees will

not be solved overnight. It will not be solved by showing sympathy alone. The refugee problem is a responsibility of everyone.

As scholars of UNB we have the greatest part of this responsibility. It's a challenge and a non-glorious field. No fame, glory or money could ever be generated from refugees (unless you are a phony). It is a hard, frustrating, stressful and discouraging area. I am not writing this to attract you nor to discourage you of the refugee problem. I'm writing this to challenge you to consider refugees.

## The Reality

Once a refugee leaves his or her own country, he or she usually ends up in a camp. Refugee camps are not pleasant things. They are densely populated, and many times a refugee camp is situated in the midst of no where, lacking the basic necessities such as fresh water, adequate food supply and sufficient medical care.

Many times these camps are a part of a political game of the 1st host country, sometimes



camp are closed, relocated and vulnerable to armed attacks by the country of their origin. Refugees may stay in these camps for many years awaiting either a peaceful resolution in their home-country, or resettlement into other countries like Canada, USA, Australia, etc.

This period is always accompanied by despair, fear and discouragement. Many times they are victims of dream-sellers, the Sri Lankans off Newfoundland for example.

They wait for immigration officers from other countries so that they might be interviewed, and hopefully resettled in another country.

This is also another painful period. Hopes start to rise, hopes that they will leave the camp and an opportunity of having a decent life. They have to pass both medical and security tests, and sometimes a sponsor has to be found. Of course, those who are sick and might be a drain on the budget of the resettling country, are

left behind.

Sometimes only a part of a family reaches the camp early, so they are chosen to resettle into another country. In some cases, the other part reaches the camp later and another process of a family reunion starts.

As I have said, this is a very humiliating life, but there is a solution, which is:

1. Where it is possible, the very best solution for a refugee is for him or her to go back home.

2. To be locally integrated so that they might become self supporting in their country of residence and of asylum.

3. To be resettled into another country as immigrants.

## How Can we help?

World opinion is a powerful force that greatly assists refugees in their struggle to find a better life. They need many helping hands in order to start living a useful and productive life again. In the final analysis, refugees' problems are not impossible unless you believe them to be.

## Christmas display

By DIANE BURT

The York-Sunbury Historical Society Museum is presently featuring a special exhibit entitled "Time Machines: 19th and early 20th Century Clocks". The exhibit contains clocks from private collections, with a special emphasis on those particular to Fredericton and Saint John. Some of the more interesting clocks include John Babbitt's shelf clock (mid to late 1800s), Boss Gibson's clock from his office in the Marysville Mill, Pequegnat clocks, W. and G. Hutchinson Clocks (early 1800s), W. Fairbanks and Co. clocks (mid to late 1800s), and Plummer and Mitchell clocks (mid to late 1800s).

Types of clocks on display are banjo, French, gingerbread, staple, miniature, Vienna, Mariner, railroad, and schoolhouse clocks, covering the period between 1800 and 1920. This special collector's exhibit will be displayed until

Feb. 1st, 1987. Clock enthusiasts can visit the museum on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, from 11 am to 3 pm or by appointment. The museum will also be open on Saturday afternoons, from 12 to 4 until Christmas. Group tours can be arranged and facilities are available for seminars and special Christmas functions.

On Saturday, December 6th, the museum will be open from 10 am until 4 pm and hot cider will be served to all visitors. In keeping with the season, the York-Sunbury Museum has been decorated and a "legendary Christmas tree" features folk legend decorations. All Santa Claus parade watchers are invited to attend the museum's Open House on the 6th of December.

Other exhibits in the museum include a Pioneer kitchen, a Loyalist room, a military exhibit, an Indian display, a replica of a World War One trench, and the famous 42-pound Coleman Frog.



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