

**Life in Refugee Camps - Hong Kong**

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### Introduction:

Throughout history, refugees have existed, but never until now have they existed in such appalling numbers (Malarek, 1987; World Refugee Survey, 1989). However, statistics indicating that the current world's refugees, estimated about 15 millions, cannot even begin to speak the cruelty, indignities, violence, tortures, and powerlessness and helplessness experienced almost daily by these asylum seekers confined in refugees. Many of them are stranded in camps for years and years supported by nations throwing money into the coffers of the UNHCR to ensure that they are "protected" while durable solutions can be worked out.

While the memories of the Indochinese "boat people" have dimmed, but the flood of refugees in Southeast Asia has never stopped. While countries such as Canada, U.S.A. and Australia continue to select refugees for resettlement, some 107,571 asylum seekers are still languishing in camps in Thailand, Malaysia, and Hong Kong. Some 51,793 asylum seekers are currently being held in 11 detention centres in Hong Kong. During the first six months of 1991, a total of 12,646 asylum seekers arrived Hong Kong and are placed in these camps.

Responding to the decreasing number of refugees being accepted by other countries for resettlement, the Hong Kong government has established a policy of "humane deterrence" - taking all arrivals since June, 1988, as "illegal immigrants" unless they can prove their refugee status according to the 1951 UN Convention. This



"humane deterrence" policy was instituted together with other measures taken such as threats of repatriation (voluntary forced) and detention upon arrival, to discourage other "boat people" from leaving Vietnam. In contrast to those "boat people" leaving Vietnam in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the motives and reasons for these current cohorts of "boat people" to leave Vietnam have been captured in the dichotomous distinction between "genuine refugees" and "economic migrants" allegedly intent on seeking a better life (Chan, 1990). The "bogus refugee" argument has found its way into the core of the rationale of public policies as well as measures taken by the Hong Kong government towards the Indochinese asylum seekers. These "boat people" are viewed as burden or costs, forever taxing resources of the state, casting them into beings no one wants to inherit.

A visit to a refugee camp anywhere in the world is a sobering experience. The detention centres in Hong Kong are much more akin to concentration camps where the asylum seekers are "imprisoned" than the large number of impoverished camps dotting the Pakistani borders with Afghanistan or spread throughout Africa. While basic needs (food, water) are generally well cared for, Robert Leeuwen, Charge de Mission of UNHCR in Hong Kong, said:

The way the detention centres are set up in Hong Kong do not allow for a normal family life, they do not allow for a normal community life.

Relief workers from other camps in the region have voiced their disbelief at the conditions in Hong Kong's detention centres. A relief worker who worked in Thailand and Hong Kong commented:



In Hong Kong .... detention centres .... they are very restrictive, oppressive and repressive. There were definitely restrictions in other places. Certainly in Thailand, there are plenty of abuses .... there is torture. Yet, it still seems the people can gather like a community and be more like people, rather than in Hong Kong. *day life of these asylum seekers and their families*

The prison-like environment of the camps has been widely criticized by relief agencies. Oxfam said:

In purely physical terms, the camps are .... short-term accommodation .... provide the basic necessities of daily living. However, the overwhelming impression .... is that they are prisons. They are surrounded by tall fences and there are uniformed officers everywhere. Even moving within the camps involves endless unlocking and locking gates .... *into a detention centre, the high fence*

When the Hong Kong Governor, Sir David Wilson, visited one of the camps - San Yick, it was reported that he was "visibly shocked by the lack of sanitation and the cramped conditions" (South China Morning Post, September 7, 1988). The original plan to house up to 5,000 refugees was then changed to 4,000.

Clearly, the wait between walls and the endless shadows (Llambias-Wolff, 1990) and the stressful conditions of camp life, e.g. overcrowding, lack of privacy, violence, uncertainties of screening procedures and resettlement opportunities, and threats of repatriation, etc., are dehumanizing and demoralizing for both adults and children. A story told repeatedly by workers in the camps is a poignant example:

A mother was called to the fence by her son, who said: "Mother, mother, come, hear it! There is a dog outside the fence and it won't stop barking." The mother heard the chirp of a bird, and realized that her son did not know the difference between the sound of a bird and a dog.

Based on interviews and observations in the refugee camps, the



paper examines the living conditions of thousands of these asylum seekers. What conditions of life - rules and regulations, scarcity of material resources, overcrowding, violence, and their impact on the everyday life of these asylum seekers and their families cogent questions that cannot be underestimated because there is a great deal of profound change which occurs in their internal external lives as a direct result of their experiences in camps.

#### Overcrowding Conditions:

Before even walking into a detention centre, the high fences barbed wires, locked gates and guards make it strikingly evident that this is a prison-like environment. Inside the camps, overcrowding conditions (9 out of the 11 detention centres exceeding their original capacity) and the rules and regulations of a prison system are constant reminders that the asylum seekers are viewed as "prisoners" rather than persons who had to struggle with the highest price for life to reach supposedly the freedom land of Hong Kong. One teenager said:

There are fences surrounding this camp and we cannot go outside. The camp is like a cage to keep birds in, not people.

Food is provided centrally, so mothers cannot cook for their families. Clothes are distributed centrally, so people cannot choose what they want to wear. Authority rests with the Police or Correctional Officers, so parental role is being undermined. There is little privacy. A family of 5 may live in a bed space 8' x 3' crammed in with all their belongings. A thin curtain



separates them from the next family. This space may be the "home" for many months, even years, yet they cannot stand up in it. A relief worker lamented: "Even Hong Kong's prisoners can stand up in their cells."

Responding to criticisms about the living conditions in the camps, the Assistant Commissioner for Correctional Services said:

.... compared with inmates in other Correctional Services Department Institutions, the boat people show very few signs of any problems .... These are very resilient, determined people, they are risk-takers ....

Although he dismissed the criticisms by relief agencies as "drivel", he nevertheless noted:

.... The problems .... show themselves within family relationships. Fathers began to see their authority as head of the family eroded because they no longer filled the role of breadwinner. Mothers, too, lost some of their status because they were no longer responsible for cooking the family food and some of their other responsibilities for child care were shared with CSD officers ....

The living conditions created in the camps are designed for maximizing the Hong Kong government's ability to control the asylum seekers keep them imprisoned en masse. Improving the accommodation in the camps has been taken as "attracting more Vietnamese to Hong Kong." Hence, the situation in these camps is primarily one of "warehousing" and the "boat people" are accordingly "numbered, catalogued, and shelved, side by side, row after row."

In the camps, the overcrowding conditions have resulted in the almost non-existent personal and family space. Within an environment in which people live side by side, one on top of



another, separated only by a plank or thin curtain, or enclosed bed space with fabric, cardboard, and plastic to create some sense of privacy and personal space, their "lives and activities" are completely open to others to "comment upon or laugh at." Children are exposed to everything including illegal activities that occur within the hut. The quality of family relationships changed. A sample of the interviews illustrates this change. One respondent said:

The intimate relationship between spouse is difficult, always tense and on the defensive with each other because you can always be seen by others.

Another echoed:

We are always together so it's hard to avoid conflicts. In Vietnam, if we had conflicts, it was easier to go somewhere, but not here. If we have problems, we must be careful because everyone can hear what we say.

A father with a 10 years old son in a camp sadly said:

There is no intimacy because there is no privacy. Others can see and hear. I don't think that my son, only 10 years old, should be exposed to the adult activities yet. It is frustrating. What is more frustrating is that I don't know how to discipline or teach my son when others are so close. I don't know if he can live in a real world.

The overcrowding conditions not only affect the adults but also children. They find that their lives are exposed as well

One teenager said:

Sometimes, I want to talk about a private problem, but I couldn't find a place to talk privately with my mom. Sometimes, I don't want to explain what I'm doing, but I can't get a place to hide. I can't even hide in the toilet because there are always people there and they'll yell at you to hurry up ....

The mental anguish and the sense of "no escape" as a result of



living in the extremely overcrowded conditions of the camps have been vividly captured by the comments of a woman with her 9 year old son who arrived Hong Kong without her husband:

I am afraid to sleep at night because when I first came to the camp, I was awakened by men touching me in the darkness. I sleep a few hours only during the day and I ask my son to keep watch. I am mad that I have to ask my son to protect me. I am angry that I must remain on this bed in order to make sure no one steals my personal belongings. I am sad that I cannot quietly teach my son not to get involved with the gangs. It is miserable but going back to Vietnam is not a solution because it only means going from one camp to another ....

Another respondent gave a vivid account of what his huts are like at night:

.... when I want to sleep, the children suddenly cry or play .... so many people living in one hut .... the noise from the neighbours is terrible .... children crying and playing .... adults talking or playing games .... the couple, they suddenly start quarrelling and then fighting .... Terrible .... I need some paper to put in my ears .... I want to sleep because I have no reason to get up.

The overcrowding conditions in the camps have been cited by the asylum seekers as contributing factors causing "headaches and insomnia" and leading to "quarrelling, conflicts, and fighting" between family members and also between different factions of the camp residents.

#### **Scarcity of Basic Resources:**

In the camps, inadequate supply of water and electricity is common. The overall sanitation of the camps is deplorable. Clothes, shoes, blankets, soap, toilet paper, and sanitary napkins are not enough to meet the basic needs of the asylum seekers. This shortage has led to violence and other illegal activities that



affect women and children the most. It is not uncommon for women to trade secretly with other camp residents with their clothes and shoes to get extra food for their children or to get additional sanitary napkins.

The lack of water means that toilets are not flushed frequently and they become "filthy, unhealthy and unusable." In the hot and humid days, one has to hold the breath when passing the area. In one camp, there had been only one bathroom for 2,000 camp residents for about six months. It had not only caused a major hygiene problem but also "quarrelling and fighting" among the asylum seekers. In another camp, the ratio of people to toilets is still 50:1 in contrast to the recommended ratio of 20:1 by U.N. Instead of improving the apparently unhealthy conditions, the "boat people" are blamed for not keeping the toilets and bathrooms clean. The following comment has been frequently made by the Police or Correctional officers:

These Vietnamese people, they don't care about their living environment. They don't know how to keep the place clean and tidy. They are lazy. There is water but they waste it. They are so lazy that they don't turn the tap off after using it. They then complain. They don't want to keep their place clean, this is their business. Don't expect us to clean it for them. When I finish my shift, the first thing I must do is to clean myself.

Meanwhile, many asylum seekers complained that there is never enough hot water during the winter months. This is especially "hard" on mothers with small children/babies. One mother said:

We need hot water in winter, for the baby. But there is not enough. We use cold water, but this is bad for children's health. If we use electricity to boil water, it is illegal. Resources has also led to some asylum seekers



As observed in the camps, although illegal, electric mains are secretly tapped for heating water or for listening to music tapes. However, this often leads to quarrels and even fights in the camps because tapping the electric mains for heating water may suddenly cut the current off and disrupt the neighbour who is listening to the music tapes.

Besides water and electricity, other basic needs such as clothes, soap, toilet papers, and sanitary napkins are in short supply as well. One bag of ten sanitary napkins is given to women each month. One woman said:

I get ten per month. But I need more. Where can I get them? If you go to the welfare office and ask for more, they will say: "Why? You must have traded the napkins for something else - cigarettes or noodles." It is insulting and embarrassing. I have to beg them.

A mother with a teenage girl added:

It is a problem for the girl, not just my daughter, but all girls. It is not easy to convince the welfare office to get the napkins if they need them. Some bad officers in the office may even laugh at the girls ....

The scarcity of resources has led to illegal selling or trading. Often times, these activities are controlled by the few gang members in the camps who have elicited fear from other asylum seekers that the few items they have will be stolen. Police or Correctional officers have largely adopted an attitude of "couldn't care less" towards these activities. One officer said:

We can't stop them. There are numerous thefts in the camp and we just don't want to get involved unless there are fierce fightings. We know who the gang members are. They are really violent. At most, we just warn them.

The scarcity of resources has also led to some asylum seekers



escaping from the camps by climbing over the high fences. For those who can afford to buy these necessities will do so in the nearby stores while others will resort to stealing. Many of them get caught and put into "solitary confinement" for a week to ten days and the goods confiscated.

#### **Food Distribution and Cooking:**

Food is either cooked in the camp's kitchen and distributed in large plastic garbage bins to the huts or brought in from a central kitchen in Kowloon. Some Vietnamese asylum seekers are employed by the camp management to assist in the distribution. In most camps, food is collected by each family head in red plastic bowls and yellow plastic cups. Families who do not wish to eat and stay in their bunks are forced down and made to collect their food.

In general, breakfast consists of rice soup twice a week and sweet soup for the rest of the week, together with bread. Lunch consists of rice, vegetable and meat. Chicken wings, beef, fish and minced pork are served twice a week. Dinner consists of the same food. Milk is given twice a week. Children under 10 are given one egg each week. Pregnant women get an egg and one chicken wing daily. One orange is given daily to everyone.

After food is given to the head of the family, it is sometimes necessary for it to be reheated. However, not every camp allows reheating. In some camps where reheating is allowed in the already overcrowded huts, this presents an extreme hazard. In addition, the food is by and large monotonous and tasteless. There is a high demand for oil, salt, MSG, chile sauce and other ingredients. For



those who can afford to buy these ingredients do so in the camp's canteen while others have to beg relief workers in the camps to bring in these supplemental items on a personal basis or bribing those working in the camp's kitchen in exchange for personal services. One asylum seeker recalled:

The food is bad. I try to eat even if I don't want to, but I feel terrible. I beg him (an asylum seeker working in the kitchen and occupying the upper bunk bed) to give me extra salt. I clean his bed and wash his clothes.

Another said:

I get the chile sauce from the camp officer because I promise him that I will keep an eye on the trouble makers and report to him. I have been threatened a few times by them. It is scary but I can't eat the tasteless food all the time. I want to live and I can't starve myself to death. Why can't they give us enough salt, soya sauce, and chile sauce? These are not expensive things. Are we asking too much? I don't think so.

In fact, not only that these asylum seekers have been deprived of the tradition and ritual of creating food that satisfies their stomach, regulations prohibiting cooking in the camps have taken away from them the basic control of their lives. In some camps where reheating food is allowed but items necessary for the task are not provided. For example, charcoal is provided but matches and pot or pan are not allowed. Coping with the contradiction and deprivation has resulted in forcing some asylum seekers to use illegitimate means to survive in the camps.

#### Daily Activities:

Daily activities of the asylum seekers are very much structured and routined. They begin their days waking up anywhere from 5:00 to 7:30 a.m. They wash in the communal shower room and



use a communal area toilet. They wait for food distribution. After eating with family members or by themselves, they walk around in circles in the inside perimeter fence of the camp. They do the laundry and household chores like cleaning the bunk bed. After lunch, many people take a rest in their bunks. Some write letters or watch TV in the community area or chat with others. After dinner, watching TV or visiting friends are common activities. They go to sleep around 10:00 p.m. Some asylum seekers make use of night to find a private space outside the hut to be alone with their thoughts. Except for a few asylum seekers who work in kitchen, or being employed by voluntary agencies or the camp management (Correctional Services Department or Police) as interpreters, most of them adhere to a consistent and even rigid schedule. One respondent said:

I do the same thing every day. It is very boring. I just feel tired and sleep. When I get up, I don't know what to do with myself. I feel the time here passes very slowly. I feel my life is slipping away ....

As observed, the beginning and ending of each day for asylum seekers in the camps is not signalled by the clock but by the noise of the loud speakers, hut checks, and lock-up. The loudspeaker is used for calling people, by their boat number instead of their name, to certain management office, announcing and reading management regulations. It ends at around 10:00 p.m. One asylum seeker said:

I don't have to look at my watch. I wake up at 7:30 a.m. because of the noise from the loudspeaker announcing that hut checks are going to take place in a few minutes. And, I know it must be 10:30 p.m. by the sound of locking up the huts.



The observed and reported daily activities which rarely vary have been described by asylum seekers as "a slow and terrible torture." With limited recreational opportunities available to adults and children, a mother commented:

My child just plays and mimics fighting adults. I sleep for recreation. I feel useless, wasted.

Moreover, the monotonous daily life in the camps has led to illegal activities. The most common illegal activities are brewing and drinking and gambling. "Too much spare time" and "nothing to do" are frequently cited by asylum seekers as contributing factors. For example:

They don't have any work or anything to do. If they have work to do, they wouldn't have time to make alcohol, to gamble, or to make weapons. Some get drunk to help forget and escape hardships in the camp and to absorb time and boredom. Drinking and gambling help them get through the day ....

While most asylum seekers feel that these illegal activities adversely affect them because when fighting occurs as a result of drinking and gambling, police and/or Correctional officers will not only punish those who are responsible but also those innocent victims who have nothing to do with these activities. One respondent related the following incident:

There was a fight after some arguments about gambling. The police came and stopped the fighting. They then searched the hut for weapons. I was not involved in the fighting. But, the police search my bed too. They found a small pocket knife that I used to cut oranges. They took it and said that I had in my possession, without the permission of the Superintendent, a weapon. I argued with them and I was put into the house (solitary confinement) for three days because they said that I disobeyed the officer's order and treated the officer with disrespect ....



However, some illegal activities committed by known gang members in the camps such as making weapons or robbing are not acted upon by police or Correctional officers. Many asylum seekers believe that these trouble makers have been "bought on side" by the camp officers and made them as "hut leaders" or "security guards". Regardless if the alleged complicity is substantiated by "facts", the asylum seekers are living in constant fear, under close watch and being confined to "four sides of barbed wires." As one respondent expressed:

This place is a prison. But we are not prisoners because we have not done bad things. There is great difficulty in living day-to-day, and in doing the basic routines - cooking, talking, sleeping. We don't have any control. Worse, we cannot run away from the trouble makers and the bad people in the camp and we are afraid of them. But we have live side-by-side with them. We receive a lot of trouble from them, but the police don't care. It is not their life, but ours....

Unfortunately, instead of looking at the camp conditions as reasons for violence and illegal activities, whenever there is a problem, the Police or Correctional Services department will put in more staff and crack down on the "riot" and invariably attribute the "problem" to "historical and cultural" reasons between North Vietnamese and South Vietnamese, and between asylum seekers from Haiphong vis-a-vis Quang Ninh. One officer confided:

We don't intervene. There is no way to adjudicate who's wrong and who's right. As far as we know, they fight because of some historical reason, or something that happened on the way to Hong Kong .... Afterall, we let them settle among themselves as long as it doesn't get out of hand - for example, causing serious personal injuries or death .... We know who the trouble makers are, but we can't do anything .... if we lock them up for a few day, they will then give us more trouble ....



### Impact on Asylum Seekers:

Confined to an overcrowding environment with scarcity of basic resources provided, where not only the physical "space" but social "space and time" are defined and regulated, where daily activities that are largely monotonous, asylum seekers have virtually lost ownership of themselves including security of person in the camps. The detrimental impact on their life is nowhere clearer illustrated than the following responses:

What life? It has been wasted .... I can't provide and protect my family .... I will become mad and crazy ....

Another added:

Here I feel I'm always impolite. I'm fed up. I become selfish, aggressive .... I don't care about my behaviour to my children and wife .... I become very easy to get mad and angry at people, anything ....

According to respondents, it appears that "husbands" have changed the most in the camps because "they have lost their rights of the husbands" and "they can't earn money to provide for the family." Combined with uncertainties about the screening procedures or being screened out, and feelings of life being wasted and often times degraded and humiliated, arguments and even fightings between spouses are not uncommon. One respondent said:

There were a lot of changes .... but no responsibilities at all .... no work .... Nothing I do is of any real importance to anybody .... I quarrelled a lot with my wife about small things such as using too much soap or toilet paper ....

The quarrels and arguments may create a cycle of violence which undermines the family relationship enormously. One woman said:



In Vietnam, there's total dependence on the man for support, here, it's the administration. In Vietnam, he was able to deal with problems, here, he has no power and can't do much. He feels sad and angry .... and he beats me and the children ....

abuse and child abuse are not uncommon in the camps A  
respondent related the following incident

There is nothing to do .... people always treat each other badly in the camp .... How can we live if we are always worried about tomorrow .... you always get angry with other .... the couple .... at lunch, perhaps they only have two small pieces of meat .... the husband gave it to the wife and the wife wanted the husband to have the meat .... back and forth for a few times .... then they threw it out and fight with each other .... the wife got hurt .... then the police came and got the husband and they beat the husband ....

There are many of these incidents that happened in the camps undermining family life and inevitably affecting children. They know the "ultimate authority" in the camps lies with the guards - police or Correctional officers, not their parents. Particularly, when they see that their parents are humiliated by the guards at the gate or during "search for weapons" in the huts, children realize that they cannot depend upon their parents for protection One father said:



Searching is humiliating .... being searched in front of your children is doubly humiliating .... I have a tin pot for water and during the search, they crush it .... they said I could use it to make weapon .... just taking it would have been less humiliating .... my son asked me why the guard crushed the tin pot .... I gave him no answer and I was too sad to give him any answer .... I watched what the guard did and I couldn't do anything to prevent it .... what could I say to my son .... some other even

A woman added:

We are always being made to wait at the gate, being interrogated at the gate, before being allowed to go to the clinic or to see relatives/friends in the other section of the camp .... the police at the gate are very impolite .... always saying bad things about us very loud .... we are always afraid if they will allow us to go .... they take away our dignity in front of our children .... they have us wait unnecessarily and they enjoy making us wait .... how could I explain to my son that we have to wait until the police unlocks the gate so that he could go to the other section of the camp and play with his cousins? Now, he doesn't want to go there with me anymore .... he simply climbs over the fence and then crawls back .... it is dangerous .... but, what can I do?

The concern that children will lose the most has been deeply felt by parents who are preoccupied with coping with "living in an aberrant environment," "uncertainties of screening" and "threats of repatriation." One parent lamented:

Everyone changed .... we thought too much about the future .... children have to live in a boring situation .... no meaningful activity for them .... they are not going to develop normally .... my son has changed most .... I have moments of deep sadness .... he talks back, misbehaved and uses bad languages like the police ....

Another parent added:

.... children are more angry and naughty .... they are forced to grow up too fast .... they seem older .... but they have nothing to achieve .... they are less innocent .... but they are always frightened .... they are exposed to things that they are not ready for at their age ....

In addition to the changes in family relationships between



spouses and between parents and children, with few exceptions, many asylum seekers believe that there is a dramatic deterioration in their relationship with other asylum seekers. One respondent said:

People become aggressive, selfish, mistrusting against each other .... even with close friends, honesty and trust have disappeared .... we don't help each other even though we live so close together .... everyone is sad, frustrated, confused .... everyone is hot-tempered .... everyone feels like strangers .... we all have changed not for the better, but for the worse ....

#### Concluding Remarks:

Clearly, the "humane deterrence" policy has been translated into "inhumane treatments" towards the asylum seekers in the camps. It is a deliberate attempt by the Hong Kong government to make "life" in the camps as "degrading, demeaning and dehumanizing" to discourage other "boat people" from arriving Hong Kong. It is by and large a "calculated" attempt to appease the local people who are "hostile" to the "boat people" and who feel that they are caught between China at their back and the Vietnamese pushing up against their stomach. While reluctantly maintaining Hong Kong as "first port of asylum" in the region without receiving assurance from other countries that the asylum seekers will eventually get resettled or voluntarily repatriated (Lam, 1991) the inhumane treatments are also aimed at "forcing the asylum seekers" to accept repatriation voluntary or otherwise, as the only viable alternative for their predicament. This will also appease the Chinese government that "measures are being taken and implemented" to "empty the camps" by 1997 when Hong Kong returns to Chinese administration. The ongoing negotiation between Hong Kong, U.K.



and the Vietnamese government (Toronto Star, October 16, 1991 is a reflection on this "concerted and co-ordinated attempt" to bring an end to the "boat people" saga. However, the "human suffering" and the possible long-term debilitating effects on the "incarcerated" asylum seekers (families and children), if resettled or repatriated, are incalculable. The question "how do they going about to rebuild, reconstruct, and re-establish a normal life" if resettled or repatriated, has to be addressed

For the time being, as observed, these asylum seekers surviving in the camps. Their survival depends on their internal strength that comes from "hope" - to be screened in as refugees and to be eventually accepted for resettlement. Even for those who have been screened out, their "hope" hinges upon the outcome of "review" and "appeal" and they believe that "somehow, justice will prevail" before they are being forced back to Vietnam. How long this "hope" will last and what the consequences will be if this "hope" is dashed or shattered remain to be seen. Nevertheless, response from one asylum seeker is worth-noting:

They don't want us to have any hope. They want us to go back to Vietnam. They don't want us to be happy. They don't want us to do anything to help ourselves. They don't help us .... the most important thing to them is repatriation .... but .... we are refugees, just like those who left Vietnam earlier .... why can't they see that .... I don't understand .... but .... I hope they will see that at the end ....

The "they" is not defined and it is not clear to whom this asylum seeker, like many others, is referring: the camp management, the UNHCR, voluntary agencies, the Hong government. Whoever the "they" are, hopefully, the "they" can do



something to alleviate the suffering of the asylum seekers, to improve the living conditions in the camps and to discontinue, intentionally or unintentionally, the practise of "dehumanizing and depersonalizing" their "refugee experience."



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