



**Stop
Injustice
Against
the
Haitians.**

Asylum for all Haitian Boat People.

Congressional Black Caucus Calls for Uniform U.S. Refugee Policy

The Congressional Black Caucus in calling for equal treatment for Haitian boat people has stated:

"The Caucus must stand firm in its insistence that United States human rights and refugee policy be administered on an evenhanded basis so that no government activity or decision may be viewed as tainted with race, class or ideological prejudice. However, our information reveals that these minimum standards of fairness and decency have been violated repeatedly by the Department of Justice in instances of Haitians seeking political refuge in the United States."

"The Federal Government has paid for some of the resettlement expenses for Soviet Jews, just as it did for Cuban and Vietnamese exiles. It pays about \$98 a week per person to keep Haitians in South Florida jails, deprived of their right to legal counsel and their right to hearing on their claims of refugee status."

Miami News, April 18, 1979

Support the end of discrimination against Haitian Refugees:

1. Unconditional political asylum for all Haitian refugees.
2. Termination of U.S. support of the Duvalier regime.
3. Freedom for all political prisoners in Haiti.

The Coalition for Human Rights for Haitian Refugees

The Coalition is made up of volunteers, both individuals and representatives of organizations, who are determined to aid the Haitian Refugees in their struggle for freedom and human dignity.

The Haitian Refugee Center

The Haitian Refugee Center was established in 1972 when the first group of Haitians arrived on South Florida's shores. The Center offers legal assistance, advocacy and social services for Haitian Refugees. Call, write or visit the Haitian Refugee Center/Coalition for Human Rights for Haitian Refugees, 1260 N.W. 62 Street, Miami, Florida 33142, (305) 691-2095.

ing towards the Haitians like the villain in a grade B political prisoner movie. With the exception of the Haitians, the U.S. has never made it a policy to detain people seeking political asylum. The time to erase that exception is long overdue."

Miami News, March 5, 1979

Why should we help the Haitian refugees?

Haitians escaping Duvalier's dictatorship for political and economic survival have systematically been denied political asylum like no other refugee group in the history of this country. Instead of being helped upon their arrival here, they have been incarcerated. Unable to pay high bonds, many have been deported back to the very country from which they risked their lives to escape.

For a Haitian the price of political asylum is human suffering. Most arrive with no money, unable to afford legal counsel. Those lawyers who are funded by voluntary agencies to help the Haitians are faced with as many as 50 hearings a day.

Despite the fact that Haitians are a proud people desirous of working to support their families, the basic human right to work has been denied them by immigration authorities.

A U.S. Federal Judge in Miami, in a recent opinion, has noted the impact of current immigration policy:

"Haitian aliens in South Florida have suffered and will continue to suffer malnutrition, substandard and overcrowded housing, mental and physical illness and the breakdown of the family unit, unless work authorizations are returned to them."

Few refugees speak English, and most do not speak French. So they remain insulated in the Haitian community, unable to support their families, fearing deportation back to a land of suffering, violence and possible death. Thus, the Haitian refugee lives in constant fear even today.

Many Haitians become the victims of money-hungry entrepreneurs. One such occurrence resulted in the deaths of one Haitian woman and five of her children when ordered to jump off a boat assisting them in illegally entering the country to join the father and two other children. Unable to swim, all six drowned.

For the Haitian expecting a release from the oppression of a dictatorship, the American dream of a promised land has given way to a nightmare of imprisonment, starvation and confusion.

Who are the Refugees?

They are about 14,000 black men, women, and children who have landed on South Florida's beaches, many shipwrecked and nearly drowned. Many, including small children, have been imprisoned the moment they set foot on America's shores for the "crime" of illegal entry. They are the "boat people" of the Caribbean. But unlike all other boat people, they have not received the acceptance afforded the Indochinese, the Nicaraguans, the Cubans, and other refugees.

The Haitians are the victims of U.S. government blindness to systematic human rights violations initiated during the 22 year dictatorship of the Duvalier family.

Why are the Haitian Refugees here?

The refugees have escaped Haiti because of the dehumanizing and repressive actions of Jean-Claude Duvalier, son of "Papa Doc" and Haiti's president-for-life. The Duvalier henchmen, known as the "Tontons Macoute," have continued the policies of Papa Doc's dictatorship. U.S. Congressional committees have heard testimony that arbitrary arrests, detention without trial and torture while in custody remain daily occurrences in Haiti. Recent federal court testimony has revealed that refugees forcibly returned to Haiti are imprisoned, persecuted, and in some cases, murdered.

Many prisoners are arrested and tortured in Port-au-Prince's "Caserne Dessalines," replacing the infamous Fort Dimanche, without even having charges filed against them. Frequently relatives are not allowed to visit the "prisoners," and must rely on rumors to determine if relatives are still alive, and if so, where they are being held.

For those escaping political oppression, poverty and hunger are a daily way of life. By all socio-economic indicators, Haiti is the poorest country in this hemisphere and one of the poorest in the world. Although foreign aid has increased by \$800 million in the last four years, nearly half the government's internal revenues are unbudgeted and deposited into what one foreign official terms a "presidential slush fund."

"The Haitians aren't criminals. Their reasons for leaving their homeland are as valid as those of Cubans, Vietnamese and Eastern European refugees. Yet the federal government, for all its tarnished trumpeting about human rights, goes on behav-

Support Haitian Boat People

Commit-Mobilize-Act!

Commit yourself and your energies to the Haitian cause. Mobilize to involve your friends, family, organization, co-workers and fellow students.

Please check one or more of the following:

I am willing to help in the following ways:

- Work in national support network.
- Join the Coalition for Human Rights for Haitian Refugees.
- Donate/raise money.
- Lobby local, state, federal governments.
- Temporarily house homeless Haitians.
- Organize labor, university, and church groups.
- Show Haitian documentary.
- Other (please state) _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Telephone:

Day _____ Evening _____

**Haitian Refugee Center
1260 N.W. 62 Street
Miami, Florida 33147**