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September 10, 2001

Victory in India

Abbas Rezaie and Ghafour Zareen, two Iranian asylum seekers who were arrested en route to Europe, imprisoned in India and threatened with deportation, were finally released after 6 months in prison and granted refugee status by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) after IFIR's powerful campaign. From the very moment when Rezaie and Zareen were detained in India, IFIR activists around the world put pressure on the Indian government by picketing their embassies and sending protest letters and faxes to cease their deportation to Iran. IFIR also wrote letters of support, provided documentation to support their claims and put pressure on the UNHCR to grant them refu-

gee recognition. IFIR's campaign mobilised the support of a large number of progressive organisations and personalities. These efforts finally paid off and Rezaie and Zareen were released on July 24 and were granted refugee status. This is a valuable victory for all refugees and those who lent their support to this campaign. It was achieved through the united action of many concerned individuals and organisations in different countries. This victory once again highlights the undisputed role played by IFIR in defending Iranian asylum seekers and refugees. IFIR's secretariat congratulates Rezaie and Zareen and their families on their victory and extends its warmest greetings to all those who helped achieve this victory.

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Support Sit-in in Turkey

Refugees in the border town of Van, Turkey have been participating in a sit-in at the office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in Van, Turkey in protest against that agency's indifference and

irresponsibility towards their claims. Lengthy procedures, non-provision of reasons for refusal, inadequate translators, confrontational interviews, as well as non-

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To Trades Union Congress

Saeed Arman, IFIR-UK Director

Dear Mr. Bill Morris, TUC President:

Please accept the International Federation of Iranian Refugees – UK Branch warmest regards for your Congress.

The UK government has introduced and is continuing to introduce the harshest and most repressive measures toward asylum seekers, people who have fled brutal governments and unwanted religious and nationalist wars. Vouchers, the dispersal system, detention, high refusal rates, the militarisation of borders are some examples of its anti-asylum policies.

Furthermore, in order to promote economic relations with the Islamic regime in Iran, the UK government has ignored and legitimised 23 years of oppression and slaughter, imprisonment and execution,

Sexual Apartheid imposed on millions of women, public hangings, stoning, floggings and amputations. Upon their arrival in Britain, the regime's victims have been further degraded and denied their rights.

As you know, asylum seekers are the weakest segment of the working class in every country. Any attack on them is an attack on the people and especially the working class of that country. Any attack on the rights of asylum seekers is a move towards attacking the achievements gained by the working class during decades of struggle.

IFIR calls on the Trades Union Congress (TUC) to continue its defence of asylum seekers. Any real change in the situation will be dependant on the TUC's and working class' intervention.

Editorial

The Right To Move, Live and Work Anywhere

Maryam Namazie

Australia:

On 26 August, MS Tampa, a Norwegian ship, rescued 430 plus mainly Afghan asylum seekers on their way to Australia from Indonesia. Though the Tampa had reached Australian waters, the Australian government denied the victims of Taliban's vile regime their right to seek asylum and land. During the stand off, the Australian government never sent any medical assistance though 10 of the asylum seekers were unconscious on deck and pregnant women were falling ill. Instead, it sent commandos on board and forcibly transferred the asylum seekers to New Zealand and the Pacific state of Nauru where their applications are to be processed. There are reports that the women and children will be processed in New Zealand while the men are to be processed in Nauru.

The Australian government, the only Western country in the world with mandatory

detention for all asylum



seekers without possibility of review, has now set another dangerous precedent in its assault on refugee rights. It has put into practice the recently fashionable notion that asylum seekers should be processed in 'safe' havens and only allowed into the West in a regularised immigration-type manner.

The Australian government has rightly been condemned by public opinion. It is this public opinion that has prevented that racist government from directly returning the asylum seekers to Afghanistan. It is again this public opinion, trade unions, progressive, socialist

and rights organisations that can and must continue to demand their return and the right to asylum of the 434 asylum seekers in Australia itself.

Britain:

On another front, the UK government is demanding the closure of Sangatte, a substandard refugee camp in Calais, France and calling on the military to stop asylum seekers from entering Britain via the Eurotunnel. Clearly the issue at hand is not Sangatte camp; the Red Cross run camp was created because asylum seekers were gathering in Calais and not vice versa. What, then, is the issue at hand? Why can't asylum seekers come to Britain?

Some say the flow of people to the UK must be stopped because having 'so many' asylum seekers is costly. In reality, it costs 1/5 of 1

percent of government spending or £10.00 per head of population; asylum seekers receive the equivalent of 70% of the insufficient income support provided to UK citizens; the European population is greying and immigrants are needed to sustain the economy, etc. Though accurate, these responses are insufficient when dealing with human beings. Even if it does cost 'too much,' asylum seekers, 'economic' migrants, 'illegals,' have a right to come to Britain and live and work here. Even if Iran and Afghanistan were not ruled by Islamic reaction, even if reactionary nationalist parties did not run Iraqi Kurdistan, they would still have such a right. Rights are not dependant on cost, on polls, on one's method of arrival...

The right at stake is the right of human beings – and not just those with capital – to move, to live and to work anywhere they choose. And like all rights, it is up to us to demand it, struggle for it and turn this human concept into a societal norm.

Support Sit-in in Turkey, continued from page 1

provision of any form of financial support until claims are approved, etc. are some of their grievances.

In light of the fact that the UNHCR Turkey office has refused to address previous

legitimate demands, protesting refugees are demanding to meet with a mission from the UNHCR - Geneva.

IFIR calls on all to support the protesting refugees from Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan and

other countries in their attempt to have their grievances addressed. Send letters to UNHCR Geneva urging them to investigate the situation.

Protest letters can be sent

to: UNHCR Geneva, Fax: +42-22-739-7353, E-mail: hqpr00@unhcr.ch; UNHCR Turkey, Fax: 0090-312-438-2702, E-mail: turan@unhcr.ch.

Stop Deportation of 220,000 from Iran

The Islamic Republic of Iran is about to deport 220,000 Afghan and Iraqi refugees from Iran back to war torn Afghanistan under the rule of Taliban, and dictatorship, war and bloodshed imposed on them by the Iraqi government and the nationalist ruling parties.

The Iranian regime has used every possible means to

isolate, exploit and suppress the refugees. Deportation of the refugees is part of this brutal act.

IFIR condemns the Islamic Republic of Iran's plan and calls on all to demand their right to live and work in Iran. Send protest letters to Mohammad Khatami and Ali Khamenei, c/o The Presidency, Palestine

Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Iran, Fax: +98 21 649 5880; khatami@president.ir.

Join a demonstration organised by the Federation of Iraqi Refugees Britain on September 14 from 12pm - 1pm at the The Iranian Embassy, 16 Princes Gate, London SW7 (Underground: Knightsbridge).

DOWN
WITH
ISLAMIC
REPUBLIC
OF IRAN

Stop Deportation of 220,000

September 14

12pm - 1pm

at the The Iranian Embassy, 16 Princes Gate, London SW7
(Underground: Knightsbridge)

Asylum Seeker Saeed Sajadi, Commits Suicide

Farshad Hosseini, IFIR Vice Executive Director



To the parents and family of Saeed Sajadi:

From the moment we received your request to obtain news on the whereabouts of your son, we began an extensive search and hoped to be the bearer of good news. Regrettably it was not to be. We were shocked and extremely saddened to find out that Saeed had taken his own life. Alongside Iranian asylum

seekers, IFIR has tirelessly fought to defend the rights of asylum seekers and refugees. Our efforts and victories have brought joy and hope to many families in Iran. This time we were sincerely hoping to bring you good news. We would have liked to show to you that together we could overcome difficulties and obstacles and defend basic rights. But unfortunately your son's fate took a tragic turn. Saeed is no longer in our midst. He did not survive to share the fruits of our collective struggles and enjoy the sweet taste of victory.

Although it seems that Seed

succumbed to his fate and chose death, it was other factors that presented him with this fatal way out. Saeed, in our opinion, is the victim of murderous and racist policies. Saeed is the third Iranian asylum seeker who committed suicide in Holland this year as a result of the inhumane asylum policies of the Dutch government.

On this sad occasion, while we wholeheartedly sympathise with you and share in your sorrows, we reaffirm our determination to turn the loss of Saeed and others into a massive campaign against European governments as violators of asy-

lum rights and also against the Islamic Republic as the cause of the flight of hundreds of thousands of refugees. We assure you that we will not allow these crimes to go unnoticed. We will expose the perpetrators of these crimes in whatever position and guise.

We will redouble our struggle against the Islamic Republic of Iran and the inhumane policies of the European states in the hope that no other families will have to mourn the loss of their loved ones.

Please accept the sincere condolences of all IFIR members and activists.

Harassment and Violence by the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran

IFIR has a long tradition of defending the rights of refugees and asylum seekers wherever they are regardless of their political affiliation, religion or atheism, race, gender, nationality, etc. Such beliefs have been an integral part of our existence from the day IFIR was inaugurated over 12 years ago.

Recently a large group of Iranian asylum seekers in Erbil, Iraqi Kurdistan have been protesting against the lack of support and protection from the UNHCR of-

vice. Their protest has escalated into mass sit-ins. The IFIR Branch in Iraqi Kurdistan has been instrumental in organising these protests; in conjunction with the IFIR International Secretariat, we has been able to mobilise public opinion to place pressure on the UNHCR to respond to their legitimate demands.

Nonetheless, a number of Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) members have been harassing and intimidating KDPI refugee supporters of IFIR and our colleagues. Twice, they have

violently attacked IFIR activists and supporters. As a result, on August 9 six activists, including a woman and a teenager received injuries that required hospital treatment.

IFIR reiterates that it will continue to defend the rights of asylum seekers and refugees and will not be intimidated into abandoning our work by governments, the police or thugs. We strongly condemn the recent violence carried out by the KDPI's activists and demand its end.

On a more positive note, and

despite the anti-refugee policies of the KDPI, sit-in participants have been able to obtain some of their demands including monthly financial assistance from the UNHCR. 40 people have also been resettled to safe third countries. IFIR will continue its support of the protest until the legitimate demands of the refugees are met. IFIR calls on all to continue sending letters of protest to the UNHCR in Iraqi Kurdistan and Geneva. UNHCR E-mails: irqba@unhcr.ch, unhcr-erbil@un.org.



Protesting Refugees in Van, Turkey

Next Issue:

Monday, Sept. 24, 2001

IFIR Representative in Iraqi Kurdistan

Bakhtiar Mirzaie is the IFIR representative in Iraqi Kurdistan. He is responsible for contacts with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).

Open letter to the UK Home Secretary and Immigration

Minister

Saeed Arman

Prior to the racist killing of Firsat Dag, a Turkish asylum seeker in the early hours of Sunday, August 5 in the Sighthill area of Glasgow, there had been over 70 recorded incidents of racist attacks on asylum seekers in that area. It was clear that it was a question of time before a tragedy of this scale would take place. Two days later, an Iranian asylum

seeker was stabbed and seriously wounded on the same estate.

Such incidents do not take place in isolation. They are the product of a hostile and pernicious environment created by the government and its policies against asylum seekers, fuelled by the right wing media. Sadly, it is certain that there will be more tragedies like the ones this week in Glasgow unless something drastic is done to

address the situation. The racist and anti-asylum propaganda directed at the asylum seekers in Glasgow still continues. The authorities and the police have done nothing to improve the situation. This situation is the direct consequence of the government's dispersal policy. This policy has played into the hands of the perpetrators of the recent attacks on asylum seekers. It has condemned thousands to a life of isolation and despair.

There have been several suicides. Ramin Khaleghi - an Iranian asylum seeker forcibly dispersed to Leicester - took his own life in January this year. The inhumane dispersal policy must be scrapped immediately before another life is lost.

It goes without saying that the responsibility for any future tragedies will lie with the government and local law enforcement authorities.

International Refugee News

* Deaths

(The Guardian (U.K.), September 10, 2001) The bodies of 13 illegal immigrants who drowned while attempting a clandestine trip across the Straits of Gibraltar to Spain were washed up on a Moroccan beach yesterday, as the search began for 46 others believed to have died after their boat overturned.

(Agence France Presse, September 7, 2001) Greek police arrested more immigrants from a Turkish ship, the Imdat, who were dropped off at sea off the coast of the Aegean island of Evvoia two days ago and forced to swim ashore. The 32 new arrests bring to 268 the number of mainly Iraqi Kurdish immigrants found to date. Passengers from the Imdat said they had spent a week in cramped conditions without food or water and that five or six passengers

had died of malnutrition during the journey. Among those found so far are 14 women and 13 children.

(Agence France Presse, August 23, 2001) Nine African immigrants drowned near Spain's Canary Islands after they were reportedly forced to jump off the boat transporting them.

* Detention

(The Associated Press, September 7, 2001) Four Iraqi Kurds won a court ruling that they had been illegally detained in Britain, a case with broad implications for the government's immigration policy. The case pitted the government's contention that the detention served a legitimate purpose — the examination of refugees' asylum claims — against the Kurds' argument that there was no reason to believe that they would ab-

scond and that the government had no right to deprive them of their liberty. Refugee advocacy groups hailed the decision, which the government will appeal. Justice Andrew Collins ruled that the four Kurds had been unlawfully held at the Oakington center, a former Royal Air Force base in Cambridgeshire. Collins said his ruling did not mean that the government could not detain refugees. Detention was unlawful in the case of the four because it was imposed "to enable there to be speedy determination of their applications," Collins said. Three of the Kurdish men have since been granted refugee status.

(Press Association (U.K.), September 7, 2001) The "fast-track" detention centre at Oakington held detainees for up to seven days, and sometimes longer, with no access to bail so that asylum applications could be rap-

idly processed. During the High Court hearing in July which led to today's ruling, Rick Scannell, appearing for the four Iraqi Kurds, said the centre had room for up to 400 detainees. Mr Scannell said it had been argued by the immigration authorities that "Oakington Week" involved "a relaxed regime with minimal physical security". But that did not square with other evidence of constraints imposed by the "house rules", which required detainees at the former military barracks to vacate and return to their dormitory when required. Fathers were not allowed to sleep in the same block as their children and mail had to be opened in front of officers, said Mr Scannell. Detainees also had to eat at set times and carry ID cards at all times, while all staff instructions had to be obeyed and visitors could only be received at particular times. Mr Scannell argued that the re-

strictions “touch upon areas of private life which are the cause of civil liberties debates”. Detainees suffered a loss of personal liberty which “degrades the subject in both their own eyes and in the eyes of the community”. Detention was not based on concerns that a particular asylum seeker might abscond or otherwise seek to enter the country unlawfully, but on the view that asylum claims could be decided quickly.

* Protests

(The Guardian (U.K.), September 10, 2001) Union leaders in Britain are set to cause fresh embarrassment for the government by endorsing calls for an end to the asylum detention system and condemning ministers for failing to abolish vouchers. The TGWU has tabled an emergency motion welcoming last week’s high court decision declaring the detention of four Kurds to be unlawful and demanding an end to the detention system as well as reforms to the policy of dispersing refugees. The TGWU leader, Bill Morris, this year’s TUC president, will use his opening address to conference today to denounce the government for reneging on the abolition of non-cashable vouchers for refugees instead of giving them cash benefits and banning them from working while their applications are processed. News of the motion came as government lawyers began to search for ways to overturn last Friday’s high court ruling that 11,200 asy-

lum seekers have been detained illegally at the Home Office’s Oakington immigration centre while their claims were determined within seven to 10 days. It is believed that ministers are considering whether it will be possible to introduce emergency legislation to overturn the ruling under the Human Rights Act if the decision is confirmed by the court of appeal next month.

(The Guardian (U.K.), September 6, 2001) Asylum seekers have won their fight not to be housed in run-down tower blocks in Liverpool. Lord Rooker, the immigration minister, confirmed yesterday that no more asylum seekers would be sent to the crumbling privately owned 15-storey blocks. The mainly Kurdish asylum seekers, who are housed four to a two-bedroom flat, said they were forced to live in squalor. They complained of poor heating, erratic water supplies, overcrowding and dank, dirty conditions, and said they were subjected to racist abuse.

(Agence France Presse, August 28, 2001) Two Iranian teenagers — one of whom has sewn his lips together — are among hunger-striking inmates at a Western Australian detention centre. Sharna Avesta, 13, and her brother Parvis, 17, are among about 40 detainees refusing food at the Curtin centre, near Derby, in Western Australia’s north-west. In her message, Sharna asked Australians to open their hearts to people in immigration detention. She claimed her family’s applica-

tions had been refused and that they had been at the facility for two years. “I hate this life - I want my freedom,” said Sharna. “That’s why my brother and I decided to hunger strike. “(My father) could face imprisonment for a lifetime and torture and execution (if we are sent back to Iran). “I’m so tired because of all that has happened to us. I’m so weak on my food strike, my knees are shaking and have no power to stand up. “Is there anybody out there to answer me? Why shouldn’t we be loved?” He said the parents were trying to encourage the children to eat. “The mother has even taken food to them and eaten in front of them, but the kids are still fairly resolved to continue,” he said.

* Racism

(CNN, September 4, 2001) The stance adopted by Australian Prime Minister John Howard on would-be asylum-seekers has paid big political dividends ahead of national elections tipped for later this year. Howard’s refusal to allow a boatload of 433 asylum-seekers — rescued by the Norwegian cargo ship Tampa nine days ago — to land on Australian shores has won public support. An ACNielsen poll held at the weekend found 77 per cent agreed with the Australian government’s decision to refuse the asylum seekers entry and 74 percent approved of Howard’s handling of the stand-off.

(The Associated Press, August 28, 2001) Germany’s neo-Nazi

“skinheads” are keeping up the pace of attacks against foreigners and minorities. Especially distressing in Germany because of its Nazi legacy, the movement is spreading across Europe. Far-right parties that represent many of the skinheads’ anti-immigrant ideals are also joining mainstream governments, as in Austria with Joerg Haider’s Freedom Party and most recently in Italy - where Italian Premier Silvio Berlusconi formed his Cabinet this summer including the once-fascist National Alliance and the often xenophobic Northern League.

* Repressive/Restrictive Measures

(CNN, September 9, 2001) Channel Tunnel operator Eurotunnel has appointed a senior British Army officer to lead its fight against asylum seekers who use its cross channel route to gain entry into the UK. General Sir Roger Wheeler, who commanded British land forces until his retirement last year, has been asked to review the tunnel operator’s security procedures in France to cut down on the number of immigrants crossing into Britain. Wheeler, who has seen action in Bosnia, Northern Ireland and the Falklands, takes on the job indefinitely to try to stem the numbers of illegal immigrants.

(The Irish Times, September 10, 2001) The National Union of Journalists (NUJ) has accused the Irish Minister for Justice of unnecessarily delaying the reform of controversial legisla-

tion which limits the media's ability to report on asylum issues. Six months after promising to amend the legislation, which requires the media to get ministerial consent before identifying asylum-seekers, Mr

O'Donoghue has yet to act.

(The Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, September 10, 2001) German Interior Minister Otto Schily and his state counterparts agreed at a conference in Magdeburg to appoint a working group to discuss controversial points of his immigration and asylum proposal. Bavarian Interior Minister Günther Beckstein from the CSU said the points of the proposal to which the Union parties objected were the age up to which foreign children may follow their parents to Germany, unclear provisions for immigration of the self-employed and the lack of involvement of the Bundesrat, the body representing states' interests nationally, in the issue of migration of labor.

(Reuters, September 10, 2001) The tiny Pacific island of Nauru agreed to take another 237 immigrants off Australia's hands in exchange for fuel and other incentives. The agreement bought Australia a way out of its latest asylum seeker dilemma after the navy boarded an Indonesian ship over the weekend and transferred its passengers to a troop carrier already laden with people being sent to Nauru and New Zealand. Australian Defense Minister Peter Reith told journalists in the balmy heat of the South

Pacific nation that Australia would give Nauru diesel, write off medical bills for its citizens in Australia, cancel some debt and increase scholarships in a deal worth some \$10.2 million.

(The Associated Press, September 7, 2001) A court ruling on the fate of a boatload of refugees refused entry to Australia will be made this weekend or early next week. Civil rights lawyers argued this week that the 433 refugees, rescued by the crew of a Norwegian cargo ship from a sinking Indonesian ferry on Aug. 27, should be allowed into Australia to apply for asylum. The Australian government contends they should have been taken to Indonesia, which was the closest land to where they were rescued in the Indian Ocean. The government's actions, which included sending 50 commandos to board the boat when it entered Australian waters, attracted unprecedented international criticism. The asylum seekers, mostly from Afghanistan, are now on an Australian naval troop carrier steaming toward Papua New Guinea. They are expected to arrive early next week.

(The Evening Standard (U.K.), September 5, 2001) Seven refugees have each been jailed for a month for trying to get through the Channel Tunnel in an apparent change in policy by France. The two Afghans and five Iraqis were arrested after a highly-publicised bid to try to storm the entrance to the tunnel. They were found guilty at a French magistrates court of trespass.

(The Age (Australia), September 7, 2001) The captain of the Tampa said yesterday he was surprised and disappointed by Australia's refusal to accept the shipwrecked refugees he had rescued, but he would not hesitate to mount another sea rescue. At a news conference in Singapore, Captain Arne Rinnan said the experience would not deter him from honoring the conventions of the law of the sea that require masters of vessels to help people and ships in distress. Captain Rinnan, 61, who retires after his next round-the-world voyage, complained that Australian authorities had not responded promptly to requests for medical supplies and blankets after he rescued the Afghan asylum seekers from a sinking Indonesian ferry. He also denied the Australian Government's assertions that medical conditions on the Tampa were exaggerated to force Australia's acceptance of the refugees, saying his decision to head back for Australian waters was a "last resort".

(The Age (Australia), September 7, 2001) The Australian Federal Government is expected to spend at least \$20 million this financial year on barristers, solicitors and bureaucrats contesting claims by asylum seekers for refugee status.

(Press Association (U.K.), September 5, 2001) The fate of the Sangatte refugee camp could be ruled on by a French court next week, a spokeswoman for Eurotunnel said today. The Channel Tunnel operator has

launched a legal bid to shut the camp used by hundreds of asylum seekers who try to break into the Calais terminal each night. The camp, which is run by the International Red Cross and currently holds around 1,600 asylum seekers, is based in a Eurotunnel warehouse requisitioned by French authorities in 1999.

(Agence France Presse, August 31, 2001) Police in southeast China's Fujian province — the home of 58 immigrants who suffocated to death in a truck entering Britain — have severely cracked down on smuggling from the region in the year since the tragedy, state media said Friday. In the first eight months of this year, Fujian police broke more than 30 smuggling rings, seizing around 300 stowaways and more than 280 organizers.

(The Times of London (U.K.), August 28, 2001) As the Italian Cabinet prepares to adopt tough measures against 'illegal' immigrants, police detained more than 350 people who were trying to enter the country on a fishing boat yesterday. Coastguards in the southern Italian port of Crotona said that the immigrants, who included Kurds, Pakistanis, Afghans and Sri Lankans, were first sighted off the coast of Calabria on Sunday packed into an 80ft Turkish vessel. The Government of Silvio Berlusconi, which took office in May, is to crack down on 'illegal' immigration and make the fight against people smuggling a priority when Parliament resumes next month after the summer

recess. The Cabinet includes members of the anti-immigrant Northern League and the "post-Fascist" Alleanza Nazionale, which have campaigned for the criminalisation of 'illegal' immigration. The Right echoed the fears of many Italians during the election campaign by claiming that illegal immigrants were responsible for much urban crime and disease. Under a proposed Bill naval vessels will be authorised to use force to intercept smugglers and 'illegal' immigrants will face prison sentences of up to four years.

(The Australian Associated Press, August 23, 2001) Australian government moves to permit strip searches in immigration detention centres were draconian, parliament was told today. "This piece of legislation before us is a very shameful exercise by both of the major political parties," Andrew Theophanous (Ind, Vic) told parliament. "To agree to legislation of such a draconian nature, which will in fact impose further burdens on already burdened and oppressed people - I'm referring to the detainees." The bill did not mention the conditions under which detainees were being held or make any provision to protect their rights, he said. Dr Theophanous said he had visited Port Hedland detention

centre and saw people with bruises on their hands and their backs.

(Australian Broadcasting Corporation, August 21, 2001) There is now bipartisan support for Australian Federal Government moves to allow strip searches of detainees in immigration detention centres, including children as young as 10.

(Press Association (U.K.), August 20, 2001) An asylum seeker drowned today after jumping off a cross-Channel ferry in a bid to escape repatriation, coastguards said. The Kosovan man, in his 20's, was being taken home after having his application for asylum in Britain rejected by the Immigration Service.

(The Associated Press, August 17, 2001) Amid a barrage of criticism, Spanish authorities were studying the possible expulsion of 91 African immigrants Friday following their arrest in a major roundup by police in the northeastern port city of Barcelona. The order came a day after some 100 riot police moved in on more than 200 immigrants who had been sleeping in the city's Andre Malraux square unable to find proper lodging.

(The Australian Associated Press, August 17, 2001) The Australian government would consider tightening immigration laws.

(The Australian As-

sociated Press, August 17, 2001) Australian Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock today said the courts were contributing to the large number of 'illegal' immigrants arriving in Australia because of the broad definition applied to refugees.

(The Australian Associated Press, August 17, 2001) Family issues and not detention was the reason for a six-year-old boy from Villawood Detention Centre being treated for a post-traumatic stress disorder, Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock said today. Shayan Badraie, who is in Westmead Children's Hospital, has been diagnosed as suffering from chronic post-traumatic stress disorder after spending more than 17 months with his family at the Sydney detention centre. Mr Ruddock today said it was wrong to say detention was the problem, citing family issues instead as the cause. Mr Ruddock said the boy's father had agreed he should be fostered out to another family.

(Australian Broadcasting Corporation, August 17, 2001) Forty-two-year-old Nahta Al-Raheem, from Iraq, an asylum seeker from the Port Hedland detention centre has been jailed for more than a year for her involvement in a major riot in May.

(The Australian Associated Press, August 17,

2001) Children were being traumatised by confinement in migrant detention centres and should be released, child health specialists said today.

(Reuters, August 16, 2001) Bosnia's aviation authorities have stopped two Bosnian airlines landing in the northern town of Tuzla because they are suspected of bringing in 'illegal' immigrants, the U.N. mission said on Thursday. "This suspension will be in effect until the end of August," said U.N. spokesman Stefo Lehmann. Last week, the U.N. mission in Bosnia accused the national carrier Air Bosnia of deliberately re-routing its Istanbul-Sarajevo flights to Tuzla in a bid to avoid strict border controls in the capital. According to the U.N. mission, more than 12,000 people have arrived in Bosnia from January to August 2001 from countries seen as origins of potential 'illegal' immigrants. Of these, 3,550 have left while more than 8,700 are unaccounted for. Every week, Bosnian police discover and detain groups of immigrants from Turkey, Iran, Tunisia, China and other countries trying to illegally cross Bosnia's western border with Croatia. They are normally released immediately as they are allowed to stay in the country for two weeks on tourist visas. If caught again, they are deported.

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