

camps in Zaire. The lack of proper asylum for legitimate Rwandan refugees became one trigger for the current civil war in Zaire, which in turn triggered attacks on Zaire's refugee camps. Significant numbers of Rwandan refugees continue to die in central Zaire.

The *Bulk Challenge*—a freighter packed with Liberian refugees fleeing violence and chaos in their country—was turned away from one West African port after another last May.

Burmese refugees in Thailand suffered cross-border attacks on their camps in 1996, while Thai authorities offered little security. In recent months, there have been instances of Thai authorities preventing New Burmese asylum seekers from entering Thailand and forcibly returning those who have managed to cross the border.

Iraqi Kurds who fled to Iran last September returned to Iraq by the end of the year because the quality of asylum offered by Iranian authorities was so poor. The close proximity of the camps to the border allowed them to be shelled from Iraq, while basic services were lacking. When the Iraqis began returning to their country under questionable circumstances, UNHCR was not permitted access to the camps.

"The deterioration of asylum is not only an African phenomenon," said Winter. "The problem can be found in every corner of the world and even in our own backyards as the recent changes in U.S. asylum law shows," he said. The new U.S. asylum law, which went into effect in April, makes it harder for asylum seekers to apply for asylum, in part through a summary removal procedure for persons arriving with false documents, the only way many asylum seekers can flee repressive governments.

Other Western governments are also taking a more restrictive approach. In Germany, authorities are seeking to withdraw asylum for Bosnians prematurely. Authorities there recently ended temporary protected status for Bosnians and are beginning to send them back to an unstable situation in Bosnia, which is short on housing, landmine sweeping, jobs, freedom of movement, and tolerance.

The 1997 World Refugee Survey reports that although the total number of refugees, internally displaced people, and asylum seekers is at a seven-year low of roughly 34 million people, the reasons are complex. While human rights conditions have sufficiently improved for refugees to repatriate to Guatemala, Haiti, Mozambique, and Cambodia, refugees elsewhere have been forcibly repatriated to unsafe conditions. At least 18 countries, including the United States, forcibly expelled refugees or insufficiently screened asylum seekers in 1996.

Founded in 1958, the U.S. Committee for Refugees (USCR) is a private humanitarian agency which defends the rights of refugees, asylum seekers, and displaced persons worldwide.

COUNTRIES THAT DAMAGED ASYLUM PRINCIPLES IN 1996

(This is a selected list and should not be viewed as comprehensive)

- The Bahamas (denied asylum to Cubans)
- Bangladesh (denied asylum to and forcibly repatriated Burmese)
- Cote d'Ivoire (denied asylum to Liberians)
- Germany (announced intention to forcibly repatriate Bosnians)
- Ghana (denied asylum to Liberians)
- Hong Kong (forcibly repatriated Vietnamese)
- Iran (provided inadequate asylum for Iraqi Kurds and expelled Afghans)
- Lebanon (provided inadequate asylum to Palestinians)
- Tanzania (forcibly repatriated Burundians and some Rwandans and denied asylum to Burundians)

Togo (denied asylum to Liberians)

Turkey (denied asylum to Iraqi Kurds, expelled Iraqi and Iranians)

United States (provided inadequate asylum procedures for Cubans)

TRIBUTE TO MAJ. (P). RANDY O'BOYLE

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, when people think of special operations forces, the image that immediately comes to mind is that of the Army's Green Berets and Rangers, or the Navy's SEAL's. Few realize that the Air Force has a special operations element which is robust and impressive. Air Commandos, Combat Controllers, and ParaRescue personnel have all made important contributions to military operations and National Security over the past five decades, and today, I rise to pay tribute to one member of that community, Major Randy O'Boyle, who is about to assume command of the 551st Flight Training Squadron.

For the past several years, Major O'Boyle has been a tireless and diligent advocate as the Deputy Director of Legislative Affairs for the United States Special Operations Command. In that capacity, he has worked closely with Senators, Representatives, and their staffers in order to explain the missions and needs of this unique, joint-service Command. In the process he has helped to give Members of Congress a better understanding of the capabilities of our Nation's special operators and has provided us with the information necessary for us to help shape policy and the future of our special warfare elements.

Major O'Boyle was particularly effective in his job as he brought with him to Washington both extensive experience as an Air Force Officer and as a special operator. An accomplished pilot, Randy O'Boyle has literally thousands of hours behind the stick of the Air Force's Pave Low helicopter, an aircraft specifically modified to support special operations. During Operation Just Cause, Randy demonstrated his abilities as a pilot and his coolness under pressure as he flew combat operations in support of Army, Navy, and Air Force special forces personnel as they fought to liberate Panama from the grasp of the dictator Manuel Noriega. Major O'Boyle's experience and expertise was put to good use a little more than a year later during the Gulf War, where he played an instrumental role in helping to plan the coalition forces' first strike into Iraq, kicking off Operation Desert Storm. His intimate knowledge of what is required of both a successful tactical and planning officer provided Major O'Boyle with an unusual insight to how the Special Operations Command functions. His understanding of what the needs of Special Operations personnel are, from the newest member on a Special Forces or SEAL Team to the Commander of one of the SOCOM Theater

Commands, assured that he was able to speak knowledgeably and eloquently on literally every aspect of special operations. In addition, his easy-going Midwestern demeanor, engaging personality, and quick-witted sense of humor all assured that he established a bond with those he worked with both in the Department of Defense and in the halls of Congress.

As Major O'Boyle leaves Washington and heads west to the famed painted landscapes of New Mexico, he leaves many friends who have enjoyed working with him during his assignments here. Though the ranks of the Special Operations Command are filled with nothing but capable individuals, I am certain that SOCOM Legislative Affairs will miss Major O'Boyle's positive and determined attitude and his effective representation of the Command. Without a doubt though, the young Air Commandos who will come under his command at the 551st Training Squadron will benefit greatly from his tutelage. I am especially pleased to note that Randy will pin on the silver oak leaf of a Lieutenant Colonel on June 1, I hope that he continues to enjoy great success in the years to come.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 9:42 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Goetz, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 84. Concurrent resolution establishing the congressional budget for the U.S. Government for fiscal year 1998 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002.

At 1 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Goetz, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the following concurrent resolution, without amendment:

S. Con. Res. 26. Concurrent resolution to permit the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for a congressional ceremony honoring Mother Teresa.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1306. An act to amend the Federal Deposit Insurance Act to clarify the applicability of host State laws to any branch in such State of an out-of-State bank.

H.R. 1650. An act to authorize the President to award a gold medal on behalf of the Congress to Mother Teresa of Calcutta in recognition of her outstanding and enduring contributions through humanitarian and charitable activities, and for other purposes.

At 4:09 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Goetz, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, with an amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate: