

Portland OR  
Jan 21, 2002

The Right Honourable John Howard  
Prime Minister of Australia  
3-5 National Circuit  
Barton ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister,

Many thanks for your Department's previous reply. I notice the implication that the Minister for Immigration, Mr. Ruddock, is responsible for the policies on asylum-seekers, and that your Department therefore forwarded my letter to his.

Since Ministers do not actually make policy, I am writing to you, as policy architect of the Australian Government, again. I will send a copy of this letter to Mr. Ruddock so that your Department may concentrate on more important matters.

Once again I point to the desperate conditions inside Woomera and other detention camps used for asylum-seekers in Australia.

Once again I point to the complete illegality of these arrangements and conditions, and to the sadistic slowness of your government's visa procedures.

The latest of Mr. Ruddock's announcements - that anyone who wants to leave (i.e. return to his/her country of origin), can - is yet another of the Catch-22 pieces of viciousness this policy wholly consists of.

Your government's entire boat-people/asylum-seeker procedure (parking some people in Papua New Guinea, some on Nauru, etc., etc.) reminds me of nothing so much as 'Breaker' Morant's method of preventing British trains from being blown up during the Boer War.

The only war you are effectively waging is on the refugees themselves.

Your government's policies are not only illegal, but sickening, outrageous, and unforgivable.

Yours faithfully,

M. F. McAuliffe

cc Mr. Philip Ruddock, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Reconciliation; Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs