

May 14, 2002

The Hon Philip Ruddock, M.P.
Minister for Immigration

Re: <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2002/05/13/1021002431544.html>

Dear Mr. Ruddock,

I am writing to protest, again, against the unconscionably cruel and dubiously legal conditions in the Woomera Detention Camp, and the suffering of the asylum-seekers there and in other detention centres.

The opacity of Immigration processes to those undergoing them is in itself a major cause for depression and self-harm, quite apart from the isolation and the growing callousness of those set to guard the detainees.

As Minister for Immigration you have responsibility for these matters, for the minute-by-minute, ongoing, endless in prospect distress, despair, illness, harm, self-mutilation and madness these people are being driven to.

These centres must be shut down and the people in them dispersed to community or hospital care.

As Minister for Immigration you have responsibility for the policy of mandatory detention in penalcolony conditions.

Policies, like governments, do not last forever. This policy must be changed before detainees begin to succeed in their many attempts to kill themselves, or live, irreparably harmed.

M. F. McAuliffe

cc: The Rt. Hon. John Howard, Prime Minister of Australia