

STRENGTH AND KINDNESS

Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project (BASP)



52 Beaconsfield Pde, Albert Park 3206
Ph: 96962107; bscc@cyberspace.net.au

*I was a stranger and you made
me welcome ...*

Newsletter 71 September 2014

The Project aims to:

- * provide hospitality and practical support for asylum seekers
- * actively network with like-minded individuals and groups who are working for justice for asylum seekers
- * promote advocacy for the rights of asylum seekers
- * raise awareness of asylum seeker issues and concerns through a range of activities

Justice is always about making certain the 'outsiders' in the world are treated with compassion and offered the opportunity of being 'insiders'. And recognising that the 'outsiders' have a wisdom of their own to share. So it behoves us to look at those who are on the margins of our society. When we think of the 'outsiders' in Australia, we probably immediately think of indigenous people, disabled people, those with mental illness, those who are materially very poor and so on. And asylum seekers. Indeed all those who suffer injustice, inequality and exploitation. This should not suggest that we understand the experience of being an outsider through single categories. Those who are marginalised generally experience their status as outsiders in multiple ways.

There is a curious and sad phenomenon happening in our country at present for all 'outsiders'. There is a lot of emphasis on financial rights (leaners and lifters), arguments that everyone can manage if they try hard enough (apply for jobs that are not really there), and identity (many things are 'un-Australian').

There is a lot of romance around identity and a lot said that seems to have little connection with Australian reality. Identity often means ensuring that people retain contact with their primary culture as well as working with their new. We need to ensure that perceptions of identity are not subject to abuse or to stereotyping and to do this we need laws, frameworks, campaigns and constant diligence. It is simplistic and offensive to insist that only some ways of evidencing ones identity are acceptable or permissible. In particular to tell women how they should dress is dreadful! Respect for differences needs to be a hallmark of any society and this is particularly true in a multicultural society such as Australia.

The Jewish philosopher Abraham Heschel said we are all human beings but we have to work at being human. Part of working at being human involves establishing right relationships—with each other and with our world. Justice is really about these right relationships. It is about equality and cooperation and kindness and hospitality. Justice so defined is lacking in much of Australian current discourse and policies.



The following is a piece of writing from a man who has been detained for five years because ASIO has deemed him to be a security risk.

There is no-one to ask questions to the bird.

Twice a month the psychiatrist will call.

With all his knowledge he asks six questions:

‘How is your health?’

Before I can answer he proceeds to the second question:

‘Did you sleep well?’

There are sleeping tablets but there is no sleep.

‘Are you able to communicate well with your family?’

This question angers me.

The fourth question is a question that creates what it asks.

‘Do you have suicidal thoughts?’

If I say yes, four guards will appear and become my constant companions.

The fifth is a question to clear doubt.

‘What are your plans to take your life?’-

If I answer this there is more medication

‘When will you do it?’

These are questions without answers.

These are people who experiment on our lives.

For all the questions I answer, do any of these people understand my pain?

So many years.

What is the point of repeating?

The questions haven’t changed neither is there change in my life.

The difference between birds in a cage and us?

Nobody asks the birds these questions.



From Guardian online, Tuesday 8 July 2014

A young thirteen year old girl has assumed a mothering role for a family of six children and two adult males, one the father of five of the children and the other the father’s brother. The other child is a nephew of the men. On an excursion out of the detention centre the six year old said solemnly



what he wanted to do while he was out was buy a helicopter. Indeed there was a helicopter to buy in K Mart. All the children were allowed to buy one toy which they dutifully did. There was a lot of deliberation but no-one asked for more than one. The thirteen year old girl bought nothing for herself until she was pressured to say what she needed. And that was some basic clothes. This family is Rohingya and they have been in detention for over a year.

There’s been lots of talk recently about ‘turning back’ asylum seekers. **But what if a person has no country to be turned back to?**

An ethnic minority from Burma, the Rohingya people have been turned on by their own government and left effectively stateless. In the past few years, violent clashes in Burma have left hundreds of Rohingya dead, and hundreds of thousands homeless -- their houses set ablaze.

Amnesty International says: The Rohingya can’t go home. The Burmese Government simply denies their existence.



basp

Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project

Discussion Night 4 - 2014

Thursday 23rd October

7.30 – 9.30p.m

St Joseph's Hall

274 Rouse St

(next to bluestone church)

Port Melbourne

Our focus:

How much do we know about the places where we are putting people seeking protection?

A closer look at Christmas Island, Manus Island, Nauru and, especially, Cambodia

What other major issues need attention?

A discussion of the bills before Parliament and responses we might make.

Our special guest:

Joan Healy

Joan has been involved for 25 years in community development in Cambodia, East Timor, and Peru.

I was a stranger and you made me welcome...

We urge you to bring your friends.

As always, time will be allowed for supper and informal conversation.

Fears for the Hasaras who feel abandoned

We could weep for a group of Hasara men who feel threatened and desperate. They have been in Australia for five years, with a lot of that time in detention and the rest on Bridging visas. Applications refused on many occasions. Victims of the vagaries of the system of managing asylum seeker applications. Watching others who came with them and from the same set of circumstances get Permanent visas. The subject of arbitrary decisions that were part of 'policy made on the run' - to satisfy, it would seem, political aims of whichever party was in government.

They have been the victims of flawed assessments that used soft and dated country information to pretend that they could return safely to Afghanistan. Then after another decision by the Department of Immigration and after legislation permitting claims for Complementary Protection to be made they had claims submitted on their behalf (usually without their knowledge) and all of these, without exception, rejected. Because the High Court ruled that this process lacked procedural fairness they are now being given another opportunity to lodge an application to the Minister with any new information. They are given fourteen days to do this. Many have had work rights taken away and they are without any assistance to pay for such a submission.

BASP is trying to assist some of the men caught in this situation. In some cases this means assisting with paying a Migration Agent to help them, in others we are fortunately able to get pro bono help.

It is unconscionable that these men be returned to Afghanistan and equally immoral to deny them a Permanent Visa. Anything less than this means they cannot travel to see their family let alone be reunited with them.

We know that it would be almost impossible for Hasaras to avoid being targetted as soon as they returned to Afghanistan. A combination of media coverage and strategic contacts would all but ensure that their arrival was well known. The Taliban take notice of who is returning and will search for anyone they want to target. They gather information on returning refugees by taking careful note of media coverage at Kabul international airport and by using their links with personnel at the airport. There is no doubt that any Hazaras would become high priorities for subsequent persecution by the Taliban and other Sunni extremists.

The situation for Hazaras in Afghanistan has deteriorated markedly. It is clear that, after a period of restriction, the Taliban are now expanding their area of control again. All of the signs point to a rapid deterioration in the situation, especially with the continuing withdrawal of the Coalition troops. Not only is the safety of Hazaras in great jeopardy, but their means of livelihood is progressively disappearing as Kuchis and others take over traditional Hazara land and property without restraint and supported by the Taliban.

Travel on intercity roads is even more dangerous now than in 2008 and 2009.

A recent horrific event has shown that the fears all these men talk about if they were returned to Afghanistan are justified. The following account is written by Abdul Karim Hekmat for The Saturday Paper <http://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/sites/all/themes/saturday/images/thesaturdaypaper.png>

It has been summarized by Graeme Swincer from the Blue Mountains Support Group:



An Afghan police photograph of Zainullah

On 4 October 2014 Abdul Karim Hekmat, Australian community worker, journalist and member of the Refugee Council of Australia reported on his meetings in Kabul with recent deportee Zainullah Naseri. Zainullah was forcibly removed on 26 August, the first Hazara asylum seeker to be *refouled* by Australia, at least for many years. His friends had worked hard to alert the government to the escalating dangers facing Hazaras who might be returned to Afghanistan, and to appeal for a review of the December 2012 final decision to declare him not to "engage

Australia's protection obligations". But the decision had been locked away and was beyond challenge within the current system, in spite of the protection offered subsequently to others with matching backgrounds in view of the increasing threats.

Hekmat arrived in Kabul the day after Zainullah and managed to find him two weeks afterwards, living in fear and poverty. He then lost contact, but a week later came a phone call and news that Zainullah had been captured and tortured by the Taliban. In spite of the known dangers he tried to travel to his home town to see his wife and the daughter had never met. He had lash marks on his back and carried photo and video evidence of his experience. He had escaped from his Taliban captors by crawling through a toilet cesspit while they were distracted by attackers in the night.

The Taliban had punched and kicked him, beaten him with sticks, bashed him relentlessly and threatened to kill him. They found his Australian driver licence and photos of Australia on his mobile phone and claimed this showed him to be a spy for an "infidel country". They did not accept that he had been deported. After two days they gave him five days to arrange a payment of \$300,000 or face decapitation. By now, after almost 3 weeks without money or food he did not care whether he lived or died. But he was able to break his chains with a rock and make his escape. Eventually he reached a police station where he was protected and cleaned up before returning to Kabul, no longer willing to risk the onward journey.

Zainullah is from Ghazni, the most volatile and dangerous province in Afghanistan at the moment, not least because of the arrival of Islamic State supporters, friends of the Taliban. It is reported that in recent days the insurgents associated with IS have decapitated 11 innocent men and women in Ajristan district and have driven many people into the mountains.



Hekmat reports that Mohammad Musa Mahmodi, the executive director of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, said: "It's totally unacceptable to return a refugee to Afghanistan in this critical moment".

A further challenge facing Zainullah is the fact that nobody will believe he was deported from Australia simply for being a failed asylum seeker. He is presumed to have committed a serious crime. This only goes to exacerbate his already deep depression. He has lost all hope. Suicide is always on his mind as he contemplates life as a beggar on the streets or under a bridge with the drug addicts.

Australia's official advice

Referring to reports that an Australian citizen who was visiting his family was killed recently in Afghanistan, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Dfat) advises that Australians should not travel to Afghanistan due to the "extremely dangerous security situation and the very high threat of terrorist attack."

A spokesman for Dfat said: "The Australian embassy in Kabul continues to seek to confirm reports an Australian-Afghan dual national has been killed in Afghanistan.

"The area where these events reportedly occurred is contested by the Taliban and it will be difficult to obtain definitive and official confirmation of the man's death from the Afghanistan government.

"Consular officials are providing assistance to the man's family. We urge all Australians considering travelling to Afghanistan to consult the Australian Government's Smartraveller website, which continues to advise that Afghanistan remains a Do Not Travel destination."

So why would we contemplate sending Afghan asylum seekers back? And why do we not recognise this reality by granting Permanent Visas to these men – after five years?

Asylum seeker policy– the longer term

Written by Pat Agostino and John Addie

We often feel overwhelmed by the policies of both the Government and the Opposition on asylum seekers. Against this background Sister Brigid often reminds us that we must tackle the problem at all levels, from the practical day-to-day level, to the courts if necessary, and all points in between.

One organisation, Australia 21, is tackling the asylum seeker project at the policy level. They are aiming for outcomes in the medium to longer term. Australia 21 is a non-partisan, non-profit organisation.

In July, Australia 21 convened a roundtable conference. The aim was to develop a framework for the future which is fair, transparent and efficient and which is helpful to all sides of the political spectrum.

The roundtable comprised 35 high-level policy-makers and experts including a former Indonesian Ambassador to Australia, a strategist from Malaysia and parliamentarians from three of the four major parties. They approached the problem from a variety of perspectives, including the political, legal, social, community, academic and religious. You will be familiar with many of them: – Paris Aristotle, Adam Brandt MP, Fr Frank Brennan, Julian Burnside AO QC, Senator Sam Dastyari, Dr Clair Higgins, Dr Anne Kilcullen, Prof Robert Manne and Prof Jane Mc Adam. [There has since been another round table in Melbourne and Brigid was present at it].

Recognising the difficulties and the wide range of interests represented, the Roundtable did not seek to reach consensus but some important areas of common ground did emerge: –

“• While emphasising that Australia must respect its international legal obligations, the roundtable also recognised that the community wants reassurance that Australia retains control over who becomes Australian citizens and under what circumstances.

- Participants stressed the importance of implementing fair, transparent and efficient refugee status determination procedures, wherever processing takes place. They supported raising Australia’s humanitarian intake, perhaps set as a percentage of our annual migration intake.*
- Participants expressed concern at the militarisation of current approaches, and emphasised the need to build regional protection capacity and foster bilateral partnerships built on trust and respect.*
- There was support for extending the rights available to asylum seekers awaiting the outcome of their protection claims, including the right to work, and for phasing out mandatory detention.*
- Participants recommended measures to expedite the processing of particular cohorts of claimants, and encouraged new community initiatives, especially in regional Australia, that bring Australians into direct contact with refugees and use their skills to help rehabilitate depressed areas.*
- The participants are committed to creating a ‘second track’ dialogue that will engage the community, policymakers, experts and politicians in rethinking our approach.*
- Finally, it was noted that any new approach must use language carefully, recognising the humanity of those in search of protection.”*

It may not yet be the breakthrough we are all hoping for. The project shows just how painstakingly slow it may be to reach a working consensus. Nonetheless, progress is being made where it appears that no progress will occur if we wait for the major political parties to revise their political agendas. A full report will be issued later in the year.

On the lighter side

[also from Pat Agostino and John Addie]

Helping asylum seekers is a rewarding, but often taxing, job. Often your best plans go astray.

On one such day we had a series of meetings for our Iranian families with a variety of organisations spread over a wide area, none of which was very successful.

We started early in the morning at Sth Melbourne and by late afternoon we had been from St Albans to Werribee to Broadmeadows, and many points in between. Before returning to Sth Melbourne via St Albans we went to a community centre in Ascot Vale with Case Manager's food vouchers for our Iranian friends.

The centre appeared closed but we learned from the wall notices that food parcels were indeed available but because of the demand, there was a procedure to follow. You queued for numbers at 5pm and came back at 6pm to be served in number order.

Pat, ever persuasive, found a person to speak to. She explained our predicament – we had had a long day and just couldn't wait another 2 hours until we got home.

The gentleman didn't seem concerned and took us into a room stacked with bags of rice, cereal and much more. Shelves laden with dry food, and freezers filled with slabs of prepared meals. It was like a mini supermarket. "No", he didn't need to see the referral from the case manager. "Grab some bags" he said "and help yourselves". Which we did.

Feeling guilty at having upset the rigorous protocols we were almost over effusive in our thanks and said how sorry we were to have trampled all over the well-honed routines.

"Oh don't worry love," said our new found friend. "I'm just the cleaner here".



Pat and two of her friends

A long road

Every day a little group walk down the road leading to the Detention Centre. An elderly man and his wife and usually two or three of their daughters. They are friendly and welcoming to other visitors they recognise. They have been doing this for months – ever since one of the couple's daughters, her two children and another son were transferred to the Detention centre from Nauru. The reason for this transfer was medical. It is expected that this part of the family will be sent back to Nauru as soon as the need for treatment in Australia is over. And from there, who knows!

Everyone needs a Grandmother

A seventeen year old Afghani boy, (let's call him Ahmed) who arrived in Australia some twelve months ago and who has been very lonely and stressed in detention has another young friend who is supported by an Australian lady in another state. Ahmed said recently to Brigid "Will you be my grandmother? My friend has a grandmother and he says I should try and get one too". So a new relationship has been forged, proving that it is never too late to become a grandmother even if all the odds seem stacked against it!

The Asylum Legacy Bill (amendments to the Migration Act—2014)



This is a new bill before the Parliament. It was presented to a senate committee in late September and will be returned to the full senate for a vote – probably in late November. It is probably the most far reaching and ‘catch-all’ piece of legislation in the area of policy involving asylum seekers and we believe it is draconian in its assault on the rights of asylum seekers.

We urge you to voice your concerns. (if you share ours)

The following is a short summary of some of the points in the bill.

- A reintroduction of Temporary Protection Visas for asylum seekers (whether they arrive by air or by boat)
- A new visa (Safe Haven Enterprise visa) which appears to give asylum seekers the right to apply for a Skilled Migrant visa (457) after working for five years in a regional area
- Suspends ‘natural justice’ as a basis for challenges to the Governments decisions (including in the High Court)
- The government can send asylum seekers anywhere they want and turn them back at any point they wish.
- Removes all responsibility for the welfare of those arriving by boat and turned back.
- Allows for a new ‘fast track’ assessment for those who have arrived in Australia after August 2012; this gives very limited opportunity for review of these cases
- Removes all references to the Refugee Convention in the Migration Act.
- Children born in Australia to parents who arrived by boat will have no right for their applications for protection to be heard in Australia.
- The government can set a cap on the numbers of Protection Visas granted.

This does not do justice to the bill because it is 118 pages and the Explanatory Memorandum is 251 pages. **From what we now understand it is a stripping away of rights and is designed to not allow any asylum seekers stay in Australia. As well as an obligation to assist people seeking protection we believe we should be resisting moves by developing countries such as Australia to leave the total burden of looking after asylum seekers and refugees to developing nations. The displacement of people is a global phenomenon and there is a responsibility of all nations (particularly those with more resources) to act with justice.**

On the next page is a draft letter – which you may like to use as a basis for an email or letter. A list of contact details for the cross-bench senators is below. In effect these are the people who have the most influence in the passing or not of the Bill. We urge you, as well to write or ring, all Federal MP’s., especially your local Member.

Cross-benchers

John Madigan DLP senator.madigan@aph.gov.au Telephone: (02) 6277 3471 Fax: (02) 6277 5967

Bob Day FFP senator.day@aph.gov.au Telephone: (02) 6277 3373 Fax: (02) 6277 5951

Nick Xenophon IND senator.Xenophon@aph.gov.au Telephone: (02) 6277 3552 Fax: (02) 6277 5834

Ricky Muir MEP senator.muir@aph.gov.au Telephone: (02) 6277 3040 Fax: (02) 6277 5720

David Leyonhjelm LD senator.leyonhjelm@aph.gov.au Telephone (02) 6277 3054.

Jacqui Lambie PUP senator.lambie@aph.gov.au Telephone: (02) 6277 3063 Fax: (02) 6277 5887

Glenn Lazarus PUP senator.lazarus@aph.gov.au Telephone: (02) 6277 3204 Fax: (02) 6277 5904

Dio Wang PUP senator.wang@aph.gov.au Telephone: (02) 6277 3843

Would be good to write as well to Mr Clive Palmer PUP Telephone: (02) 6277 4372 Fax: (02) 6277 8484

Dear Senator

Re: Proposed changes to the Migration Act – Asylum Legacy Bill

I am writing because I am deeply concerned about the raft of changes proposed in this Bill, and I ask that you vote against these changes which deny people the right to seek asylum and permanent protection in Australia.

Australia is a signatory to the UN Refugee Convention – which seeks to provide protection for people who cannot live in safety and security in their own country, because they are subject to, or have reasonable grounds to fear persecution due to their ethnicity, religion or political beliefs. The proposed changes would essentially mean that Australia is no longer working under the terms of the Refugee Convention.

Until recently Australia has enjoyed a reputation as a good global citizen which upholds human rights. Our current asylum policies have significantly tarnished that reputation, and the changes now proposed would mark Australia, one of the wealthiest most secure countries in the world, as uncaring and unwilling to fulfil our responsibilities. We must not resort to draconian measures in order to reject a few thousand desperate people who seek our protection – we must be better than this.

The key problems with the proposed amendments include:

- Removal of references to the Refugee Convention from the Migration Act
- Suspension of the rules of natural justice – removing the possibility of High Court challenges: the rule of law and the judiciary is fundamental in our democracy, ensuring fairness, justice and transparency in decision-making.
- Changes that would allow boats carrying people seeking asylum to be towed anywhere beyond Australian territories, including the open sea, and leaving them there without regard for the safety of their passengers.
- Fast track assessment process with no access to the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) and very limited review processes. Fast turnaround processing was ruled illegal in the United Kingdom in July 2014 as it carried an “unacceptable risk of unfairness” (see <http://www.righttoremain.org.uk/blog/detained-fast-track-asylum-system-ruled-unlawful-byhigh-court/>).
- Children born to asylum seekers who arrived by boat will not be eligible for any visa, but would be classified as “transitory persons”, creating a new group of stateless persons.
- Safe Haven Enterprise Visas - temporary visas for 3 to 5 years which would not provide permanent protection visas even for those people assessed to be refugees. There is no justification for leaving people found to be refugees in limbo, with no prospect of resettlement in Australia.

I urge you to not support the proposed changes. We need to work with global community towards a system of co-operation which ensures the protection – not rejection – of people seeking safety and security. The proposed changes would shift our responsibility onto our neighbours, and damage our standing in the region.

Let’s work together to find policy approaches which are based on decency and which protect human rights.

Yours faithfully

How moral is it to make the deterrents such that people won’t seek protection in our country ...

Like putting a bull terrier at our door so the lady next door can’t come in to get a bandaid for her child ...

Born With No Homeland

Ahlam Always Mohamed

Our lecturer just told us

To write about

Our country

Our rivers

Our trees

Our land

Ten minutes later

My body cells

Tremble

Inside me a pain

Groaning

A storm

Is in my mind

A volcano

Sears my heart

But silence controls me

What shall I write on my country?

What shall I write on My city?

What is the best thing there?

Dust, wars, or dead bodies

Weapons, women with no power

Children searching for water !

All those

"Images transmitted directly

From my brain"

How can others describe

Great things in their country

Is it that easy?

Is it that easy to praise

What they mentioned

Trees, seas, mountains

Skyscrapers, crowded roads

Different life styles

Oooh, sorry

Nothing beautiful visits my mind

Not even a smile on a child face

Why do people like

To extol their homeland

It's One of Three:

Feeling of belonging (to it)

Country's great achievements

Or it has spectacular views

But

People like us

Can't say a word

Because we were born

With having no homeland

People like us

Can't capture a beautiful scenery

Because we were busy

With burying dead bodies

We were born with having

No skies

No stars,

No moons,

Even the sun

Was there

But not for us

We were born with having

No relatives

No grandparents

So no stories

No childhood

No games

No adventure trips

Even though the air was there

But the contaminated air was ours

People like us

Don't need pity from anyone

We are strong enough now

Even more than you think

Because through all that

We're still alive,

Yeah

We are still alive

So appreciate and value

The life you live

Because at least

You were born

With having a homeland

But we were born

With having no homeland

15-8-2014

Ahlam is a young woman from Somalia. Neither Aham or her family know what their future will be—security or long term living 'with no homeland'.



Good News



How offers of help can blossom!

Robyn and John offered to donate some furniture to asylum seekers. We identified a family in need of these items and John and Robyn said they could do the deliveries themselves, immediately striking up a rapport with the couple and their 2 children.

So much so that they had the family come and stay with them at their seaside home during the next school holidays.

They then took some more items to 2 men who were friends of the original family. This is what Robyn described ' We had the most fantastic day ! We took a trailer load of furniture to them (including a queen and a single bed).

They were so grateful and insisted that we stay for lunch. They worked together for two hours to provide us with a sumptuous Iranian banquet which was amazing. We felt humbled and so privileged to share this special time with them, and all agreed that we would like to keep in touch. As you probably know their English is very limited, but we managed to communicate via sign language interspersed with lots of laughter."

Accommodation

We continue to be heartened by the generosity of people in the community offering accommodation to those in need.

One family has taken in a recently arrived young woman from Pakistan who was homeless and distraught at having to leave her family and homeland, but aware that her life was in grave danger to remain there.

This family had a spare room and the young woman has been warmly welcomed into their family and local community.

Another offer was to a young man on a short-term basis until his application for funding was confirmed. This was in a bungalow at the rear of the home, giving both owner and guest some privacy but giving the young man some safety

Employment assistance

While most of the people we see do not have work rights, some do and they often have a struggle to secure a job. Following a talk given by Brigid to a local Baptist group, we received an offer from an attendee to assist with employment.

We referred a young man and his father to this business- a bakery- where they have been interviewed and told they would be contacted soon to commence.

For those who do not have work rights, we also seek meaningful voluntary work for some. A young Iranian woman is volunteering as an English teacher in our program. She also assists us with interpreting. Cabrini Hospital has trained and started 2 young Somali women as volunteers at the hospital. Catholic Homes and BASP are currently in discussions about how we can provide meaningful voluntary work to 3 or 4 asylum seekers.



Mats for babies to roll on

A group of people, led by Christine Hill from Monash University, has been helping women in detention bond with their babies. It became

obvious that it is difficult for babies to have somewhere to roll and play in the confined space of a detention room. Christine has provided mats for the families—with the help of girls in the Justice Group at Star of the Sea College.



A day in the peaceful surrounds of Amberley is just what is needed for a group of asylum seekers and friends. Especially when there are swings and big spaces for kids to run.

How you can help ...

Donations of Food and Material Goods

Dear Friends

Our Office has moved to 54 Beaconsfield Parade, Albert Park [around the corner in Beaconsfield Parade].

This impacts on our storage ability.

We regret we can no longer take **clothes**.

If you have **material goods**, please talk to Libby (9682 2971) or Catherine (9696 2937) who will discuss with you the needs for the goods and arrangements for them.

With regard to **food**, we are finding that even among those who are dependent on us- in our houses, or in the houses we have helped set-up – the greatest need is for very specific food items and cleaning items.



Here is a list of what we can dispose of quickly

Tea, coffee, sugar, long life milk, oil, eggs, fish-sardines, tuna.

Canned- tomatoes, fruit, beans- all kinds, chick peas, peas, lentils. We have enough soup until next winter.

Toiletries-soap, toothpaste, shampoo, deodorants, shaving cream, disposable razors, aftershave, tissues toothbrushes.

Household cleaning materials especially jif, spray and wipe, dishwashing detergent, washing powder, toilet paper, paper towels tissues.

At the moment we have enough rice, pasta and red lentils until Christmas.

We are most grateful to everyone for your wonderful ongoing support. Very soon we will be talking to you about Christmas hampers.

THANK YOU



These are very difficult times. There is a new sense of uncertainty as government policies harden and places like Cambodia are mooted for asylum seekers from Australia to go to. We are very grateful to all in BASP for supporting many individuals and families and for helping us to do likewise.

An amazing achievement by the Supporting Families through the Teaching of English Program is that seventy volunteers have formed a supportive relationship with over thirty families. This is due to the magnificent work of Phil Steele and Sue Wood.

Our hope for the future is a collaborative and persistent effort on all fronts to bring justice to those who come seeking Australia's protection. One of our main efforts is to try to expand the numbers of people who work for asylum seekers to be welcomed and accorded justice. We rely on our supporters to do this.

Brigid Arthur

Catherine Kelly

for the Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project