

Even Citizens Can Need Immigration Counseling;

Out of the Frying Pan

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Body

To the Editor:

As an attorney specializing in immigration law, I can attest that "A Hotel Hell for Refugees," Arthur C. Helton's article (Op-Ed, Sept. 23) about a hotel at Kennedy International Airport used as a detention facility by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, is completely accurate. I should like, however, to add one further point.

The aliens who are being detained in these appalling conditions are the least likely to complain to authorities. This is because, if their cases are not meritorious, they will be shipped out of the country. On the other hand, if, as with a client of mine, the case is meritorious, there is a great reluctance by the alien or his family to make waves and complain when they are seeking affirmative relief from the Government.

In our case, it was only with the utmost reluctance that the family agreed to approach the Government about the subhuman conditions under which their relative was being held.

This situation is particularly ironic because many of these people are seeking political asylum. Their treatment in this facility, however, is not much better than in any oppressive regime from which they are escaping. My client is a free man today in this land that has finally agreed to give him refuge, but what a nightmarish and truly un-American introduction he has had to our coun-try.

JOANNA MILLER BUKSZPAN

New York, Sept. 25, 1987

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