

The fear of refugees in waiting

By Paul Watson Toronto Star

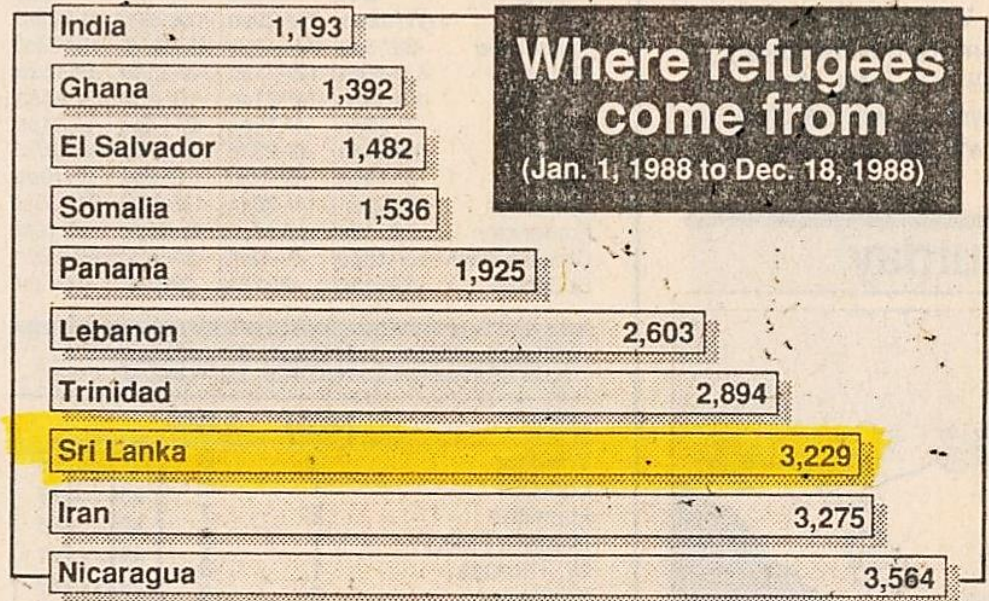
LACKAWANNA, N.Y. — Osman Isse has seen the room a thousand times in his mind and listened to the echo of questions that will decide his future.

And he lies awake each night waiting for the immigration official to answer.

"I think about it every hour — no, every minute," said Isse, one of several hundred refugee claimants waiting in the U.S. for hearings in Canada. "I'm scared for myself and my family."

The 36-year-old Somali said he can't return to his homeland in the Horn of Africa because he supported a northern rebel group trying to overthrow the government.

Isse, his wife Sahra, 20, and their 5-month-old son Abdulaziz were caught up in the scramble of both bogus and genuine refugees trying to enter Canada before tighter rules take effect tomorrow.



Where refugees come from

(Jan. 1, 1988 to Dec. 18, 1988)

SOURCE: Immigration Canada

Canada ranks second only to the United States in the list of developed countries that have given a permanent home to refugees.

From 1975 through 1987, Canada gave landed immigrant status to 223,637 refugees,

according to the U.S. Committee for Refugees in Washington, D.C.

During that same period, the U.S. allowed 1,166,191 refugees to stay there. France was third with 169,452 and Australia

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