

CONFRONTATION DOESN'T HELP THOSE DETAINED AT KROME

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Outside agitators who want to help Haitians detained at Dade's Krome Camp are certainly going about it the wrong way. The stirring of further unrest at Krome can only backfire on the would-be refugees themselves and on this community.

Krome Camp is a shameful chapter in our immigration history. So was the 1980 boatlift. The more than 7,000 Haitians who came during that boatlift are not detained; they are living in this community. Hunger strikes and rock throwing melees will not help the more recent arrivals now held at Krome. The best way to reduce the misery behind that barbed wire is for the Haitian inmates to clearly understand what options are available to them. Under present U.S. law they can only be admitted as refugees if they can prove that they are fleeing political persecution. That is a slow process, made even slower by countless legal battles which are not yet resolved.

Would-be refugees frustrated at the long wait can return home now without delay. The U.S. government will even pay their air fare. Those who want to pursue the legal avenues to political asylum must realize that due process does not make for instant results. The chaos brought about by confrontation can only make that wait even longer.

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