

Who's coming down the chimney?

Well it is the end of another year. Time to prepare for the festive season and enjoy the company of family and friends. To end the year I just want to remind everyone of the threat of virus attacks.

Periods like Christmas and New Year are great targets with the volume of email being sent increasing exponentially and people feeling more relaxed.

It is inevitable that virus attacks will be disguised in greeting cards and well wishes.

If you have the latest virus scan software then you are probably doing the best you can to protect yourself, but nothing beats common sense and regular backups.

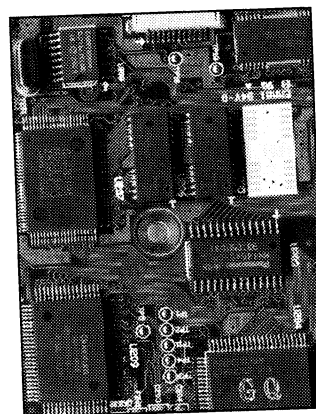
If a message looks suspicious (eg you do not know the sender or there is some corny catch-phase) then have the

message checked before you open it. [For more tips and information see my article in March 2001]

A tip for those taking holidays, consider enabling an auto-responder on your email.

This feature is included in most common email packages and will let those trying to contact you know that you are away. You can usually include a message to give details of how long you will be away for as well as alternative contact details.

Next year promises to be a great year for information technology so I look forward to then.



In the mean time, have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

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Refugee Week seminar in Darwin

By Koula Saraglou, IHL Officer, Australian Red Cross (NT Division)*

In October a lunchtime seminar was held at the Darwin City Council, as part of the activities for AustCare Refugee Week. The topic was international humanitarian law and refugee issues. The speakers were Colin McDonald QC and John Pinney AM.

Mr. McDonald addressed the East Timorese situation, and government policies and attitudes on asylum seekers and refugees in general.

He also spoke about the detention centres in Australia and the signal it sent to Australians and asylum seekers around the world.

He suggested the restoration of judicial review, statutory reform, maintenance of adequate funding for the UNHCR, abolishing the so-called Pacific solution, and creation of a genuine refugee review tribunal.

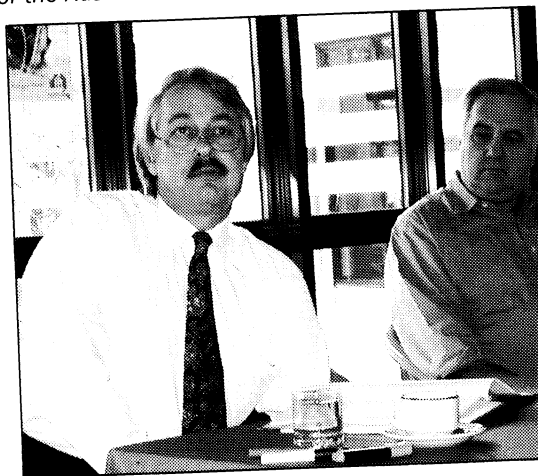
Mr. Pinney spoke on *Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Detention in Australia: The Role of the Australian Red Cross*.

He presented a fascinating insight into the Australian Red Cross' humanitarian role for asylum seekers and displaced persons.

He spoke of the Red Cross and its unique situation with the Australian Government, which allowed the Red Cross access to all detention centers around Australia and in the Pacific, specifically for visiting and assisting detainees.

He also spoke of the fundamental principles that guide the work of the Red Cross, in its involvement and policy towards immigration detention.

* The views expressed are the author's own and not that of the Australian Red Cross



Above: Refugee Week seminar presenters Colin McDonald QC (left) and John Pinney AM.