

Boat towed to Midway Atoll

The Coast Guard towed a disabled Asian fishing boat to Midway Atoll yesterday and turned the vessel's passengers and crew over to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.

The number of people on the boat, its point of origin and its destination were not disclosed.

Coast Guard spokesman David Santos said the Coast Guard was not concerned with where the stranded 140-foot vessel came from.

"We just wanted to make them as comfortable ... and as safe as we can for the 350-mile journey to Midway," Santos said. "We off-loaded passengers and crew to the INS, who were waiting."

Santos said it appeared that the passengers were Chinese and the name "Yu Xing" was painted on the side of the boat. But he said communicating with the crew was difficult because there were no interpreters on the Coast Guard's 225-foot buoy tender Kukui, which towed the stricken vessel.

Santos said the passengers were dehydrated, malnourished and in "real bad

Midway houses Chinese aliens

Atoll's routine goes back to 'business as usual'

By Jan TenBruggencate
ADVERTISER KAUAI BUREAU

Wildlife and tourism activities have returned to normal on Midway Atoll following the arrival last week of a boatload of Chinese migrants, rescued by the Coast Guard after their cargo ship broke down.

U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service spokesman Don Mueller said agents are on Midway, continuing to interview the more than 75 migrants, all of whom are believed to be from China.

The group is housed in a gymnasium built when the Navy operated Midway as a mid-ocean military base. They have cots, pillows and blankets, access to rest-

rooms and showers in the gym, and can go outside to a tennis court next to the gym, he said. (BLACKTALP)

Their meals are prepared in the old Navy galley, which is built to handle many times the present population of the island, said Mike Gautreaux, island manager for Midway Phoenix Corp.

The island's sewage plant and other facilities are easily capable of handling the added demands of some 75 migrants and 50 federal naturalization and public health people, he said.

The company has a contract from the Fish and Wildlife Service to operate the Midway airfield and to run an environmental and historic tourism program, featuring bird-watching,

fishing, diving in the lagoon, and visits to military sites made famous during the Battle of Midway.

"It's back to business as usual as far as we're concerned," Gautreaux said. Most of the visitors now on the island are divers, and while visitors are aware of the migrants, few see them. Immigration officials prevent interaction between the migrants and others on the island.

Mueller said the boat people are receiving full physical exami-

nations from U.S. Public Health Service employees while they are being interviewed to determine whether they left China for purely economic reasons or whether there may be political or other issues that could threaten their safety if they are returned.

"In the past, generally, the vast majority are economic migrants" who would be returned to their homelands, he said.

The Yu Xing, the aged 140-foot coastal cargo ship on which they were traveling, is under tow by the Coast Guard buoy tender Kukui to Honolulu.

THE HONOLULU ADVERTISER 9-28-99 B3

THE HONOLULU ADVERTISER

9-2-99 B2

Chinese refugees queried on Midway

8-31-99 A1

Rescued ship likely to be sent home

By Jan TenBruggencate
ADVERTISER STAFF WRITER

The survivors of a ship that drifted for a month in the North Pacific are refugees from the People's Republic of China, an official of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service said yesterday.

More than 75 passengers and crew of a run-down former cargo ship, the Yu Xing, were rescued last week when a Coast Guard cutter towed them to Midway. Federal public health officials screened the undernourished, dehydrated passengers, and had found no one suffering serious health problems as of yesterday.

They are being housed in a gym on Midway, a former Navy base that is now a Fish and Wildlife Service refuge

about 1,200 miles northwest of Oahu.

Don Mueller, a spokesman for the INS, said the people are likely "economic refugees" looking for a better life in the West.

"Most of these folks either destroy documents en route or they don't bring documents with them," he said.

Immigration officers will interview the Midway boat people to determine their status. If they face no danger of retribution, they will likely be sent back to their homeland, Mueller said.

He said the Yu Xing is the seventh ship full of Chinese refugees recovered in the Pacific in the past five months. The passengers and crew of the six previous ships were flown back to China, he said.

The 140-foot Yu Xing is under tow to Honolulu Harbor. The vessel broke down after its propeller shaft failed, said Coast Guard spokesman Dave Santos.

TO: MIRAN SA
ONE PAGE

*** TX REPORT ***

TRANSMISSION OK

TX/RX NO	1586	
CONNECTION TEL		415 291 8722
SUBADDRESS		
CONNECTION ID	AIUSA SFO	
ST. TIME	10/02 12:12	
USAGE T	00'47	
PGS.	2	
RESULT	OK	

Coast Guard finds boat suspected of smuggling

More than 75 people were aboard a disabled 140-foot vessel suspected of smuggling undocumented Asian migrants Wednesday after the Coast Guard responded to a distress call about 350 miles off Midway Island.



The crew reported by radio they were low on food and water and needed medical attention after drifting for about a month.

A Coast Guard C-130 aircraft from Barbers Point located the vessel. Later, a team from the Coast Guard Cutter Kukui, out of Honolulu, went aboard. The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service is investigating.

<http://starbulletin.com/1999/08/27/news/briefs.html>

Honolulu Star-Bulletin Breaking Stories

<http://starbulletin.com/1999/09/10/news/briefs.html>

Three are charged with alien-smuggling

Three Chinese nationals accused of operating an illegal alien-smuggling ring were charged in a federal criminal complaint yesterday with attempting to smuggle aliens from China to the United States aboard a ship that became disabled and needed help.

Charged were Song Fei Wu, Wen Liang Chen and Chen Qin, identified by passengers as the ship's captain, co-pilot and head enforcer, respectively, according to an affidavit.

Passengers said the smuggling fee was more than \$30,000, the affidavit said.

▲▲▲

[E-mail to City Desk](#)

Text Site Directory:

[\[News\]](#) [\[Business\]](#) [\[Features\]](#) [\[Sports\]](#) [\[Editorial\]](#) [\[Do It Electric!\]](#)
[\[Classified Ads\]](#) [\[Search\]](#) [\[Subscribe\]](#) [\[Info\]](#) [\[Letter to Editor\]](#)
[\[Stylebook\]](#) [\[Feedback\]](#)

© 1999 Honolulu Star-Bulletin
<http://starbulletin.com>

(412) 811-2193

*** TX REPORT ***

TRANSMISSION OK

TX/RX NO	1589	
CONNECTION TEL		415 291 8722
SUBADDRESS		
CONNECTION ID	AIUSA SFO	
ST. TIME	10/02 14:55	
USAGE T	00'53	
PGS.	1	
RESULT	OK	

TO: MIRAAAN SA
FROM: GEORGE (808) 271-5494

OCTOBER 2, 99
1 OF 2 PAGES

AS PROMISED - I SINCERELY APPRECIATE YOUR INTEREST
IN THIS CASE.

- INS HAWAII DISTRICT DIRECTOR =
DONALD A. RADECLIFF (808) 532-3746
- INS HAWAII General information
(808) 532-3721 RECORDED MESSAGE
PRESS 1 FOR ENGLISH, THEN PRESS 0
FOR "LIVE" ASSISTANCE.

- "DESTINATION MIDWAY" SPECIALIZING IN REDUCED PRICE
PACKAGES FOR TRAVEL TO MIDWAY ON ALOHA AIRLINES CHARTER JETS
(808) 325-5000

Scheduled flights in October presently known -

OCT. 6, 16, 20, 23 and 30

- "Phoenix Corp." MIDWAY RESERVATIONS (BASED IN GEORGIA)
1-888-643-9291 SAME FLIGHT DATES
AS ABOVE

PHOENIX AND THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
OPERATE FACILITIES ON MIDWAY UNDER A COOPERATIVE
AGREEMENT.

- US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE HONOLULU (808) 541-2749

I BELIEVE THAT THE BOAT PEOPLE AT
MIDWAY ARE BEING TREATED WELL, BUT UNDER TIGHT
DETENTION CONDITIONS. I AM CONCERNED ABOUT
THEIR FATE WHEN/IF SENT BACK TO CHINA.

THEY DESERVE BETTER, THEY ARE ON
HAWAIIAN SOIL - THEY DESERVE SOME
ALOHA. BUT FEW PEOPLE HERE
EVEN KNOW THEY ARE THERE.

992-A AWAAWAANA PLACE
HONOLULU, HI 96825
Tel. 271-5494
10-28-99

Dear Mrs. Cowenthal -
The attached was forwarded to
Judge EZRA when he was deciding
the fate of the Chinese boat
people at Midway.

I applaud your efforts to seek
meaningful hearings for them. I understand
that about 200 went to California
and will have "Credible Fear Asylum
Hearings." I want to follow this case
and I learn of the outcome. Can you
please tell me:

- 1.) Are you still involved trying to
help the ones still here in the U.S.?
- 2.) Is there any way I can help,
as a private citizen?
- 3.) Where exactly were they taken
in California? How many are find
out? Is this information available
to the public?
- 4.) Are charitable groups allowed
to help them, make contact with
them?

Thank you for your time and advice.

Aloha,
George Bettes
271-5494

THE HONORABLE DANIEL AKAKA
UNITED STATES SENATOR

30 OCTOBER 1999
992-A AWAAWAANA PLACE
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96825

TEL. 395-6409; 271-5494
HOME CELLPHONE

Dear Senator Akaka:

I am writing to ask for your direct help to obtain timely answers to questions about the 20 young Chinese boat refugees recently sent from Hawaii (Midway Island) to an INS "detention center" in California (please see attached articles). They were taken there as the result of a court ruling by Federal Judge David Ezra that they deserved a "Credible Fear" immigration hearing. My questions are as follows:

- 1.) When exactly will each of their Credible Fear hearings be held, where, and how can one find out the outcomes in a timely manner?
- 2.) Who will represent each person in court?
- 3.) Do each of them have access to charitable and other non-government organizations to assist in meeting their social, legal, family, medical and other basic human needs? Exactly which organizations are helping them now?
- 4.) Where exactly were they sent to in California (names, addresses and phone numbers of facilities)? Who oversees the standards of care and treatment at these INS facilities? - Which Senate (or House) committees are involved?

Last week, I contacted the San Francisco branch of the National Refugee Office of Amnesty International. They have had no success in obtaining answers from the INS to these very basic questions. I am therefore turning to you, in the sincere hope that you can help.

With Aloha,
Sincerely,
George H. Balazs

cc National Refugee Office - Amnesty International U.S.
500 Sanson Street #615
San Francisco, CA 94111

DANIEL K. AKAKA
HAWAII

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
720 HART SENATE OFFICE
BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
TELEPHONE: (202) 224-6361

HONOLULU OFFICE:
3106 PRINCE JONAH KUHIO
KALANIANA'OLE FEDERAL BUILDING
P.O. BOX 50144
HONOLULU, HI 96850
TELEPHONE: (808) 522-8970

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1103

MEMBER:
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND
NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

November 3, 1999

Mr. George H. Balazs
992-A Awaawaanoa Place
Honolulu, HI 96825

Dear Mr. Balazs:

This is in response to your correspondence seeking my assistance in obtaining information from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) regarding 20 Chinese citizens awaiting a hearing before an immigration judge.

I am in the process of filing a formal inquiry with the INS on your behalf. Please expect my further correspondence upon receipt of their reply.

Thank you for contacting me.

Aloha pumehana,



DANIEL K. AKAKA
U.S. Senator

DANIEL K. INOUE
HAWAII

APPROPRIATIONS
Subcommittee on Defense
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
Subcommittee on Surface Transportation
and Merchant Marine
COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
DEMOCRATIC STEERING COMMITTEE
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

United States Senate

SUITE 722, HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1102
(202) 224-3934
FAX (202) 224-6747

PRINCE KUHIO FEDERAL BUILDING
ROOM 7325, 300 ALA MOANA BOULEVARD
HONOLULU, HI 96850-4975
(808) 541-2542
FAX (808) 541-2549

101 AUPUNI STREET, NO. 205
HILO, HI 96720
(808) 935-0844
FAX (808) 961-5163

November 4, 1999

Mr. George Balazs
992-A Awaawaanoa Place
Honolulu, Hawaii 96825

Dear Mr. Balazs:

In the absence of Senator Inouye who is currently in Washington, D.C., I wish to acknowledge your letter regarding the immigration status of 20 Chinese citizens who are in a detention center in California.

We will be pleased to assist you in this matter. I have written to Mr. Donald Radcliffe, District Director of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) in Honolulu, on your behalf and have asked that he look into their case. I will be back in touch with you as soon as we receive a reply from the INS.

Aloha,



BARBARA C. SAKAMOTO
Legislative Assistant
Honolulu Office

DANIEL K. INOUE
HAWAII

APPROPRIATIONS
Subcommittee on Defense

COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
Subcommittee on Surface Transportation
and Merchant Marine

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

DEMOCRATIC STEERING COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

United States Senate

SUITE 722, HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1102
(202) 224-3934
FAX (202) 224-6747

PRINCE KUHIO FEDERAL BUILDING
ROOM 7325, 300 ALA MOANA BOULEVARD
HONOLULU, HI 96850-4975
(808) 541-2542
FAX (808) 541-2549

101 AUPUNI STREET, NO. 205
HILO, HI 96720
(808) 935-0844
FAX (808) 961-5163

November 19, 1999

Mr. George Balazs
992-A Awaawaanoa Place
Honolulu, Hawaii 96825

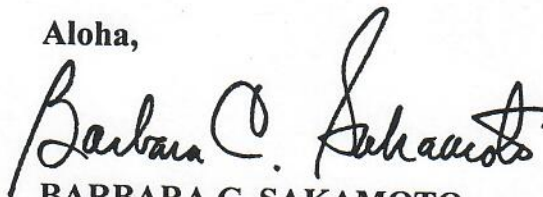
Dear Mr. Balazs:

This is in reference to our inquiry on your behalf regarding the immigration status of 20 Chinese nationals who are in a detention center in California.

According to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), Western Region, these individuals are currently housed at the Los Angeles County S.O., Mira Loma Facility, 45100 N. 60th Street W., Lancaster, California 93536. The facility's phone number is (805) 940-3555. In addition, the INS has advised that you may wish to contact the Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR) at 606 South Olive, 15th Floor, Los Angeles, California 90014. The EOIR has a list of agencies available to assist people requesting asylum. It also handles the court docket and can answer your questions regarding legal representation. The EOIR's phone number is (213) 894-2811.

I hope that the information provided by the INS will be useful to you. We were pleased to have been of assistance to you in this matter.

Aloha,



BARBARA C. SAKAMOTO
Legislative Assistant
Honolulu Office

PATSY T. MINK
SECOND DISTRICT, HAWAII

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
2135 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-1102
(202) 225-4906
FAX: (202) 225-4987
<http://www.house.gov/writerep/>

DISTRICT OFFICE:
5104 PRINCE KUHIO FEDERAL BUILDING
P.O. Box 50124
HONOLULU, HI 96850-4977
(808) 541-1986
FAX: (808) 538-0233

BIG ISLAND: (808) 935-3756
MAUI: (808) 242-1818
KAUAI: (808) 245-1951

GEORGE BALAZS
992-A AWAAWAANO A PLACE
HONOLULU HI 96825

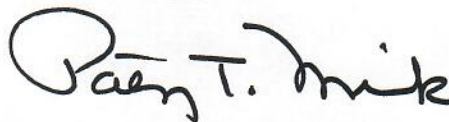
Dear Mr. Balazs:

Thank you for your telephone call of September 27th regarding a group of Asian migrants who were captured that week by the U.S. Coast Guard.

The *Star-Bulletin* article, which said there were more than 75 people on board, apparently underestimated the number of passengers. The Immigration and Naturalization Service in Honolulu reports that 120 people were aboard.

Of that group, 94 were repatriated to the People's Republic of China, 20 were sent to the Mainland to pursue political asylum claims, and six are being held in INS detention in Honolulu so that they can be processed for deportation.

Very truly yours,



PATSY T. MINK
Member of Congress

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND
THE WORKFORCE

EARLY CHILDHOOD, YOUTH AND
FAMILIES SUBCOMMITTEE

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, TRAINING AND
LIFE-LONG LEARNING SUBCOMMITTEE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DRUG POLICY AND
HUMAN RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE, RANKING
GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT, INFORMATION AND
TECHNOLOGY SUBCOMMITTEE

DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS EDUCATION
AGENDA TASK FORCE, CO-CHAIR

DANIEL K. AKAKA
HAWAII

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
720 HART SENATE OFFICE
BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
TELEPHONE: (202) 224-6361

HONOLULU OFFICE:
3106 PRINCE JONAH KUHIO
KALANIANA'OLE FEDERAL BUILDING
P.O. BOX 50144
HONOLULU, HI 96850
TELEPHONE: (808) 522-8970

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1103

MEMBER:
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND
NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

January 10, 2000

Mr. Donald Radcliffe
District Director
Immigration and Naturalization Service
595 Ala Moana Boulevard
Honolulu, HI 96813-4999

Dear Mr. Radcliffe:

This is a follow-up to my inquiries dated November 2, 1999 and December 8, 1999 on behalf of George Balazs, concerning 20 Chinese citizens awaiting a "credible fear" hearing before an immigration judge. As of this writing, I have not received a response from your office. Your assistance in inquiring into the status of my requests would be appreciated.

Please forward your reply to my Hawaii Office, P.O. Box 50144, Honolulu, Hawaii 96850.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Aloha pumehana,



DANIEL K. AKAKA
U.S. Senator

cc: George Balazs ✓

- URGENT AND IMPORTANT -

TO: MIRAAAN SA

Aloha Airlines - Public Relations
COMMUNITY OUTREACH (808) 836-4113
Phil Lowenthal Attorney - (808) 545-5688

The Honolulu Advertiser HAWAII

SECTION B

www.honoluluadvertiser.com/localnews • 525-8090

WEDNESDAY • OCTOBER 6, 1999

Judge blocks deportation of Chinese

Asylum issue to be decided first

By David Waite
ADVERTISER STAFF WRITER

Federal Judge David Ezra has ordered all federal agencies not to return any of the 75 or more Chinese being cared for on Midway Island to their home country until he decides whether each of them is eligible for a full asy-

lum hearing before an immigration judge. Ezra issued the temporary restraining order toward the end of a hearing held yesterday to decide whether each of the Chinese is entitled to a full asylum hearing. The Chinese were taken to Midway after the Coast Guard received a distress

call in late August that the Yu Xing, a 140-foot coastal cargo ship, had run out of food and water. The group is being housed in a gymnasium built when the Navy operated Midway. Hugh Mullane, representing the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, argued that federal district court in Hawaii has no jurisdiction in the matter since Midway is not considered part of the United States. INS officials have

processed all of the Chinese and have recommended that a "significant minority" of them be brought to the United States to determine if they are eligible for asylum to prevent their being persecuted for attempting to flee China. Honolulu attorney Phil Lowenthal, arguing on behalf of the Chinese migrants, said anyone asking for asylum in the United States is entitled to a full hearing. The "processing" by INS

officials on Midway Island amounts to only "half a loaf" of the hearing procedure the migrants are due, Lowenthal said. After listening to both sides, Ezra said he would reverse the matter and report his decision later. But Mullane then told the judge that time was of the essence because plans called for the group to be returned to mainland China on Friday. An annoyed Ezra told Mullane he felt he was being

rushed to make a decision. "If these people are repatriated before I have a chance to address the issue, I will be very unhappy," Ezra said. At that point, Ezra barred all government agencies from moving any of the Chinese to any place other than a state within the United States. The restraining order against repatriation is in effect until he rules on the matter, which he will try to do by Friday, Ezra said.

(712) 811-2115

*** TX REPORT ***

TRANSMISSION OK

TX/RX NO	1612	
CONNECTION TEL		415 291 8722
SUBADDRESS		
CONNECTION ID	AIUSA SFO	
ST. TIME	10/06 11:16	
USAGE T	00'35	
PGS.	1	
RESULT	OK	

Midway's Catch of the Year

Midway's biggest catch for 1999 consisted of 75 Chinese visitors who ended up on the island after being rescued from a disabled Chinese freighter, which was discovered drifting 280 miles from Midway.

The broken-down freighter was towed to the atoll (which is located at the far end of the Northwest Hawaiian Island chain) by the U.S. Coast Guard because it was the closest point of land and several of the passengers needed immediate medical attention due to their long ordeal at sea. Midway has a fully equipped medial clinic staffed by a full-time doctor and nurses, and several U.S. Public Health Service doctors and nurses were flown to Midway to assist.

As illegal immigrants, Midway's Chinese guests were isolated in the island's gymnasium while their health was restored, their medical needs were attended to and they were interviewed by U.S. government officials to determine their ultimate status (return home or be granted refugee status).

The presence of the Chinese visitors on Midway did not disrupt the normal operations of the island. As a matter of fact, their isolation was so complete that some guests may not even have been aware of their presence. It is likely that most of Midway's Chinese visitors will have been flown back to their homeland by the time you are reading this report.

For *kama'aina* rates, Midway travel bookings and any sort of Midway information, contact **Destination: MIDWAY** at (808) 325-5000 or <captrick@kona.net>, or visit <<http://www.fishdive.com>> on the Internet. . . . Rick

HAWAII FISHING NEWS
NOV. 1999