



CANADA'S PERIODICAL ON REFUGEES

REFUGEE

American Indochinese Refugees: Are They Welfare Bums?

Studies of refugees are an excellent vantage point to gain an insight into the political life, economic policies and values of society.* Studies of studies of refugees provide a shortcut to the same goal. A report of the Appropriations Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives argues that 67% of the Indochinese refugees settled in the United States have become dependent on the state. The source of the problem is public welfare and its partner, a poor bureaucracy which provides ineffective management, direction and administration for the refugee assistance program.

"Even though there has been a heavy commitment of funds, resources, and personnel at the Federal, State, and local government levels, the refugee assistance programs have not succeeded in their basic objective of decreasing the level of dependency of refugees participating in the programs. In fact, the dependency rate or percentage of the refugee population receiving cash assistance and other benefits has steadily increased since 1975, the year the Indochinese Refugee Assistance Program was initiated. As of June 1981, the nationwide dependency rate reported by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) was 67% and growing. For FY 1983, ORR is predicting a nationwide dependency rate of 70%."

This is a shocking conclusion for Canadians who take great pride in the way Indochinese refugees in Canada have adapted so well in spite of a severe downturn in the economy which has affected them disproportionately. But before one asks *why* the Indochinese refugees have fared

so poorly in the U.S., one must ask first if it is true.

The report draws even more drastic conclusions. The refugees are developing a welfare mentality.

"What is even more worrisome than the immediate dismal situation are indications that a strong 'constituency' is being formed among refugees which expects continued assistance over a prolonged period of time. Most of the aid recipients are being nurtured so that all their wants are being catered to without much work, effort, or sacrifice on their part. Thus, a philosophy or attitude is being engendered — directly and indirectly — that they have a vested right, entitlement, if you will, to: money, housing, food, clothing, medical attention, and educational allowances from Federal, State, and local government sources."

What are the facts? Can you measure dependency?

One method entails comparing refugee resettlement expenditures in different

*See Page 2. Indochinese Refugee Social Assistance Programs in Europe and the United States.

jurisdictions. (Fortunately, the European report, though weak on assessment, evaluation and policy recommendations, has excellent basic data.) The Netherlands, for example, spent Fl.32,000 (U.S.\$11,500 approx.) per refugee for help and resettlement. The average cost of resettlement per refugee in the U.S.A. was less than one-tenth that figure (\$936.00), including cash allowances for resettlement, medicare and social service costs. In Canada, the cost of resettlement per refugee was U.S.\$4,100 if *all* costs are considered. For direct social assistance, the cost per refugee was in the order of U.S.\$2,100.

If Americans spend so little to resettle each refugee, how can this be reconciled with the claim that 67% are dependent on the state? The report, unfortunately, never defines dependency. However, one can tease out its meaning by reading the whole report. The contrast with

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REFUGE

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Correction

In the Note on the Politics of Counting the World's Refugees (page 12, Sept - Oct, 82 *Refuge*), the fifth sentence should read, "The number of Palestinian refugees does include children of refugees ..."

Letters

To the Editor:

We have just recently received the September/October issue of *Refuge* and read with a great deal of interest, your open letter to The Honourable Lloyd Axworthy.

We wish to commend you for your efforts and want you to know that we will support and assist you whenever possible.

Audrey Johnson, RSW
Coordinator,
Nanaimo Refugee Coordination
Society

(See following letter)

Indochinese Refugee Social Assistance Programs in Europe and the United States

One of the important functions of *Refuge* is the analysis and interpretation of key reports on refugees. In the last issue, we informed readers of three important studies on the resettlement of the Indochinese in Canada. In this issue we compare three reports, two American and one European, which analyze the assistance offered in refugee resettlement.

In July of 1982, the Council of Europe, through its Steering Committee for Social Affairs (CDSO), published a report by consultant Reinhard Lohrmann, who is the chief of the Research and Documentation Unit for the Department of Planning, Liaison and Research of the Intergovernmental Committee for Migration (ICM) in Geneva. The report deals with the social situation and social measures concerning people seeking political asylum or having refugee status in the member states of the Council of Europe.

A "Profile of the State Refugee Resettlement Programs" (undated) prepared by the Office of State Services of the National Governors' Association on the basis of surveys conducted during the 1980-81 fiscal year is very similar to the European report. Both compare data from different jurisdictions (independent nation states in the Council of Europe; states in the American union). Each reflects the preoccupation of the different perspectives. Both reports begin with the customary background material and numerical comparisons of the different jurisdictions, then each diverges. Given the different problems — America, a federal state with divided jurisdictions, relies much

more on the non-governmental sector than Europe — it is not surprising to find the Governors' report concentrating almost entirely on problems of administration and coordination.

The European report concentrates on the actual social measures provided for the refugees — reception centres, housing, resettlement patterns, social assistance, language training, education, health, secondary migration and family reunification. These are more or less the same topics dealt with in the Second American report prepared in February focussing on the refugee assistance program of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) of the Department of Health and Human Services. Unfortunately, this American report was not written by an independent consultant with a knowledge of and experience in refugee matters, but by the surveys and investigations staff of the Committee of Appropriations of the U.S. House of Representatives. The lack of independence and expertise in this case is combined with such poor social science methodology and such illogical reasoning wrapped up in tendentious moralizing that the result tells us more about the political attitudes of the authors and, perhaps, about the U.S. government than about refugee assistance programs for the Indochinese. The feature article in this issue takes the Congressional Report as its centrepiece and uses the European report and the Governors' report as a Greek chorus from which comments and insights can be gained into one policy direction active in the U.S. government.

Dear Mr. Axworthy:

We are responding to a recent press release that the number of immigrants to Canada will be reduced.

We accept the logic of reducing the number of immigrants at this time when our country is unable to provide employment to its citizens but we believe Canada would be evading its duty more if we close our doors to the hapless refugee who faces a life of utter hopelessness until we extend a helping hand. We therefore ask that the refugee portion of the immigrant quota not be reduced in spite of bad economy.

We also suggest that the government might relieve the public pressure by once again suggesting to individual Canadians that they can sponsor refugees.

Turning to another facet of immigration, we ask that Canadian officials involved in

counselling normal immigrants, and perhaps even those refugees who might have a further option, acquaint these people with the realities of life in Canada. It would appear that many have unrealistic expectations.

If potential newcomers have the hurdles and alternatives clearly set out for them by Immigration counsellors at the time of interview, then many decisions made about coming to Canada clearly become their own responsibility and no blame can be laid at the door of the Canadian government.

Our concerns have evolved from our frequent and direct contact with these new immigrants.

David L. Handley
President,
Nanaimo Refugee Coordination
Society

Cont. from page 1

dependency is total self-sufficiency. Any refugee who receives state cash assistance of any kind is not self-sufficient and therefore dependent. On that definition, all families in Canada with children under 18 would be classified as dependent. After all, they receive state monies in the form of family allowances and, hence, are not totally self-sufficient. A student and his family are dependent on the state if that student receives an educational grant. Since Canadians enjoy the benefits of medicare, the authors of the report, using their logic, would conclude that Canadian "wants are being catered to without much work, effort and sacrifice on our part."

The issue is not that Indochinese refugees resettled in the U.S. are more dependent than the refugees who settled in Canada, but that a number of Americans, including the authors of this report, reject the welfare state. The model held out by the authors of the report is Texas. That state spent \$192 per resettled refugee.

"Texas leans more toward the teaching of 'survival skills' — ESL and employment training — and strives to get refugees employed as soon as possible, whether they speak English or not."

It is one thing to have an ideological bias on the basis of which one derives conclusions deformed by the bias. It is another thing to distort legislation. As the report interprets the American Refugee Act of 1980, employment training and placement are to be made available "in order to achieve economic self-sufficiency among refugees as soon as possible." In fact, a state must, as a condition for receiving refugee assistance, submit to the Director of Refugee Resettlement a plan which provides:

"(a) a description of how the state intends to encourage effective refugee resettlement and to promote economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible;
(b) a description of how the state will ensure that language training and employment services are made available to refugees receiving cash assistance."

There is no phrase "in order to" connecting effective refugee resettlement and the speed of economic self-sufficiency. Effective refugee resettlement is not defined in terms of the speed of obtaining economic self-sufficiency, but conjoined with it. Effective refugee resettlement does not mean getting a refugee a job as soon as possible to get the individual off the state dole. Rather, the intent is to make the refugee economically self-sufficient and effectively resettled — the latter presumably including adequate language training and job training to make the most of the refugee's talent as well as providing opportunities for social adjustment. That, of course, is why the second clause indicates that the goals of both effective resettlement and speedy

economic self-sufficiency require language training and employment services — the latter including training and not just job assignments. Thus, when the report states that, "California's approach to the provision of social services to refugees is in conflict with the provisions of the Refugee Act of 1980", one can only conclude that California's interpretation of the Act conflicts with the authors' very biased and self-evidently deformed reading of the same Act. For example, the monies expended directly on social services may be a more reliable indicator of actual dependency. In this case, the gross expenditure for social services declined in the last three years by almost one-third while the total refugee population increased by about 50%; the actual cost per refugee of social services was reduced by over 50%.

The report also draws conclusions unsupported and, I might add, unsupportable by the data. For example, the report implies that perhaps the greatest factor in secondary migration and dependency rates is the high level of cash assistance available in some states. The basis of this evidence is that California, with the second highest per refugee assistance program (\$1,233 per refugee) has the largest refugee population (193,841) and the highest ratio of refugees to population (1:122). (Washington's is higher — \$1,675 per refugee.) But Texas, with the lowest per capita assistance program, has the second largest number of refugees (51,932) and stands 8th in ratio of refugees to population (1:274). If the report's claim was true, one would expect Texas to be at the bottom of the list of numbers of refugees and ratio of refugees to population. Since Illinois and Pennsylvania are in the middle of the list of ratios of refugees to population but relatively high in the cost per refugee resettled (\$940 for Illinois; \$631 for Pennsylvania), one finds it difficult to detect the degree of correlation between refugee assistance and refugee resettlement patterns let alone a conclusion that this is the single most important factor.

One more item makes the whole interpretation of data obviously incorrect. Alaska and Vermont provide the highest monthly welfare support (\$746 for Alaska; \$587 for Vermont), yet Alaska has the lowest refugee population (461) and Vermont has the lowest ratio of refugees to population (1:1,699). One suspects that weather, job availability, previous patterns of migration, the location and strength of VOLAGs (the 15 national voluntary agencies), and family reunification may be equally or more important factors than the amount of social assistance available in the particular state. There are simple statistical correlation

tests which are standard in sociological methodology which are not used in this report.

The report's ideological bias, distortion of legislation, misuse of statistics all pale into insignificance when the authors' attitudes to rights of refugees are revealed. The report deplores regulations which permit refugees freedom of movement within the United States. This report is not only opposed to allotting adequate monies for resettlement; it endorses state intervention into freedoms, including one of the most basic freedoms — the freedom to move — an ironic opposition in a report on refugees.

The complaints about the vacant position of the U.S. Coordinator for Refugee Affairs from January 1981 to October 1981 and the lack of staffing are mainly concerned with the inadequate monitoring functions, not its assistance role. The report concludes, "ORR's inability to demonstrate the effectiveness of social service programs in expediting the refugees' attainment of self-sufficiency is considered to be a major factor in the cutback of social services in the FY 1983 budget." The authors want it both ways. ORR did not have funds, so it did not monitor well. Because it did not monitor the goal of self-sufficiency, it did not obtain funds. Since the report is guilty of almost every other illogical error, why shouldn't it engage in circular arguments?

The fact, which the Congressional and the Governors' reports both noted, is that funds were not forwarded to states. The federal government, through long delays, disrupted the programs, the administration and the planning. Questions must be raised about the contrast between the lofty ideals of the written 1980 legislation and the economic, executive and administrative policies which undercut the intent and implementation of that legislation.

The analysis evades this issue. Further, an opportunity to learn and become informed has been missed. Perhaps VOLAGs, handling resettlement under contract, deform and distort assistance and use previous refugees as sponsors as an easy way out of ensuring proper resettlement. Also, it may be true that ESL training linked to employment is more effective, but would you trust this conclusion when it is derived from such biased analysis?

*Forthcoming . . .
Canada's Restrictive
Refugee Admission
Practices.*

Resettling Hmong in French Guyana

An original experiment has been conducted by France in the shape of schemes for resettling groups of refugees in a rural environment. This rural resettlement scheme has been introduced in French Guyana in South America. Guyana, with its low population density and its climate relatively similar to that of Southeast Asia, fulfilled conditions favourable to the resettlement of Hmongs in the same living conditions as they had known in their home country of origin.

In October 1977, 500 Hmongs were settled in several stages at the locality of Cacao. The refugees built their houses themselves. A village has been functioning for the past two years, with a daily allowance of

40 French francs per head being paid by the Directorate of Health and Social Action of the département. This allowance has made it possible to provide food, the staff necessary for the centre and part of the expenditure involved in clearing land and putting it under cultivation. The community has in the meantime become self-sufficient in food and in the spring of 1980 it set up a co-operative composed exclusively of Hmongs. In 1981, Cacao had a total population of 618 persons including 118 young children born since 1977.

A second settlement of 400 Hmongs was established at Mana in Guyana in October 1979. During the initial phase, some houses, an infirmary

and an infant school were built. A building to house the co-operative is in the process of construction. An initial crop of rice was harvested in 1980, and the local community has attained self-sufficiency in fruit and vegetables.

In 1979, Cacao harvested as much rice as the whole of Guyana. The two villages will shortly be able to feed the entire population of this département which used to import more than 95% of its food.

(From Council of Europe, July 26, 1982, Steering Committee for Social Affairs. CDSO. "Social Situation and Social Measures Concerning People Seeking Political Asylum or Having Status in the Member States of the Council of Europe," by Reinhard Lohrmann.)

Refugee Resettlement in Europe

Excerpts from a report for the Council of Europe¹

by Reinhard Lohrmann, Consultant

In Europe it is generally speaking the governments which meet the financial costs involved in the reception and resettlement of refugees. The majority of countries place refugees in provisional accommodation centres for periods of 3 - 12 months; in other cases the Canadian pattern is utilized — after only a few days refugees are directed to their final destination to flats or to private sponsors until independent housing is found.

Switzerland

In Switzerland, the social bodies responsible for the reception of refugees and the initial measures to resettle them call upon the services of groups of four to ten voluntary workers to assist the refugees in the resettlement process and maintain regular contacts with them. It is the primary task of these groups of voluntary workers to help refugees find independent accommodation, settle into it, find a job and enrol their children at a school and at the same time to introduce them to their neighbours and to the administrative authorities with which they will have to deal.

Does this seem similar to the proposals to integrate government-assisted resettlement and private sponsorship?

Denmark

In Denmark, refugees enjoy rent-free accommodation from the moment of their arrival, in the same conditions as Danes who are temporarily without earnings.

Federal Republic of Germany

In the Federal Republic of Germany 6 months after their settlement in independent housing, the refugees will be entitled to subsidised housing.

As soon as they arrive, refugees can attend free courses in German.

Foreign refugees who wish to work immediately after completion of a language course will receive during their linguistic training (nine months) maintenance assistance, training fees including materials, commuting expenses, health and accident insurance, and, in the case of any non-local accommodation necessary, also the cost of lodging and extra cost of board.

Foreign refugees who do not wish to work (housewives, pensioners, etc.) are paid the cost of the linguistic training and of commuting during the period of the language course (300-800 hours).

Foreign refugees up to 35 years of age who wish to begin an educational or vocational training course after completion of the linguistic training receive the same allowances as under (a) during the period of the language course (up to 48 months).

Netherlands

The Netherlands Government spends each year an average of Fl. 32,000 per refugee for help and resettlement (more than 65,000 French francs or \$13,000 Canadian dollars). A certain proportion of new dwellings must be allocated to refugees.

Sweden

In Sweden, children who had to interrupt their schooling when fleeing their countries are given an opportunity to continue their education.... The national system of leave for study is also available to refugees.

Belgium

In Belgium, UNHCR representatives appraise the legitimacy of the motives of asylum-seekers after the Ministry of Justice decides on admissibility.

Austria

Austria does not allow access to the labour market for asylum seekers. (There were 5,627 cases in 1979.)

Europe in General

In order to forestall the many abuses of the rules on asylum for persons persecuted on political, religious and racial grounds, it is proving necessary for European countries to take all appropriate steps to reduce the chances of misuses and thus to protect and indeed reinforce the right of asylum for those who are in the most urgent need.

1. Social Situation and Social Measures Concerning People Seeking Political Asylum or Having Refugee Status in the Member States of the Council of Europe. (Activity 6.50.2) July 1982.

Forthcoming . . .
Unaccompanied Minors in
Canada.

International Protection: Are Doors Closing on Refugees?

— A report on the UNHCR Executive Committee Meeting, Geneva, October 1982 —

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' Executive Committee¹ meets every October to approve the UNHCR's proposed budget. It is also the occasion to debate and discuss refugee issues. This year, the main theme of discussion was protection of refugees, both protection through asylum and "physical" protection.

World economic recession and high levels of unemployment in receiving countries have impaired the desire and the ability of many countries to absorb large numbers of refugees. There has been a reduction in levels of financial assistance available for international relief and assistance. At the same time, these recessionary trends have prompted many to migrate in search of better economic opportunities. Many governments have reacted to these external

This year the Committee approved the revised financial target of U.S.\$430 million for UNHCR programs in 1982 and U.S.\$425 million for projected requirements in 1983. Projected expenditures by country are as follows: (in U.S. dollars) Pakistan, \$78 million; Somalia \$42 million; Thailand, \$32 million; Sudan, \$25.5 million; Zaire, \$14.5 million; Philippines, \$9.6 million; Iran, \$7.5 million; Malaysia, \$7.5 million; Indonesia, \$7.3 million; Tanzania, \$7 million; Angola, \$5.4 million and Honduras, \$5.3 million. The High Commissioner's request for 30 new staff within UNHCR's regular programs was denied: several members wanted more information. Canada was strongly in favour of granting the High Commissioner's request. (Michael Molloy, speaking for Canada, delivered an impassioned speech arguing that the staff increases were essential to ensure protection of refugees.) The matter will come up for review again in January 1983 at an informal meeting of the Committee.

¹The Executive Committee, elected by the Economic and Social Council, is comprised of representatives from 41 member states selected from a broad geographical basis with a demonstrated interest in solving the refugee problem. The Committee acts in an advisory rather than a governing capacity. Attendance is further swelled by representatives from members of the U.N. system and observers from non-member governments, intergovernmental organizations, other organizations and liberation movements.

and internal pressures by adopting restrictive admission practices, reducing immigration quotas and introducing deterrent measures in order to curtail the flow: these have included making status determination regulations more difficult.

If refugees have difficulty in attaining protection through asylum, their situation is compounded by a lack of "physical protection". There have been military attacks on refugee camps, and many ships have refused to rescue refugees adrift on the high seas.

While the High Commissioner addressed both protection issues at this year's meeting, he also strongly reaffirmed the value of the UNHCR's non-political, humanitarian mandate (perhaps in response to pressure to act otherwise in efforts to attack the root causes of massive exodus.) Today's world refugee situation differs in several ways from the post World War II years. Twenty or 30 years ago, most refugees were of European origin and ended up settling in developed countries. Now, the majority of refugees are in and come from developing countries.

Many migrants attempt to circumvent restrictive immigration regulations by trying to gain admission as asylum seekers. Deterrent measures adopted by some countries (e.g. application of very strict refugee criteria, "prior assumption" that certain groups are ineligible for refugee status and the use of "humane deterrents" such as detention) could have a potentially detrimental effect on established principles of international protection.

The Sub-Committee on Protection recognized the need for measures to meet the problem of manifestly unfounded or abusive applications for refugee status and recommended that this be examined at next year's meeting as a separate item on the agenda on the basis of a study to be prepared by UNHCR. Also, states party to the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol were urged to establish procedures for determining refugee status if they had not done so already.

Protection Through Resettlement

In a speech to the Executive Committee, Michael Molloy, counsellor for the Perma-

nent Mission of Canada to the United Nations, stated that resettlement may be seen as a protective function in cases where individuals or small groups cannot be provided with an acceptable durable solution in the country of asylum or within the surrounding region and for whom serious protection problems may arise. Canada intends to become increasingly involved in areas where its resettlement capacity can be used to solve protection problems, such as in the case of refugees from Africa, El Salvador and Belize.

Some European states complained that North American states were not admitting for permanent resettlement refugees who have temporary asylum in Europe. However, European member states were criticized "in the corridors" for their perceived unwillingness to grant permanent asylum to refugees. Other traditional countries of resettlement felt that many European states were at least as able as they (if not more so) to afford the economic cost of resettlement.

Physical Safety of Refugees — in Camps and at Sea

The recent attacks on Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon added fuel to the already burning issue of the physical protection of refugees in camps and settlements. At the meeting of the Sub-Committee, several speakers indicated the urgent need for preventive action, mentioning in particular, military attacks on refugee camps in Southern Africa, Asia, Central America and Lebanon. (The refugees affected in Lebanon were not covered by the UNHCR's mandate.)

The High Commissioner had asked Ambassador Felix Schnyder to study this question. In presenting his preliminary report, Mr. Schnyder stressed the need for the UNHCR to safeguard its humanitarian and non-political mandate. Thus, the UNHCR cannot and must not actually prevent military attacks on refugee camps. How-

Between Jan. 1, 1982 and July 31, 1982, 66% of all boats reaching Thailand reported pirate attacks resulting in 123 murders, 120 abductions and 139 rapes. From *Refugees*, No. 9, Sept. '82. (Published by UNHCR.)

"If the Geneva Convention is interpreted broadly, there must be a billion refugees in the world, at least one billion individuals who do not agree with their governments... I believe we should get back to a more political concept of what a refugee is, and not confuse a charitable welcome, which is desirable when we can afford it, with the right to asylum or the status of refugee which implies an acknowledged duty of protection on the part of the state. This is a matter of fairness and, ultimately, of human rights." Gilles Rosset, OFPRA's Secretary-General. (French Office for Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons).

From Refugees, No. 9, Sept. 1982. (Published by the UNHCR).

ever, he argued the UNHCR could promote the adoption of principles to ensure the safety of refugees. He further suggested that refugee camps and settlements be granted special status under a distinctive sign, such as the Red Cross, as if principles and signs could protect refugees from soldiers with M6's, rockets, tanks and helicopters with gunships. How can the safety of refugees be guaranteed when armed guerillas sometimes use refugee camps as military bases

and armies then attack the camps believing or with the pretext, that they are military bases?

Ambassador Schnyder was asked to survey camps and settlements of concern to the UNHCR and prepare a report on the problem to be ready no later than September 1983.

In the other "physical" protection issue, asylum seekers at sea, recent statistics indicate that fewer ships have been stopping to rescue refugees adrift in small boats on the open seas. The reasons are obvious. Rescue operations and disembarkation procedures can prove quite costly to ship-owners. The small maritime nations whose flags of convenience these ships fly are faced with increasing numbers of refugees. They are obliged to rescue but can ill afford to offer asylum. All that emerged from this discussion was a reiteration of the obligation to rescue asylum seekers in distress at sea.

Complex issues were raised at the 1982 Executive Committee meeting. The changing world economic situation and political unrest in developing nations guarantee an increase in already large numbers of asylum seekers fleeing both economic and political repression. Backlash and shrinking economic resources are causing resettlement countries to close their doors. No matter how great the pressure exerted from

without by the waiting refugees, it appears likely to be matched by mounting pressures from within and the prospect of the doors opening enough to relieve the present world refugee crisis is far from promising.

Nansen Medal

This year's Nansen Medal was awarded to Crown Princess Sonja of Norway at a ceremony held on October 11 (the formal opening of the Executive Committee meeting) at the Palais des Nations. The medal is named after the famous Norwegian explorer, Dr. Fridtjof Nansen, who was the first League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The award is granted for outstanding services to the cause of refugees. Crown Princess Sonja has been working to help refugees both in Norway and outside for over ten years.

The funds for this year's prize (U.S.\$50,000) were donated by the Canadian government. The princess announced that the prize money would be used for the construction of schools for refugees at the Katumba settlement in Tanzania.

Canadian News in Brief

Joe Stern, the former assistant to Lloyd Axworthy, has been appointed chairman of the Refugee Status Advisory Committee (RSAC).

During the summer of 1982, an agreement was signed with the government of Newfoundland under which the federal government and the province work jointly with private groups to provide resettlement help for refugees with special needs. The agreement benefits handicapped refugees, those with tuberculosis, and unaccompanied minors who could not otherwise be admitted because of the difficulties they would face in becoming established in Canada. This agreement is similar to one concluded with the government of Manitoba in September, 1981. *From Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration Levels, November 1982.*

Early Notice: The Next Standing Conference of Organizations Concerned for Refugees will be held in Montreal, May 13, 14, and 15, 1983. The theme will be

CLOSING
"REFUGEES at OUR DOORS."

At the Standing Conference of Canadian Organizations Concerned for Refugees, December 3rd and 4th 1982, a resolution was passed to ask the Canadian government to give financial assistance to all people who have asked for refuge in Canada, are waiting for a response to their claim from the competent authorities and are presently out of resources and close to unacceptable misery.

The conditions of group sponsorship are now under review to achieve a more equitable distribution of the costs undertaken by government and the private sector. *Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration Levels, November 1982.*

About 150 persons, including former detainees who belong to the Polish trade union Solidarity and their families, will soon arrive in Canada.

Oct. 26, 1982 - Minister Employment and Immigration - Press Release

In July, Refugee-Aid of Victoria, B.C. integrated with Immigrant Services. Stuart Beaveridge terminated his posi-

tion as Refugee-Aid Coordinator on September 30, 1982.

The Inter-Church Committee for Refugees issued a report in September to the UNHCR concerning the protection of refugees and the coordination of material assistance in Honduras. The High Commissioner and member governments of UNHCR were urged to persuade Honduras to sign the Refugee Convention and Protocol to ensure protection guarantees for refugees. Twelve UNHCR staff should be sent to Honduras for the sole purpose of providing protection. A task force should be set up to report on protection and relocation issues and a meeting called to coordinate effort. The brief suggested the need to delimit clearly the protection and assistance functions of UNHCR personnel.

The brief was well-received, particularly two suggestions: the need for UNHCR to coordinate the different NGOs in Honduras so there would be open lines of communication between them; and the need for UNHCR to talk directly to the refugees.

Fact Finding Visit to Central America

*Excerpts from the Dawson Report**

The refugee situation in Central America involves upwards of half a million people. More than 10% of the entire population of El Salvador is either in internal or external exile . . . there are definite prospects that there will be an increase in the number of refugees in the area. UNHCR policy is accepted by and large by most countries in the region which at least tolerate the presence of Salvadorans and Guatemalans on their territory.

Canada's primary role will continue to be that of a donor of aid and as a catalyst for effective UNHCR programs in the area. Immigration, therefore, must complement CIDA programs of humanitarian relief and initiatives by External Affairs directly with the UNHCR or through the Executive Committee.

Canadian policy in regard to providing resettlement as a means of protection for those who suffer hardship in countries of first asylum or who are in danger of being returned to the countries from which they have escaped has been well received. It will not generate a significant flow of refugees to be resettled in Canada from within Central America itself but needs to be continued as an indispensable complement to UNHCR policy.

Awareness of our policy varied considerably throughout the region. We had made the greatest impact in Mexico City, Dallas and San Jose, Costa Rica, where the combination of a strong Canadian presence and visits by Canadian Church representatives served to publicize and reinforce information regarding Canadian refugee policy. Offices in the region need to continue to build referral networks so that potential recipients of resettlement facilities can be identified.

Central America will likely grow in importance as a source of refugees to be resettled in Canada. Our coverage in the area . . . does not seem appropriate to a region where we are attempting to implement a highly sensitive refugee program responding to individual needs. More attention needs to be paid to reporting and intelligence gathering on refugee matters, particularly in those countries where we do not have full-time representatives.

The team noted that immigration officers working in the area had a preference to fit cases with obvious humanitarian interest for Canada into the March 1981 special program rather than deal with them under the Latin American refugee program.

The profile describing those Salvadoran refugees that we are interested in assisting is valid but may be too restrictive to fully achieve policy objectives. Several sources reported that in addition to those persons involved in promoting measures for social progress or delivering services in El Salvador, those persons of military service age, both male and female with secondary or post-secondary education, would be in jeopardy if forced to return to El Salvador. Those in the foregoing category from guerilla controlled areas would most certainly face persecution if returned to their own country.

The Canadian program has potential for significant growth in proportion to the success or failure of groups in the United States in using litigation as a means of obtaining de facto protection for Salvadorans in the U.S.A. This momentum is unlikely to produce a great deal in terms of refugee intake in 1982, but may be significant in 1983 and beyond.

*The Honourable Lloyd Axworthy dispatched a team to Central America in March headed by Dennis Dawson, M.P., former Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment and Immigration, and included W.G. Robinson, Chairman of the Ministerial Task Force on Immigration Practices and Procedures and R.A. Girard, Director of Refugee Affairs for the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission.

The mandate of the team was to gauge the need for resettlement of Latin American refugees outside the zone, to assess the adequacy of existing Canadian policy and to determine whether Canadian policy is known and applied in the region in an effective way.

Canadian Resettlement Policy

Canada has a useful role to play through resettlement in Canada of those refugees who cannot be protected in countries of first asylum or those who are in imminent danger of being returned to the country from which they have fled.

Canadian Financial Aid

Canada has provided \$750,000 in financial and material aid in response to various appeals from international agencies active in the area.

The Role of the UNHCR

It is UNHCR'S intention to protect

and assist Central American refugees within the region insofar as possible until a political solution is achieved thereby facilitating orderly repatriation or local resettlement, whichever is dictated by the outcome. For example, there are approximately 400 Salvadoran refugees in Panama who, after considerable effort by UNHCR field staff were permitted to settle on the land.

Resettlement Policy Abroad

Several hundred Salvadorans have been accepted in Mexico City as Convention refugees or under relaxed criteria. In addition, Sal-

vadoran applicants abroad with close relatives in Canada are being processed under relaxed selection criteria.

Resettlement Policy in Canada

Earlier in 1981, Salvadorans already temporarily in Canada were granted de facto protection through suspension of deportation, except in cases of national security, and change of status privileges which were made available to those who had relatives or who could prove they had the ability to resettle in Canada. Adjustment of status privileges in Canada has benefitted more than 400 Salvadorans.

Regional Surveys

Costa Rica

Refugee Demography

There are thought to be 8,000 Salvadorans and Guatemalan refugees in Costa Rica, of which 6,000 are registered with the UNHCR. Only 350 of these are in the camp at Los Angeles . . . which encourages collective participation toward agricultural self-sufficiency organized largely by refugee workers. This camp will hold 1,000 persons when it reaches its capacity later this year. The remainder of refugees in Costa Rica is dispersed in the towns and cities.

In 1981 there was a series of expulsions of Salvadorans caught working illegally. These expulsions were to Nicaragua, the country most refugees passed through on their way to Costa Rica.

Voluntary Agencies

The Episcopal Church has started referring small number of Salvadorans and Guatemalans in particular need of resettlement to the Canadian Embassy. Arrangements to supply selected Red Cross personnel (the only other assisting agency) with the guidelines and documents are in process. Discussions were held with ICM for coordination of refugee transportation from the zone to Canada.

Canadian Policy

Canada's resettlement role in Costa Rica should be expanded to a limited extent. Salvadoran intellectuals, professionals and others from the urban middle class having no access to assistance in Costa Rica and no hope of local integration, and who have a clear claim to Convention refugee status, could be assisted through resettlement to Canada rather than be exposed to the hardship of enforced idleness or re-migration to another area of first asylum.

Nicaragua

Nicaragua is becoming the most favoured destination of new refugees from El Salvador and Guatemala. This impoverished country, itself in the throes of reconstruction, can offer little more than effective reception facilities and a relatively tranquil environment. One small-scale agricultural resettlement project has been launched. Educated people who are not comfortable with Nicaragua as a destination of first asylum tend to try to make their way to Mexico. Immigration personnel do not currently visit Nicaragua and the need for Canadian assistance is probably more emphatic on the aid side rather than on the resettlement side.

Guatemala

There are thousands of Salvadorans in

Refugees in Ce

The Dawson Report i

by Meyer l

Many involved in the refugee movement have advocated going beyond band-aid humanitarian approaches to an analysis of the political causes resulting in large outflows of refugees. Meyer Brownstone was invited to comment on the Dawson report. His analysis attacks alleged causes beyond the symptoms.
— editor.

The Dawson report represents a sympathetic and supportive Canadian position on the question of resettlement of Central American refugees. Its recommendations deserve support. But our understanding of the question and our actions need a far broader view unrestricted by, though including, the narrow mandate of the Department of Employment and Immigration.

"It should be noted that Canada is the only major resettlement country now accepting Salvadoran refugees for resettlement."
Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration Levels, November 1982, p.4.

Refugees in Central America are first and foremost created by long-lived, indigenous oppression by ruling oligarchies. The oppressed deny their oppression, ultimately with violence. Where they succeed in overcoming their oppression, as in Nicaragua, regional oligarchies engage in counter-revolutionary activities.

To compound the situation, external economic and political forces have historically reinforced the status quo. In Central America a pre-eminent external intervenor is the United States Government and the United States-based corporations. (Canada has done little to moderate this intervention.) The effect of this is to reinforce the indigenous, oligarchic economic political and military power. This, in turn, prolongs and escalates the indigenous struggle, raises the possibility of regional war, and shifts attention from particularly repressive national regimes in the name of regional objectives. This is the expanding foundation for the immense scale of refugee problems in Central America and their unbelievably brutal character. There are refugees inside and outside of El Salvador and

Guatemala. There are now limited but growing numbers of indigenous refugees in Honduras.

The scale is staggering and growing. There are over two million refugees from and in the region as a whole. Being a refugee is bad enough, but for these refugees there has been no end to horror. They were bombed and butchered in their homes and in their communities, attacked en route to escape to recipient countries (thousands died) and in Honduras, a recipient country, violations have not ceased. All refugees are subject to the prison-like quality of camps, to denial of basic normal activities such as work, to constant harassment by Honduran troops. Many have been forcibly relocated in the haste to clear a war zone in the border area. Many refugees and Honduran refugee-workers have been killed. This process has created Honduran refugees in their own country.

When the Dawson report refers to people in peril, then it is difficult to exclude any refugee — all are in peril of one form of extreme limitation of human rights or another, with death as a strong likelihood.

Clearly, the basic United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) objective of protection and security has not been met despite its international stature. It has been in part almost swept aside by the onrushing regional war, by oligarchic and United States policies and actions. No refugee program, outside of wholesale migration from the area, can effectively relieve suffering in the context of a regional war and the context of recipient countries who are themselves grossly under-developed and oligarchy-ridden. Salvadoran and Guatemalan

In the settlement of Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugees "of major importance, of course, if not the decisive factor, has been the cooperation and generosity of the Honduran government, without which thousands of people would no doubt have lost themselves."
From *Refugees*, No. 9, Sept./82. Published by UNHCR.

Central America

in a Political Context

Meyer Brownstone

refugees have run from one oligarchy to another. There is limited human survival in either.

The regional refugee program must emphasize security and development in the areas in which refugees are located. The Salvadoran refugees themselves have petitioned the UNHCR to provide a refuge in Costa Rica, Panama and Nicaragua, and indeed, Canada. Their choice must be understood, respected and supported. The likelihood of achieving this petition is limited and every effort must be made to support refugees in Honduras, in Mexico, in El Salvador and in Guatemala. But first, there must be a rejection and denunciation of Ronald Reagan's obscene statements of democratic progress in Central America. He has pronounced this over the bodies of thousands and the bodies of thousands who will be murdered by his forces of democracy. The people and government of Canada cannot remain silent in the face of this grotesque lie.

The major viable, if very fragile, factor in the refugee situation is the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. It is essential to focus Canadian efforts on the UNHCR. Canada is a strong supporter of the UNHCR. It sits on the Executive Committee. The UNHCR must fulfill its protection mandate in Honduras, a task which it has not fulfilled in its work in this region partly because of elements of incompetence, of questionable judgments, of succumbing to United States pressure and partly because of its weak status in Honduras. These factors have on occasion resulted in the spectacle of UNHCR officials refusing food and medical supplies and basic protection to refugees who were resisting relocation, and has actually resulted in forced reversal of the flow of refugees back into active war zones. Promises of relocation in rural resettlement schemes in Honduras have a hollow ring. After all, these are the very Salvadorans who were sent back by Honduras to El Salvador in "the football war" of 1969 — conditions are if anything less receptive in Honduras than they were then. But despite the bleakness of this prospect, the UNHCR, together with indigenous and international agencies, can do much to make life more bearable

for the refugees if international influence can cause the Honduran regime to view refugees as refugees, not as security risks, and to abandon its war against them.

The number of refugees the U.S. is proposing to admit for the 1983 fiscal year totals 90,000. This figure includes 15,000 from Eastern Europe, 6,000 from the Near East and South Asia, 64,000 from Indochina, 3,000 from Africa and 2,000 from Latin America.

From *Refugees*, No. 9, Sept./82. Published by UNHCR.

The Dawson report is sympathetic but remains confined to "practical" questions of defining status of refugees, and behaviour of recipient countries (Mexico and the United States). It speaks to the support/rescue of a miniscule portion of the refugees. Canadian perspectives must go far wider in terms of: (1) Canadian resistance to the threat to world peace posed by the oligarchy's intolerable pressure nationally, the oligarchic regional entente, and United States support and intervention on behalf of these regimes and "regional considerations". A continuation of current tendencies can only mean a multiplication of refugees and a compounding of a refugee condition which almost defies amelioration through refugee policies; (2) Canadian direct and personal responses (opening homes to refugees, sponsorship, providing funds) to refugee petitions to be relocated in other countries; (3) material support of refugees inside El Salvador and Guatemala; (4) significant intervention in the UNHCR to increase its protection function capacity in Honduras; (5) rejection of relocation within Honduras without the active participation of the refugees themselves; (6) substantial increase of material support for refugees in Mexico and Honduras coupled with continued strong submissions to the Government of Honduras regarding human rights.

(Meyer Brownstone is a professor of Political Science and Associate Chairman of the department at the University of Toronto. He has made several recent visits to Central America.)

Guatemala because of its common border with Salvador. Canada has a limited role in Guatemala facilitating family reunification of both Salvadorans and Guatemalans with their dependents from Guatemala. Voluntary group contacts in Guatemala have been able to identify a very small number of refugees who could benefit from resettlement in Canada. A procedural framework has been established in conjunction with the resident Canadian mission to ensure that such cases are referred to the visa office in Mexico City on an ongoing basis.

Honduras

Numbers

The UNHCR and other official sources estimate that the number of refugees in Honduras ranges from 11,000 to 20,000 Salvadorans and 1,000 Guatemalans. The number of Salvadoran refugees entering into Honduras is decreasing.

Complicating the question of refugees from Salvador and Guatemala is a new influx of Mosquito Indians who have arrived recently from Nicaragua, bringing the total to an estimated 10,000.

The U.N. Convention

Honduras is not a signatory to the U.N. Convention. Government spokesmen indicated that they respect the Convention insofar as national security allows. There have been a number of independent reports of arrests, expulsions and even assassinations, the trend of which appears to be increasing.

Relocation

Although refugees were initially confined in border areas where camps had been developed and a significant amount of de facto local integration had taken place, the authorities did an abrupt turn about late last year and decreed that refugees would be restricted within a zone not less than 30 miles and not more than 50 miles from the frontier. This led to the forced removal of refugees to a rather arid and inhospitable interior plateau where local self-sufficiency cannot be achieved. The main camp at Mesa Grande . . . at best can only be a holding facility pending the development of alternative local integration projects. Rather than accept forced relocation to this area, some of the Salvadoran refugees have voluntarily repatriated themselves or have left for other countries of temporary asylum.

Canada's Role

Canada's refugee interests in Honduras are twofold. Firstly, as Honduras has an extensive border with El Salvador, it is essential that the border remain open and that refugees be effectively assisted and protected in Honduras if UNHCR policy for the

... from page 9

area is to succeed. Secondly, Honduras has proven to be deeply concerned about Salvadoran refugees who, even out of fear for their well-being, have moved outside the zone 50-80 miles from the frontier. It is alleged that any such people are liable to be detained or may be summarily refouled to El Salvador. Canada could resettle some of those persons who will not be accepted by the Honduran government, provided, of course, the individuals concerned aren't statutorily prohibited from coming to Canada. Canadian support for the UNHCR assuming a coordinating role was expressed. In addition a standing offer was made to resettle any Salvadoran detainees who are not welcome in Honduras, provided we can obtain access to them while in detention and they are able to meet admission requirements.

The Role of UNHCR

At the time of the team's arrival, international assistance programs to refugees in the border area with El Salvador had fallen below minimum requirements because of a split in the administration of the UNHCR's operating partner, CEDEN. The regional UNHCR representative was in Tegucigalpa to negotiate new arrangements and seek Honduran government agreement for the UNHCR to assume the operational role itself pending the development of other solutions. At the same time, the UNHCR reactivated recommendations to the Honduran authorities to agree to the development of agricultural resettlement projects for Salvadorans as a more humane alternative to Mesa Grande. In the long term these agricultural settlements would become available to poor Hondurans as development projects once the Salvadoran refugee problem is solved. Subsequently, the UNHCR regional representative who was in Hondu-

ras to negotiate on the question of coordination reported that the Honduran authorities, both civilian and military, had agreed to the UNHCR taking over the coordinating role for refugee relief and in addition they would favourably consider the establishment of camps in more favourable areas for agriculture well removed from the frontier area. He indicated that the next problem would be that of obtaining the necessary staff to administer the UNHCR's expanded role in Honduras.²

Mexico

Transit and Refuge

There are three, if not more, aspects to the current refugee situation in Mexico, some of which have implications for Canada. As the land bridge between Central America and the United States, Mexico is a transit country for individuals seeking entry to the U.S.A. Reliable sources estimate that up to 600 Salvadorans and Guatemalans are apprehended each week in Mexico and returned to the Guatemalan border. While many of these people are simply potential illegal entrants to the U.S.A., there are, at the same time, refugees among them. There is no official handover of these people to the Guatemalan authorities at the time of their expulsion from Mexico and no information as to what happens to them.

The second component involves Guatemalans who traditionally have migrated to the Chiappas area in Southern Mexico to harvest the coffee and cotton crops. Since the outbreak of widespread violence in Guatemala directed against the Indian population, the influx of Guatemalans into Chiappas has increased 5-fold and the

²As a postscript, it is noteworthy that the UNHCR did assume the co-ordination role in April. Further arrangements for a network of agricultural settlements are now underway.

normal return has not taken place. There may be as many as 200,000 Guatemalans now in the area. *Refoulement*, which took place on a mass scale last fall has now ceased and the establishment of de facto camps is going forward to facilitate assistance.

A third component is the Salvadoran group. Mexico grants de facto refugee status and documents to Salvadorans other than those using Mexico for purposes of entry to the United States. There are no official statistics obtainable on the numbers of documented and undocumented Salvadorans in Mexico but all estimates are well in excess of 100,000.

The group in most apparent need in Mexico consists of urban Salvadorans living illegally in Mexico City who are thought to number 40,000. Being out of status and unable by law to remain in Mexico City, these people cannot obtain legal protection. The UNHCR has unilaterally granted mandates to some 150.

The Canadian Embassy

The visa section at the Canadian Embassy in Mexico City has been active in implementing the special programs for Salvadorans which went into effect in March 1981. As of June 1982, 274 Salvadorans with a close Canadian connection had been visaed under relaxed criteria and a further 160 Salvadorans as Convention refugees. Individuals who are Convention refugees are accepted within the Latin American Refugee Programme if they meet the guidelines for our limited resettlement initiative.

The Officer in Charge reported that his office has and would continue to have more work than can be handled in extending a full range of services throughout Central America. Selection visits are infrequently

Refugees in Central America and Mexico

Countries	Salvadorean Refugees		Other Refugees		Total	
	Assisted	Total	Assisted	Total	Assisted	Total
Belize	2,000	2,000	—	—	2,000	2,000
Costa Rica	8,000	10,000	1,500	5,000	9,500	15,000
Cuba	—	—	—	2,000	—	2,000
Dominican Rep.	—	—	300	5,000	300	5,000
Guatemala	—	70,000	—	—	—	70,000
Honduras	14,910	16,000	12,197	13,000	27,107	29,000
Mexico	3,500	120,000	14,325	20,000	17,825	140,000
Nicaragua	5,326	22,000	50	500	5,376	22,500
Panama	1,000	1,000	200	500	1,200	1,500
Total	34,736	241,000	28,572	46,000	63,308	287,000

(Source) From UNHCR. Figures as of 15 August 1982.

There are a total of 287,000 refugees in Central America and Mexico, according to latest government estimates. Of this total, 63,308 are receiving assistance from UNHCR at the request of host governments. More than half the refugees receiving assistance are from El Salvador. There are also significant numbers of Guatemalans and Nicaraguans, as well as refugees from other Latin American countries. UNHCR provides legal protection, emergency assistance and promotes self-sufficiency projects.

made to Nicaragua or Honduras because of the small number of applications from these areas. El Salvador (and for a temporary period Guatemala)³ is not visited because of the possible risk to the personal security of any officer sent to that country. Periodic area visits are made to Panama, Costa Rica and Belize as required. Between these visits, part-time immigration services are available in Guatemala and San Jose, Costa Rica through the respective Canadian Embassies under supervision from Mexico City. Communications, however, are not reliable nor is it an easy thing for clients from other countries in the region to obtain permission to enter Mexico for the purpose of consulting with our office there. Delays in executing routine transactions for non-refugee applicants are extensive.

Belize

One neglected area in the region is Belize, concerning which there is very little hard information. One group of Salvadorans in Belize has recently appealed to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees requesting resettlement in Canada. Simply from the point of view of availability of land in a similar climatic zone, it would seem that Belize is a prime area for resettlement of subsistence farmers from Salvador. If any Canadian involvement is required, it is probably aid rather than resettlement which would be the appropriate vehicle.

The U.S.A.

Salvadorans

The issue of Salvadorans and Guatemalans in the U.S.A. is bound up in a long tradition of illegal economic immigration from that area of the southern United States. This flow has increased in intensity since the outbreak of civil unrest in both El Salvador and Guatemala. Estimates of a quarter million or more Salvadorans in the U.S.A. were quoted by several different sources.

The U.S.A. is the only country on the North

³Visits to Guatemala were resumed in May, 1982.

American continent which officially reports to El Salvador. Far more significant than deportations is the U.S. program of assisted voluntary departure which has the same effect as deportation in respect of the long-term prohibition against return. Voluntary departure is effected without hearing or appeal.

Among Salvadorans in the U.S.A. there is little spontaneous interest in resettlement in Canada except when the alternative is expulsion from the United States.

The Canadian Presence

The operation of our programs in the United States or anywhere else must be neutral. Canadian immigration services in the U.S.A. are available to all applicants regardless of their legal status vis à vis U.S. Immigration law. The fact that we interview on occasion in U.S. detention centres is indicative of tacit consent by the U.S. authorities to the operation of Canadian programs as well as to the policy of the U.S. government to allow deportees to proceed to destinations other than the country from which they came or of which they are citizens.

Because our limited program for Latin American refugees focuses on refugees who do not have protection or are likely to be returned, the greatest potential demand exists in the United States. Groups organized to provide legal aid and community services to Salvadorans and Guatemalans in the U.S. are only just becoming aware of the Canadian program and the growth in referrals of cases from these groups is inevitable. The magnitude is difficult to predict at this time because the number of cases they refer to us will depend on the success of other legal remedies.

Groups of volunteers who came out to meet us in Texas and Los Angeles proved to be loose coalitions of church, human rights and ethnic groups. They seem to have emerged onto the scene fairly recently and did not give the appearance of yet having

been able to coordinate respective roles one to another. In some cases, our visit had proven to be the catalyst for them to come together and discuss common problems.

Considerable differences were noted between the situation in Texas as compared to Los Angeles. In Southern California, local groups had succeeded in raising bail bonds for detained Salvadorans. Once released on bail, their priority in the refugee claims procedure drops well down the list. It is unlikely that these claims will be heard in the foreseeable future. This latter group has de facto asylum in the U.S.A. In Texas, on the other hand, bonding has not been readily obtainable with the result that deportation after adjudication of the refugee claim to the U.S. authorities is a more likely eventuality. Referrals from this area will likely be heavier. The capacity of Los Fresnos detention centre is under 250, but the turnover rate is high. As a result there is potential for significant growth in our program from that area.

It was evident that while good contacts had been made between our Consulates and groups serving Los Fresnos detention centre in Harlingen, Texas and El Centro in California, no contact had yet been made with groups aiding detainees at Laredo and El Paso centres in Texas, the latter of which is the largest centre in the area. Efforts to make our program known to groups in this area are underway.

The Canadian program is necessarily small-scale and therefore applicable to those who are genuine Convention refugees and who fit the profile we have developed to describe those in most need. Media publicity (which had been suggested by some interlocutors) would serve to clog the system with ineligible; would raise false hopes among many and could be construed as criticism of U.S. policy. We also indicated that the place to make a referral was to any of the 11 Canadian Consulates in the U.S.A. with full-time immigration facilities.

World News

Squadron Leader Prasing Soonsiri, Secretary-General of Thailand's National Security Council, announced that his country would push Indochinese refugees back across its borders unless Western countries honoured pledges to accept them for resettlement.

The Asia Record, Vol. 3, No. 7, October 1982.

* * *

ICM (Intergovernmental Committee for Migration) have borrowed a Belgian expert in physical rehabilitation and a Scandinavian expert in social rehabilitation (compliments of the Belgian government and the Danish and Norwegian Refugee Councils) to strengthen

their Medical Services in Southeast Asia to identify and prepare dossiers on physically and mentally disabled refugees so these people may be considered by a country for final resettlement.

* * *

There are 175,000 Indochinese refugees and 200,000 displaced Kampuchians in Thailand. On present estimates, 40,000 are expected to be resettled in 1982. In 1981 the figure was 102,561.

The Asia Record, Vol. 3, No. 7, October 1982.

* * *

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees announced the allocation of an additional US\$2,000,000 from his Emergency Fund for assistance to persons of concern to UNHCR in Lebanon

and Syria. Beneficiaries will include Lebanese displaced persons within Lebanon, as well as Lebanese citizens who find themselves in a refugee-like situation in neighbouring Syria.

This brings the total of UNHCR's assistance to US\$5,540,000.

UNHCR Press Release REF/1512.

* * *

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 11,209 Poles had sought asylum in Austria as of August. Between January and June of 1982, UNHCR reports 9,711 Poles were resettled out of Austria; of those, 3,110 went to the U.S., 2,558 to Australia, and 1,120 to Canada.

From Refugee Reports, Nov. 5, 1982.

Human Rights & Massive Exodus

The Aga Khan Report

Background

Canada was the main initiator when the United Nations Commission on Human Rights resolved to study the relation between human rights and massive exoduses.¹ Sadruddin Aga Khan, former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, was appointed Special Rapporteur.

His study, released in December 1981, was controversial not because of the main report; it provided a general analysis of the causes of mass exoduses in the past decade, as well as suggested corrective measures. The source of controversy originated in its three annexes. The first contained succinct studies of 22 countries which have experienced the phenomenon of mass exodus. Four particularly major situations (i.e., Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Indochina and Mexico) formed the subject matter of the second annex which was quite detailed and extensive. The third annex presented an overview of international migration in some of the main areas of the world as recorded by international organizations or by private researchers. The annexes contained the information base for the observations, conclusions and recommendations of the report. While the study was concerned with potential solutions to the problem, the annexes focused on the root causes. In the official published report, the annexes were deleted (repressed?) as well as all references to them in the main body of the report.² We obtained a draft of the original full report.

Refugee Producing Countries

The reasons for suppressing the annexes are obvious. Annex I details the economic and political situation of 22 countries

¹U.N. Resolution 29, March 1981. This originated in part from Resolution 30 (XXXVI) in which the U.N. Commission on Human Rights expressed concern that large exoduses or groups are frequently the result of human rights violations. Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan was appointed Special Rapporteur by the Chairman of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights in April 1981.

²It is, in fact, possible to see where the references were deleted because the changes have been made in a different typeface. The United Nations Division of Human Rights provided the following explanation: the original report exceeded the UN's prescribed length for such studies. A different reason is indicated in the introduction to the study itself:

"There are doubtless many situations in which mass exoduses are caused by denials of human rights, and the Secretary-General does not fail to point this out in his contacts and consultations with the parties concerned. However, the Secretary-General often finds that considerable caution needs to be exercised in the public disclosure of the precise substance of his contacts with Governments concerned, including those on the nexus between mass exoduses and the full enjoyment of human rights, so as to avoid prejudicing future contacts and closing the possibility of his being of assistance in the future to the victims of such situations."

from which significant portions of their populations fled. For example, the study of Haiti provides a candid account of the economic and political situation of that country and describes human rights violations, including: repression of freedom of opinion and expression, extreme restriction of freedom of association, arbitrary detention, intimidation, and torture. (The Inter-American Commission of Human Rights, which visited Haiti in August 1978 published these findings in 1980.) Haiti would not have had the clout to repress the appendices. Annex I includes the United States government's reaction to the influx of Haitian "boat people." Haitians who reached the U.S. were sent to detention centers.

"On 30 September 1981, with the justification that the Haitians' entry was 'detrimental to the interests of the United States,' the administration gave powers to the U.S. coastguard to stop Haitian boats on the high seas, board them and turn back passengers not in possession of visas nor equipped with a proper reason for wanting to enter the United States — in the form of either proof of actual political persecution by the Government of Haiti or the fear that such persecution would start as soon as the individual went back."

[Annex I, page 35]

If Haiti's situation is drastic and the American response is depicted as cold-blooded, the situation was even worse in other areas. Equatorial Guinea, between 1968 and 1979, was, "one of the worst repressive and totalitarian regimes in Africa engaging in arbitrary arrests, torture, summary executions, government sanctioned murder, including the disappearance of two-thirds of the members of the 1968 Assembly when President Macias Nguema seized power; at least one-third of the population fled (100,000-150,000 people). Uganda under Idi Amin Dada was a close contender for the heavyweight title for repression. The military regime of Zaire and its 'pacification' program produced 220,000 refugees who fled to Angola by May of 1977; the numbers who fled totalled over 320,000 a year later.

Central and South American regimes are almost as bad. In a country with the highest population density in the hemisphere, the economic situation and conflict in El Salvador produced a quarter of a million internally displaced people with at least the same number leaving the country. Installation of left-wing regimes does not seem to solve the problem. One hundred thousand Nicaraguans fled the repressive regime of Somoza and now, the ethnic Indians (4% of the popula-

tion), dissatisfied with government integration policies, are fleeing into Honduras as are other dissidents. Cuba is a prime example of the alternative scenario. Almost one million fled Castro's regime, 120,000 leaving in 1980 alone. In the context of these regimes the repression under Chile's Pinochet seems less severe.

In Africa as well, both left-wing and right-wing dictatorships produce refugees. Civil war in Angola, following independence in 1975, produced many more refugees. In the six months from November 1977 to May 1978, for example, new arrivals in Zaire — which believed itself to be sheltering already about 470,000 Angolan refugees — were estimated to total 60,000, while the numbers in Zambia rose to 30,000. In Chad, the 13-year old civil war erupted again on March 21, 1980 leading to a massive exodus.

Political ideologies are not the only sources of repression and civil strife resulting in mass exoduses. Political conflict between neighbours is another source. In Namibia, South Africa displays "a consistent pattern of gross and reliably attested violations of human rights" not only to its own population. When Mauritania and Morocco divided up the Western Sahara, contrary to the promises of autonomy by Spain, the Polisario revolt and subsequent conflict produced an estimated 30,000 refugees in a sparsely populated region. In 1971, the massive influx of refugees from East Bengal (now Bangladesh) of two to four million refugees was a *causa belli* between India and Pakistan. Refugees were not the cause of war between Iran and Iraq, but they were certainly a by-product — one million according to some sources.

Ethnic conflicts are even more insidious than ones which are primarily ideological and political. The Palestinian refugee situation remains intractable and unresolved after 30 years. We all know of the attempts of a small white population to dominate a majority of blacks in Zimbabwe which resulted in 250,000 refugees. Few know of the Tutsi domination of the Hutu who constitute 85% of the population of 3.5 million people in Burundi; 140,000 have fled, most of them widows and children. In Cyprus, the

Forthcoming . . .
Refugees in Somalia and Sudan.

Turkish-Greek conflict resulted in the uprooting and resettlement of one-third, 220,000, of the population. In Lebanon, intercommunal strife erupting in 1975 resulted in an estimated one million displaced persons by 1978 (over one-third of the population); over 250,000 left the country.

Repression and political conflict are frequently intermixed with ethnic and communal strife. In South Africa, gross and flagrant violations of human rights, as well as discriminatory apartheid laws produce refugees. In the Philippines, we find not only a dictatorship, but a Muslim organization, the Moro National Liberation Front, struggling for independence in the south; hundreds of thousands have been uprooted by the struggle. In Burma, ill treatment of the Muslim minority in the State of Arakan instigated both an exodus and an insurgent movement.

Human elements — dictatorship and repression, ideological war, political rivalries and ethnic conflicts — are not the only causes of mass exoduses. Natural calamities can be as well. In the Sahel, hundreds of thousands were forced to flee their normal habitat because of drought.

Human Rights

Can international action contain and even eliminate mass exoduses?³ The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights has no binding effect; large portions of it have remained unheeded. The Declaration is analysed article by article to establish to what extent exodus is a by-product of human rights violations.

Two kinds of violations emerge as particularly significant. Article 14, dealing with the right to asylum, "provides the framework within which most population movements take place." Articles 20 and 21 deal with the right of peaceful assembly, freedom of association and other freedoms. The study found that all mass exoduses which took place between 1970 and 1980 "poured forth from regions where the prevailing situation prevented individual citizens from exercising their political rights," although this "is not, in itself, the essential cause for large movements of population."

No single violation of human rights or any other cause can be isolated as the reason why people choose to uproot; in each situation studied, a combination of push and pull factors leads to mass exodus. Circumstances within a country or region which force or induce an individual to flee are push factors. Incentives to leave exerted from the outside are pull factors.

Push Factors

The introduction of radical political and economic policies by revolutionary governments of underdeveloped nations in their attempts to modernize (e.g. Kampuchea, after the ascendance of the Khmer Rouge, and Ethiopia) can be a major push factor. Basic human rights are often denied; epidemics and famine can result from economic policies that neglect the agricultural sector. Large segments of the population are uprooted and displaced. Occasionally, minorities are used as scapegoats to divert attention from the policies of a new regime. In Vietnam, the government's treatment of the indigenous ethnic Chinese (closing 30,000 businesses, 80% of which were owned by Chinese) provoked a massive flight of these people from that country. Other significant push factors are wars and insurrections and their resulting chaos. In Africa, colonial partition left largely artificial boundaries. Structural imbalances led to a drift to towns from the rural areas and/or international migration within Africa. Prolonged liberation struggles were also accompanied by a massive exodus "to escape the violent methods of a self-interested minority regime." Other push factors include rapid population growth, food insecurity and a rise in the death rate from malnutrition, food scarcity and food price inflation, chronic high inflation and unemployment rates, ecological deterioration from natural or man-made disasters, loss or reduction in levels of foreign aid, investor wariness, disproportionately high military expenditures and inadequate public services.

Pull Factors

The ready availability and relative abundance of international aid, as well as the system of distribution, are the most significant pull factors contributing to mass exoduses. The increasing operational role of the UNHCR and other agencies in humanitarian emergencies may have acted as a magnet in drawing people over the borders. Annex II describes in detail the situation in Ethiopia where the repercussions of the socialist military takeover in 1974 included economic devastation (not only for Ethiopia, but for neighbouring countries, Sudan, Djibouti, etc.) as well as religious and political persecution causing a huge displacement of population. The massive influx of Ethiopians into the host countries caused serious economic and social problems as well as a growing resent-

³"Mass" exodus in the context of the study need not necessarily refer to a specific large number of people; it is a mass exodus if the number leaving is high relative to the population in either the country of origin or the country of asylum or even if the number is low when those fleeing belong to a particular minority group.

Canada's Ambassador, C.D. McPhail, in his speech to the UNHCR Executive Committee, called Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan's study an important first step in dealing with the question of massive exoduses. Governments and international organizations have an obligation to tackle both causes and consequences of massive exoduses, he said. Ambassador McPhail also expressed hope that a U.N. group of experts, to be established under FRG initiative at the General Assembly, will soon begin examining possible international legal mechanisms to avert flows of refugees. This and the Sadruddin Report are of vital importance, he said.

ment of the refugees. The international community responded to the Ethiopian crisis by providing considerable relief assistance to refugees in the countries of asylum. The government of Ethiopia suggested that the "assistance being given in one area while being denied to areas adjacent to it had contributed to the influx of refugees."

Quotas for resettlement of refugees may be another pull factor. (Australia recently decided not to announce a quota for refugees for this reason.) Cited as a pull factor was "the psychological effect upon the Vietnamese population of foreign broadcasts giving the latest information on resettlement quotes..." An added factor was an established escape route with extra-territorial "foreign vessels, merchant ships and motor launches of concerned groups in western countries whose intention it is to save 'boat people' undergoing severe hardship."

The information revolution combined with the availability of modern modes of transportation created both an awareness among poor nations of conditions existing in more affluent regions of the planet as well as the feeling that those regions are more accessible. The situation for Mexican migrants, described in Annex II, is a case in point where "sufficient opportunity for successful employment in the U.S. maintains the flow." In the case of Vietnam, as mentioned above, foreign broadcasts played a part in luring people out of the country.

Victims of human rights violations or political revolutions are also encouraged to leave by the thought that their plight arouses sympathy in countries where they would be given an understanding welcome; this is particularly true in cases where the ideology of a new regime is opposed by those countries, hence

American attraction for Vietnamese refugees.

More generally, democratic institutions in North America and Europe are viewed as guarantors of fair treatment, particularly by minorities. The authors "regret the actual double standards which those who heed this appeal find sorely disappointing, when, upon arriving they are made to feel unwelcome."

Also, emigres who have already settled abroad act as a powerful magnet as they tend to send home messages of the advantages of their new environment while glossing over the difficulties.

Problems of Relief

The combination of push and pull factors is conjoined with three serious problems in current aid and relief methods; the abuse of the right to asylum, inequitable and uneven distribution of relief and the inadequacy of resettlement as a solution to the problem of mass exodus.

Because relief and refugee aid agencies

may find it easier to help in countries of asylum than in countries of origin, they, in effect, increase the numbers of refugees as those seeking help cross the borders. Also, relief agencies designate people as refugees who under existing legal instruments do not qualify for refugee status because it is necessary to attach a "refugee" label in order to obtain funding.

The blurring of differences between refugees and migrants abuses the right to asylum and creates a backlash from which genuine refugees stand to suffer. Because the numbers are so great in situations of mass exodus, it becomes difficult to determine eligibility for refugee status on an individual basis.

The study is also critical of the *ad hoc*, and consequently costly, way in which current relief programs are carried out by the international community. The report proposes the adoption of a more integrated approach to the planning and distribution of aid to alleviate regional disparities in levels of humanitarian assistance. Because there is no effective census mechanism, it is difficult to deter-

mine precise numbers of those qualifying for assistance.

Difficulties are also encountered in the resettling of large refugee populations, both in countries of temporary asylum and countries of resettlement. To the social and cultural problems stemming from such operations must be added the high costs involved. In the case of Vietnamese resettlement, for example, over U.S.\$600 million was spent for relief by UN agencies since 1975, \$337 million for transport (ICM). One country of resettlement budgeted \$568 million for domestic resettlement in a single year. As well, "substantial sums" were spent by UNICEF, ICRC and UNHCR on assistance within Kampuchea.

The recommendations of the report reflect the study's conclusion that foreign aid practices should be administered in terms of how they could best alleviate conditions causing mass flight rather than coping with it as a "fait accompli."

Haitian Asylum Seekers & U.S. Interdiction Policy

It has been one year since the Reagan administration implemented an interdiction policy to prevent Haitian asylum seekers from reaching U.S. shores. According to the Immigration and Naturalization Service, a total of 117 boats were boarded between October 1981 and September 1982; a significant number of those boardings occurred last spring.

INS spokesman John Schroeder said that two interpreters and two immigration officers form individual teams on Coast

Guard vessels interdicting boats. He said that passengers on stopped craft are asked questions such as where they are going and why. Those screened are not eligible for asylum, Schroeder said, as they are not on U.S. soil, but individuals whose answers to questions indicate a bona fide fear of persecution would be taken to the U.S. where they could make claims for asylum. INS screening guidelines are not public information.

Schroeder also said that no one stopped has filed for asylum since the interdiction policy began, and that a total of 186 persons have been returned to Haiti, where the State Department monitors

them for a year. So far, Schroeder said, there is no evidence to indicate that those returned have experienced retribution or ill-treatment.

Since October 1981, the arrivals of 506 undocumented Haitians have come to the attention of INS, compared to 11,514 in the previous year.

From *Refugee Reports*, Nov. 5, 1982.

There will be an article in a forthcoming issue of *Refuge* on the United States as a country of first asylum, with particular emphasis on the Haitians.

Refugee Documentation Project

The Institut Henry-Dunant is currently undertaking an international study of unaccompanied children in emergencies. They would like to add to the project a review of the Canadian experience with unaccompanied children since and including WW II. To this end, they are attempting to identify a sponsoring agency to carry out a review of the Canadian experience with unaccompanied children.

The projected costs to the sponsor would likely include remuneration for a researcher, at least U.S.\$500 for the acquisition of relevant materials, some local travel (in Canada) and two one day trips to Geneva.

Interested persons or agencies should contact: Everett M. Ressler, Study Coordinator for The Study of Unaccompanied Children in Emergencies, Institut Henry Dunant, 114, rue de Lausanne, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland

A Refugee Documentation Project has been established at York University. The Project is concerned with acquiring and preserving archival materials pertaining to refugees in and from all parts of the world, with Canadian material being the highest priority. (The Project's library is open between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekdays.) Donations of archival material are encouraged. If you have worked with refugees or have conducted research on refugees or refugee-related issues, please write and tell us about your work. A function of the Project is to create an index of Canadian individuals and organizations concerned with refugees in order to establish a referral network among people needing information on refugees. Another mandate of the project

is to carry out field research in refugee crises.

The Project, funded by a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, is directed by Professor Howard Adelman and administered by Caroline Stephens.

The Project has recently acquired a large body of material on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and Haitian refugees in the U.S.A. (documents, reports, international press clippings, periodical articles, court transcripts and statistical surveys).

Further information may be obtained by writing to C. Stephens, Refugee Documentation Project, York University, 4700 Keele Street, Downsview, Ontario M3J 2R6. Telephone (416) 667-3639.

Refugee Resettlement in Canada, 1981

In 1981, 8,873 Indochinese were landed in Canada. Of these refugees, 6,723 were government assisted and 2,150 were privately sponsored by groups.

The total intake of Eastern Europeans for 1981 was 5,325, of whom 606 were sponsored by relatives and 117 by private groups.

One thousand places for refugees from Latin and Central America were allocated in 1981 but because the need for large numbers of resettlement places did not materialize, this allocation was not fully used. As well as the reported 137 landings, there was an undetermined number of Minister's Permits issued to facilitate the early admission of Salvadoran refugees.

Of the 200 places allocated for African refugees, 151 were filled; of these, 122 were government-assisted, two were sponsored by relatives, and 27 were privately sponsored. An additional 200 places from the contingency reserve were assigned to Africa in July 1981, because a further need for resettlement was expected. These places were not used owing to the difficulty in organizing a protection-oriented program quickly.

Private sponsorship applications for refugees totalled 963 in 1981, representing 2,648 refugees; of these applications, 618 were for 1,975 Indochinese, 297 were for 560 Eastern Europeans, 27 were for 87

Latin Americans, 18 were for 23 Africans, and 3 were for 3 persons from other areas.

1981 Refugee Summary for Canada

Canada's planned intake for 1981 totalled 16,000. The actual number admitted amounted to only 14,996. The government claims to have sponsored 12,080 refugees: however, this figure is misleading as it includes 1502 Indochinese refugees who were actually relative-sponsored but who are included in the government-assisted totals because some resettlement costs were incurred by the federal government.

From Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration Levels, Nov. 1982. Background Paper.

	1981 Refugee Summary			Planned Refugee Intake		
	Planned Intake	Actual Gov't Sponsored	Actual Intake		1982	1983
Indochina	8,000	6,723	8,873	Indochina	4,000	3,000
Eastern Europe	4,000	4,602	5,325	Eastern Europe	6,000	3,000
	1,000**	—	—			
Latin and Central America	1,000	132	137	Latin America & Caribbean	1,000	2,000
Africa	200	122	151	Africa	500	1,000
	200**	—	—	Middle East	400	800
Other	300	37	46	Other	100	200
R.S.A.C. ***	—	464	464	Contingency Reserve ****	2,000	2,000
Total	14,700	12,080 - 1502* 10,578	14,996		14,000	12,000

*1,502 Indochinese were admitted on the strength of financial undertakings submitted by relatives in Canada. Since resettlement costs were, however, incurred by the federal government (for food, lodging, and clothing at the staging centres), they have been included in the government-assisted totals.

**Allocated from contingency reserve.

***The Refugee Status Advisory Committee considers claims to Convention refugee status by persons in Canada, and advises the Minister on these claims.

****Cabinet has approved funding for 10,000 refugees in 1983. If places from the contingency reserve need to be allocated, Cabinet will be asked to approve both the number of places and the required funding.

Source: Recruitment and Selection Branch, CEIC.

Canada's shortfall in refugee intake for 1981 is attributable to several reasons. Refugees admitted under Minister's Permits may not be counted. In addition, there were operational considerations such as the lack of flexibility to have resources moved to areas where they were needed and the priority given to

private sponsorships over government-assisted sponsorships, which sometimes slowed down the rate of government intake. As well, in areas such as the Middle East, Africa, and Central America, Canada's traditional approach of accepting spontaneous applications did not work owing to Canada's lack of past

involvement in these areas. It was thus necessary to build up contacts with local relief agencies and church groups to facilitate referrals of people. Moreover, a major crisis, which would have warranted release of the full 2,500 contingency reserve, simply did not occur.

From Background Paper on Immigration Levels. Annual Report to Parliament 1983. CEIC.

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Admission of refugees into the European countries by region of origin

Country of permanent asylum	Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia (from 1975 to 30 September 1981) (1)	Latin America (Chile, Argentina, Uruguay etc.) (2)	Africa (2)	Total number of refugees residing in the country of permanent asylum at 30 June 1980 (2)
Austria	1,432			25,000
Belgium	3,631	3,300	3,300	33,000
Denmark	2,201			3,500
Finland	115			
France	71,006	9,000		160,000
Federal Republic of Germany	18,565 (3)			48,000
Greece	95			4,200
Iceland	34			
Ireland	237			
Italy	2,832			14,100
Luxembourg	97			
Netherlands	4,526			10,000
Norway	2,717	685	450	6,000
Spain	917			21,000
Sweden	2,299	10,000	1,300	20,000
Switzerland	6,969	2,000 (Asia:1,350 Tibetans)	500	35-40,000
United Kingdom	15,230			146,000

(1) Figures supplied by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

(2) Figures supplied by the countries of asylum

(3) In addition to these figures, the Federal Republic of Germany between 1975 and 1980 resettled 283,391 ethnic Germans from East European countries and 80,926 from the German Democratic Republic and Berlin (East).

(From Council of Europe, Steering Committee for Social Affairs report. CDSO (82)29 July 26, 1980.)