



CANADA'S PERIODICAL ON REFUGEES
REFUGEE

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Refugees and War in Africa: The Failure of Development

In Africa at least one person in two hundred is a refugee and the number is increasing daily. Yet this total, nearing six million, does not include the millions who remain inside their national border, displaced and facing starvation. Certainly it is true that in some parts of Africa -- notably in the South -- drought still plays a part, but it is war and civil strife, complicated by underdevelopment and international politics, which continue to be the primary causes of involuntary migration.

Africa's problems are complex and of long duration. In the 1970s many nations were favoured by unprecedented commodity booms which created markets and buoyant prices for raw goods such as sugar and sisal, cotton and coffee. In the following decade, deflationary policies adopted by Western nations severely hindered African economic advance. These same African nations were now caught between a falling demand for their raw materials and increasing debt repayments as interest rates on money borrowed in the 1970s spiralled. By 1984 Africa's debt burden amounted to over 50% of its total GNP. At the same time, the price of imports, particularly of oil and capital equipment, soared. This further exacerbated balance of payment problems so that in the 1980s African

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Tug Wajale refugee camp, home for 32,000 Ethiopians in Somalia, 1986. BEN FAWCETT/ICRFAM (UK)

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governments have had to borrow externally, not to fund development projects as in previous years, but to finance balance of payment deficits.

Concomitant with this economic crisis has been a decline in food production. In the 1960s food production for subsistence and local markets tended to keep pace with the growth in population. But since 1969 food production per capita has plummeted,

CANADA'S PERIODICAL ON REFUGEES **REFUGE**

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for instance, between 1973 and 1984, per capita production of food crops dropped some 20%. The reasons for this are many and include environmental mismanagement, overstocking of land and incorrect agrarian policies, soil degradation and the shift from food crops to production for export. It is also a result in part of both large scale migrations of rural people to towns and government policies which tend to favour town dwellers, such as the depression of farmers' prices in order to placate urban populations. The massive drought in the north, east and south further reduced food production figures.

Drought and famine are not natural phenomena, but have causes which lie in policies pursued in the past by colonial regimes and currently by governments determined to develop their economies according to models often borrowed from the outside and in many instances unsuitable.

Faced with worsening balance of payment deficits, reduced food production and an annual average birth rate of 3.1%, African nations are vulnerable to crises such as war or drought. On the individual level, people with little food reserves, already chronically malnourished, are incapable of remaining in their homes for any length of time as crops wither or guerrillas attack and armies invade.

Yet in many parts of Africa this has been the situation, and it goes some way towards explaining why six million people are in exile. These wars and the conditions they create raise critical issues which donors, governments, researchers and international agencies must address.

Conflict in Africa evolves from a few issues of great importance: self-determination of subjugated peoples, ethnic rivalries and the failure of national conciliation, the integrity of borders in post-colonial states, the strategic and military value of certain regions to the Eastern bloc and the West, and the continuation of apartheid in South Africa and Namibia.

In the Horn, for instance, most civil strife is the result of attempts by groups within Ethiopia to achieve a certain degree of self-determination. As an empire, Ethiopia

has within it a number of peoples who see themselves colonized by the Shoa Amhars and who wish instead to determine their own political, economic and social agendas. The Ethiopian government, on the other hand, rules from the centre and pursues policies intended to consolidate its power, weaken regional opposition, and transform the political economy of the nation. The two current policies of "villagization" and "resettlement" are seen by many as further attempts to undermine opposition groups by removing people, such as the Oromo, from their land and settling amongst them northerners who support the liberation movements.

On the other side of the continent the Sahrawi are also fighting to obtain their right of self-determination. Over a decade ago a UN investigative team discovered that the Sahrawi strongly supported their political movement, Polisario, and were ardently opposed to the integration of their nation into any other neighbouring country. But today, while some 165,000 Sahrawi refugees reside in camps near Tidouf, Algeria, the war continues between Polisario and the Moroccans, while peaceful solutions to the conflict are bogged down in talk about whether the two protagonists ought to negotiate directly and who should be allowed to vote if and when a UN-supervised referendum is finally conducted.

In the Sudan, another war is being waged as the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) is fighting in an effort to change the structure and the philosophy of a central government which it feels does not represent the interests of the south. In the south, where some two million Sudanese displaced by the war face starvation, insecurity is further increased by the presence of Ugandans, refugees from Obote's regime who have not yet felt secure enough to return home, and newly-arrived Ugandans, some with guns, who have fled north as the Museveni government tries to suppress elements which are still loyal to previous presidents.

In Chad the situation is more complex, but political instability is rooted in the inability of successive governments to bring about reconciliation between the multitude of ethnic groups, the vying

regional interests and different religious communities. The involvement of Western powers, especially France and the United States, attests to the international character of the conflict, which recently has become less of a civil war and more of a war of a Western-backed Chadian coalition against Libyan troops.

Conflict in South Africa and Namibia is clearly based on efforts of blacks in those nations to achieve national self-determination. The war that has spread beyond the borders into the wider subcontinent is the result of attempts by white South Africans to halt the de-colonization process. The Pretoria regime, intent on staying in power, has adopted a regional policy which fosters war in neighbouring states by directly attacking refugee communities and economic infrastructures, and by supporting dissidents intent upon undermining governments in the region which oppose apartheid and support international sanctions against South Africa.

The problems in Africa which generate refugees are exacerbated by the support different governments give to opposition groups in neighbouring states. For instance, Ethiopia's support to the SPLA in Sudan was stepped up, reportedly in retaliation for the Sudanese government's assistance to the liberation movements operating in Ethiopia. Similarly, in southern Africa tension is increased by the support given the Mozambican dissidents by South Africa and Malawi. Indeed, South Africa has supported at one time or another in the last decade at least five different opposition groups in neighbouring states.

To make matters worse, the superpowers are involved in the domestic affairs of African states. In search of strategic positions and military advantage, they ally themselves with governments and opposition groups, providing them with arms and logistical support. Indeed, the sale of arms to Africans has become big business. The sub-Saharan arms bill for 1980-83, for instance, was over US \$7 billion, with major customers being Ethiopia, Nigeria, Angola, and the Sudan, followed by Somalia, Kenya and Zimbabwe. Major suppliers include the USSR, France, Great Britain, West

Germany, the US and Italy, though South Africa, Brazil and Israel also have customers on the African continent. International involvement of this nature does nothing to alleviate tension, reduce conflict or halt the flow of refugees.

The following papers are concerned with the causes of mass involuntary migration in Africa and the responses of host communities to the influx of refugees. The bitterness felt by many refugees is to be found in the essay by Taha Abdi. As an example of the type of work that can be done outside Africa to give refugees and their hosts a voice, the report of a seminar sponsored by the Refugee Studies Programme at Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford, is included. The resolutions passed by African government officials who work with refugees show that new ground is being broken. Initiatives such as these can contribute to halting the flow of refugees and to better assisting them and the communities that serve as their hosts.

Diana Cammack

International Collaboration

• This Special Issue on Africa of *Refuge* is a good example of the ongoing collaboration between the Refugee Documentation Project at York University and other foreign research institutions such as the Refugee Studies Programme at Oxford University, England. While *Refuge* serves as an important tool to ensure the dissemination of refugee work, the Refugee Documentation Project has also been actively involved in the promotion of international exchanges on other fronts. Several of our affiliated scholars and researchers have been using facilities abroad while a succession of foreign visitors have met with us to exchange information on research units and projects and utilize the data base at our own Resource Centre. As a member of the International Refugee Documentation Network, the RDP has been involved in a project sponsored by the European Consultation on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) in collaboration with the UNHCR to establish a mutually accessible data bank of refugee documentation throughout the world. The RDP will shortly receive a comprehensive software programme, CDS/ISIS, developed by UNESCO.

Letter from the RDP Director

I wish to express our gratitude to subscribers to *Refuge* and to the Friends of the Refugee Documentation Project for their donations. Without your steadfast support, the work of the RDP could not have gone on.

I also thank our staff for their dedication to the production of *Refuge* and to research projects which were completed during this past academic year. *Refuge: Canada's Periodical on Refugees* was produced by Alex Zisman, Feature Editor; Noreen Nimmons, Managing Editor; and Alice Dinerman, editorial Assistant. Christina Lee, Visiting Fellow, and Penny Van Esterik were the guest editors of a special edition on refugee women and Barbara Harrell-Bond, Co-ordinator of the Refugee Studies Programme at Oxford University, is the guest editor of this current edition on refugees in Africa.

As activity increased again this year at the RDP's Resource Centre, students, faculty and visiting researchers were professionally assisted by researchers Gilda Farrell, Starla Goggins-Leavy, Fernando Mata, Noreen Nimmons, Chow Ying Wong and Ka Hung Wong. Together with external researchers Tanya Basok and Leslie Rider, this group made possible our highly successful seminar series "Refugees in Policy and Practice", which was designed by our Research Co-ordinator Noreen Nimmons and co-sponsored by the Dean of Graduate Studies. We shall continue the seminar series in an expanded format throughout the full 1987-88 academic year. In the planning stage are various research projects, one of which is a special two-day workshop, December 3 and 4, 1987, titled "Reconstitution of the Refugee Family: Policies, Programmes, Problems". Further details regarding speakers and registration will appear in the next editions of *Refuge*. We anticipate the arrival next year of at least one refugee who will join York's graduate programme, and the assistance of a Visiting Fellow, also a refugee.

Finally, special thanks are due to York University professors who have served as Advisory Board members: founding director Howard Adelman, legal specialist James Hathaway, Latin American research specialists Alan Simmons and Peter Landstreet, Southeast Asian specialists Penny and John Van Esterik, and Institute for Social Research director Gordon Darroch. Their advice and assistance have been an indispensable asset to the Refugee Documentation Project.

C. Michael Lanphier

Refugees in the Horn of Africa*

Political Factors Contributing to the Generation of Refugees in the Horn of Africa

by Peter Woodward

The exposure by the mass media of the conditions of refugees in eastern Sudan and of camps of displaced people in northern Ethiopia in October 1984 first alerted the world at large to the extent of the famine in that area. But clearly the problem is more complex than most people then realized, for in the Horn, refugees, famine and politics are inextricably linked.

Northeast Africa has the biggest concentration of refugees in the world. The largest single group are those from Eritrea and Tigre living in eastern Sudan, followed by the people of Haud and Ogaden regions of Ethiopia who have sought refuge in Somalia and Djibouti. In Ethiopia there are also opponents of Somalia's government and refugees from the southern Sudan. In addition there are Ethiopian refugees in Kenya, Ugandan refugees in the southern Sudan, and refugees from Chad in western Sudan. The one generalization that can be made is that they are all escaping from conditions in which political conflict is as significant as environmental degradation and famine.

It would be the contention of most host governments that refugees originate in the peripheries of the states involved. But the refugees themselves see their relationships to the states from which they have fled as far more complex. For example, people from the Haud and Ogaden regions of Ethiopia, who regard themselves as Somalis, would like to see the boundary of Somalia redrawn in such a way as to incorporate them in that country, a view which is encouraged by Somalia and which contributed to the Somali attack on Ethiopia in 1977. The Eritreans, on the other hand, are less concerned with boundary changes than with their claim for an independent state of Eritrea, while the Tigrean movement seeks greater regional autonomy within a reformed Ethiopia.

But "periphery" is not solely a geographical concept. Groups may be socially and politically marginalized in ways that contribute to the generation of refugees. For example, the Oromos of Ethiopia are the largest single group in that country and come from a wide area in the south and east. Still they are discriminated against by the Shoa Amhars and this has played a large part in the migration of some of their number.

Tension in the region may in part be blamed on the arbitrary borders bequeathed by colonialism, especially in the case of Somalia, but often the opposition movements do not regard inappropriate borders as the heart of their problems. For them the origins lie more in the discrimination which peoples of regions have suffered at the hands of their government. Yet their suffering is not only the result of developments in their own country, but also must be seen in the wider international setting. For instance, the strategic importance of the Horn to the Middle East has meant that both Middle Eastern states and the superpowers have become involved. All too often outside powers have exacerbated tension by supporting guerrilla movements or one government against another.

There are numerous examples of the international exploitation of peripheral groups in the Horn. Libya's "radical" activities have included support for the Sudan People's Liberation Army, as a result of President Qaddafi's opposition to ex-President Numeiri, while the southern Sudanese have also been assisted by Israel as part of its anti-Arab activities. In turn, a number of Arab states have aided the Eritrean Liberation Front, the first guerrilla movement in northern Ethiopia. The superpowers have also provided military aid to a number of governments in the region, enabling them to meet opposition with force, particularly in Ethiopia.

Leaving broader international rivalries aside for the moment, relations between neighbouring states are central to the problems which have generated refugees in the Horn.

For the most part, African states have accepted their post-colonial boundaries, though this has not been the case in the Horn, especially with Somalia. The popular territorial ambitions of the Somali people in general, including those living in areas of northern Kenya, and the areas of Haud and Ogaden in Ethiopia, increased tension throughout the region and contributed to the attack upon Ethiopia in 1977-78. Ethiopia repulsed the invasion, but not before a large number of refugees fled to Somalia.

Somalia's active pursuit of boundary changes is relatively unusual, though Idi Amin made highly imaginative claims to his neighbours' territories, and it was an incursion by his troops into northern Tanzania that provided the *casus belli* for the Tanzanian-led invasion of Uganda which brought about his downfall. Also, the Sudan-Ethiopia border has been in dispute on a number of occasions during the past twenty years, and at present, with refugees of both countries on either side, it is once again a source of tension between the two countries.

The presence of refugees creates serious tensions within recipient countries. Economically, the management of refugees is likely to be far beyond the capacity of the host community, especially since border areas are, for reasons of domestic economy, often amongst the least-developed areas. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and a number of other agencies have given large amounts of aid to refugees, but this may only exacerbate local tension. For instance, the short-term aid provided for refugees may not be available to the local population who may, as in eastern Sudan in 1984-85, be in similarly desperate circumstances. Likewise, longer-term refugee aid may include resettlement, and this will impinge on local economic resources. The economic distortion that huge refugee communities can produce has been particularly obvious in recent years in Somalia; and recently in eastern Sudan, there have been several incidents of tension resulting from competition for scarce services, especially in such fields as education and health care.

Politically, too, the presence of refugees can generate a range of unexpected problems. Even if refugees accept their new status and resettle, they are likely to affect local, regional and even national political developments, as has become particularly evident in Somalia. Similarly, following the downfall of Amin in 1979, refugees from Uganda have had an impact on Equatorial politics in the Sudan.

* The articles by Peter Woodward, Mary Dines and Taha Abdi were commissioned by the Refugee Studies Programme for the Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues, which has agreed to their publication in *Refugee*.

Further, refugees usually feel involved in the political issues that gave rise to their exile, and this often leads to their support of guerrilla movements. Many men from the Western Somali Liberation Front, for instance, left their families in camps in Somalia and returned to the struggle in the Haud and Ogaden, even after the Somali defeat in 1978. Similarly, Ethiopia has frequently alleged that the refugee camps in eastern Sudan harbour its enemies from Eritrea, Tigre and Wollo.

It is a short step from these allegations to accusations that neighbouring states are condoning and perhaps even encouraging subversive activities. Ethiopia has accused not only Somalia and the Sudan but also a number of other Arab states. Similarly, the Sudan and Somalia have made counter-accusations about guerrilla movements in southern Sudan and northern Somalia.

In northeast Africa in general there have indeed been a number of interventions in the affairs of neighbouring states, sometimes connected with refugees. Tanzania's army backed the Ugandan refugees returning home after the overthrow of Amin; Libya, the Sudan and Egypt have all backed factions in Chad, some of which had sought refuge in their territory; and the Sudan condoned and sometimes encouraged guerrilla forces in northern Ethiopia. In turn, Ethiopia (and Libya) backed the Sudan People's Liberation Army in southern Sudan, some of whose members had fled there from 1983 onwards. But of course the most aggressive external attack was that launched by Somalia against Ethiopia in 1977, allegedly in support of the Western Somalis from the Ogaden who had taken refuge in Somalia.

Intervention need not always be aggressive; one country may become involved with another in order to prop up a regime with which it has friendly ties.

Still, such defensive interventions may do as much to encourage conflicts, which contribute to the generation of refugees, as more offensive intervention. This is particularly the case when the intervention gives the supported government, as in the Sudan, the confidence as well as the financial and military ability to repress marginalized groups, in that case, the southern Sudanese in the early 1980s.

While relations between neighbouring states are a significant factor in the conditions that have generated refugees in northeast Africa, there are two further political factors of consequence: regional politics and superpower rivalry.

Historically there has been rivalry and tension between Christianity and Islam in the Horn, with Ethiopia traditionally regarded as a bastion of anti-Islamic power. More recently, Middle East conflicts have had an impact on the area, with Israel first actively supporting Haile Selassie, and subsequently the Marxist regime against their common Arab enemy. Arab involvement in the Horn came first through the rival revolutionary activities of the Syrians and Iraqis, who at various times have given financial and military expression to their solidarity with the Eritreans.

Although Arab and Israeli involvement has become a factor in the Horn, it is not decisive. The Eritreans in particular are not overly dependent on their Arab supporters, nor are the Israelis the major backers of Ethiopia. Instead, superpower rivalry is the most significant factor in the polarization of political relations in the Horn.

The growing US and Soviet involvement has contributed most to the polarization of the region and led to the initial international response to the 1984-85 famine, notably to the criticism cast on the Ethiopian, Soviet-backed leadership. Still, it would be too easy to think that their presence makes superpowers the dominant forces in the area. This is not the case, for none of the leaders in the Horn is a puppet of the superpowers. In addition, neither Washington nor Moscow has been able to determine domestic policy in the region.

The political bases of refugee-generating conflicts are thus varied and complex and involve overlapping interests between domestic forces, neighbouring states, Middle Eastern states and the superpowers. Each of these political forces has a degree of autonomy and a degree of dependence: while they influence each other, none has the absolute power simply to dictate to others. Knowledgeable observers of these various conflicts frequently conclude that given the improbability of achieving military solutions, and the prospect of the continuation or even the worsening of the situation, some attempt to bring international pressure to bear to encourage negotiation would be highly desirable. Yet it follows from the above remarks that any dialogue would need to be between individual states and their internal opponents and could not be dictated from the outside. Until such time as permanent solutions are found, it is the people of the Horn who will suffer. Irrespective of the rains and crops, the refugee crisis will continue.

News Digest

- The next volume of *Refuge* will start with a Special Issue partly devoted to Bill C-55 on amendments to the Immigration Act. Articles and commentaries in the Forum section will discuss the implications of the proposals. There will also be a comprehensive section on the refugee and asylum situation in the United States. Publication is anticipated for August/September 1987.
- The Working Group for Refugee Women, Canadian Council for Refugees, is conducting a literature review of studies on Refugee Women. Many studies are difficult to locate because they are subsumed under larger research documents. If you have written a report or prepared a bibliography, please call or write to Noreen Nimmons at the Refugee Documentation Project, York University, 4700 Keele Street, North York, Ontario, Canada M3J 1P3, or telephone (416) 736-5061, extension 3639.
- The editor and staff of *Refuge* would be pleased to consider articles for possible inclusion in future editions. Articles should focus on refugee issues and situations, including government policy and social action, and be properly documented in standard scholarly format and presentation. Please mail your submission to the Managing Editor of *Refuge* (c/o Refugee Documentation Project, York University, 4700 Keele Street, North York, Ontario, Canada M3J 1P3) and enclose a brief precis of the article.

New Publications

- David Matas, *Canadian Immigration Law* (Ottawa, Canadian Bar Association, 1987). Matas stresses that "it is more important to refugee claimants than to anyone else that they know the law".
- *Review '86: Outlook '87* (Ottawa: North South Institute, 1987). This annual review focuses on foreign policy, human rights, and Canada's own foreign policy with respect to international challenges.
- *World Refugee Survey: 1986 In Review* (Washington: US Committee for Refugees, 1987). Carries an excellent collection of statistics on refugees and internally displaced peoples and "cameos" of refugee-producing countries.

Eritrean Refugees

by Mary Dines

The ex-Italian colony of Eritrea was established as an autonomous state by the United Nations after the Second World War and, although Ethiopia wanted to annex it, a federation of the two states was created in 1952. From that time onward Eritrea's autonomy was under attack and on November 14, 1962 its federal status was abolished. It was the failure of the UN to take action then that has led to the twenty-five year war between Eritreans and Ethiopians. And it is this war that has been responsible for the most serious refugee situation in the Sudan. It has also been a major cause of the Ethiopian famine of 1983-84, and in spite of reasonable rains since, Eritrea is likely to remain acutely short of food.

There are about a half-million Eritrean refugees in the Sudan alone. About one-fifth are congregated in refugee camps run by the UNHCR in the eastern Sudan and the rest are mainly unregistered refugees living in Khartoum, Port Sudan, Gedaref and other towns in the north. There are at least another hundred thousand Eritreans in the Middle East, Europe and North America.

Refugees are a barometer of the war in Eritrea. Although there is a continuous flow of families and individuals into the Sudan from Eritrean towns under Ethiopian occupation, the major exoduses have coincided with Ethiopian attacks on civilian areas. During the Haile Selassie era there were major flights in 1967 and 1970, and, since the military coup, the war has escalated into a major conflict, with massive movements of refugees in 1975, 1979 and 1982. In 1984-85 eighty thousand Eritreans fled to the Sudan. It has become common practice to refer to this group as "drought victims", but this is an oversimplification. Eritrea has been subjected to periodic droughts for many years; since the early 1970s the rains have been erratic in many areas. In spite of

this, had peace prevailed it would have been possible for Eritreans to make provision for bad years by developing the considerable agricultural potential of the country.

Within Eritrea there is widespread displacement of the population. Since the late 1970s people living in villages near towns garrisoned by Ethiopian troops or along the main roads linking Ethiopian army bases have had to flee from the major towns following the arrest or killing of individual family members. The effects of war have been particularly harsh for the pastoralists. Traditional grazing land has been subjected to bombardment and nomadic caravans have been attacked. In some rural areas, whole settlements have been burnt to the ground. The threat of air attacks has prevented small farmers, who eke out only a marginal existence, from ploughing, planting and harvesting.

The impoverishment of the civilian population by the war has been greatly exacerbated by periods of low rainfall that have affected all parts of Eritrea, culminating in the most recent, almost total drought. In many areas, water sources completely dried up and thousands of animals died. Whole communities were forced to leave their homes in search of food. Many found their way to the refugee camps in the Sudan.

A survey carried out in 1979 showed that virtually all of the refugees would return to Eritrea if that were possible. They would clearly be better off if they were able to return to their home areas and get on with the business of developing their land and improving their standard of living. In addition, their return would lift a burden from the Sudanese government. The Eritrean Relief Association (ERA), an indigeneous group founded in 1976 and working in co-operation with the Eritrean

Peoples' Liberation Front (EPLF), has already prepared a repatriation programme based on settling returnees in agricultural areas where they will have access to land, tools, seeds and training.

Already the ERA has tried to enable displaced persons to stay in their home areas rather than be forced to seek asylum in the Sudan. Their first camp for displaced civilians, Solomuna, was set up in 1977; at the same time, a boarding school, Zero, for unaccompanied children was established. Both have been forced by bombing to change locations on a number of occasions, yet both have developed into integrated communities. Further, schools and camps have since been established by the ERA, attempting to create new communities rather than places in which people can be *parked* until the situation improves. Success requires careful selection of sites with a continuous supply of water. Many of the camps have agricultural facilities, and since Eritrea has a high proportion of qualified doctors, scientists and mechanics in the "liberated areas", these people have organized training programmes in order to pass on essential skills. For instance, mechanics have been trained to repair and maintain the ERA's fleet of trucks which transport food and other necessary goods to the displaced population.

On a number of occasions representatives of the Ethiopian government and the Eritrean people have met to discuss ways to end the fighting. So far, these meetings have been unsuccessful. Now what is needed is an initiative from an independent third party who can foster negotiations between the government and the EPLF. Until such time, Eritreans will continue to flow into the Sudan and the Eritreans' hope to make the "liberated areas" into economically viable regions will be doomed to failure.

The Plight of the Oromo Refugees in the Horn of Africa

by Taha Abdi

The History of the Oromo people of Ethiopia is one of colonization, subjugation and decimation. In fact, the first refugees on record in the Horn were Oromos who left their homeland during the early period of Ethiopian occupation. Annexation by Ethiopia meant the loss of their main source of livelihood, the land, and the denial of the most basic human and national rights. The situation prompted frequent armed uprisings, which have become more organized in recent years. Conflict, political persecution, and the inept and destructive policies of the Ethiopian government have now displaced hundreds of thousands of Oromos. These people live either in the safe area within the Oromos' region, occupied by the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), or in the neighbouring states of Somalia, Djibouti, Kenya, the Sudan and beyond.

The major cause of displacement is the scorched-earth policy of the Ethiopian government, aimed at suppressing the Oromo people and taking control of the land wherever opposition is suspected. Though this policy has led to Oromo uprisings, which have been cruelly put down, it has been more evident since 1976 when the Oromo liberation struggle resumed. The policy includes the confiscation of property of both individuals and communities suspected of acts of sympathy or support for the Oromo liberation forces. Villages and crops are burnt, women and girls are raped, livestock and people are machine-gunned. Between mid-1984 and 1985 alone, measures taken by the Ethiopians in the Hrarghe drove more than 100,000 Oromos out of the region and to the safety of the Somali Democratic Republic. Many others remained inside the country, in the areas under the control of the OLF.

Fear of persecution is another major cause of displacement. Indeed, Ethiopia has become notorious for imprisoning without trial suspected supporters of the nationalist movements or opponents of government policies. In Ethiopia, where prisons are as numerous as schools and clinics, cases of torture, executions and disappearances have been well-documented.

Another cause of the Oromo exodus is conscription. In recent years, the government has introduced the draft for men between the ages of eighteen and thirty. After a short period

of training, they are sent to fight their own people or taken to other parts of the country to fight against other resistance movements. Many avoid conscription and possibly death by fleeing the country.

The forceful evacuation of Oromos from their traditional homeland to "protected hamlets" is deeply resented by the peasantry and is another cause of their flight. Forced resettlement of Oromos is motivated by the government's desire to separate the people from the Oromo liberation forces. Similarly, their forced collectivization and cultural harassment (by such programmes as the literacy campaign in which people are forced to learn Amharic), increase resentment and encourage people to leave.

Last but not least among the causes of displacement is the resettlement of the Tigre from the north. Moving northerners into the Oromo homeland and employing them as an arm of state security is a policy begun by Emperor Menelik, but institutionalized and extended by Haile Selassie. The current government hoped to move at least 1.5 million people from the same area under the pretext of drought-created famine. In an attempt to finance the project through international relief funds, the Settlement Authority merged with the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission in 1980. One of the reasons that the government allowed the recent famine to reach catastrophic proportions was its desire to create large numbers of helpless participants for the resettlement scheme as well as to attract additional funding. But, try as it might, the government has not been able to reach its resettlement target, mainly because of the paucity of voluntary recruits. Many of those who have been resettled were, in fact, abducted from their home areas. The project has proved to be an economic and social disaster, and most settlers continue to rely on food assistance for years after being resettled.

The resettlement of outsiders into Oromo country has been implemented in the face of strong objections by the Oromos and, more recently, by those being resettled. Almost without exception, this settlement has worsened the plight of the indigenous population. In all cases the best land has been allocated to the new settlers and the Oromos are pushed to less productive areas.

The political motive behind the resettlement scheme -- namely, to denude the north of Ethiopia, particularly Tigre, of people from dissident areas -- is clear. The facts that thousands of children have been orphaned partly as a result of the forced movement, and that thousands have died in the same process have been documented.

The end result is that there are at least 800,000 Ethiopian refugees in Somalia, about half of whom are Oromos. While these people face problems of status determination, the Somali government has been exemplary in maintaining an open-border policy toward displaced Oromos and others, and no refugee has been returned against his/her will by the Somali government. But neither has this government facilitated any voluntary repatriation. Kenya was once a sanctuary for the Oromo, but they are no longer welcome there. Many who settled there earlier have since left and found asylum in the Sudan, walking through Uganda, or in central Africa. In fact, there are several thousand Oromos in the Blue Nile province of the Sudan, where their communities have obtained some degree of self-sufficiency.

Djibouti once assisted the Oromos, but in 1984, (and again in 1986-87) with the implementation of the Tripartite agreement between Ethiopia, Djibouti and the UNHCR, people were returned, in some cases forcibly, to Ethiopia.

Others who faced forced repatriation went on to Somalia, while still others took fishing boats and headed for Saudi Arabia and North Yemen, with varying degrees of success.

Endemic conflict, famine and large-scale displacement in the Horn are the colonial legacy of Ethiopia and a direct consequence of the violence and destructive policies pursued by the Amhara ruling classes. The international donor community, which provides relief assistance to care for the victims of Ethiopian atrocities and incompetence, has a strong moral duty to bring pressure to bear on the Ethiopian government to seek a political solution which takes into account the representatives of the Oromos, the OLF. Until such time as a peaceful, honourable and enduring solution is found, Oromos will continue to fill the refugee camps of the Horn.

Report on the Djibouti Refugee Situation

Background

In 1982-83 as a result of a tripartite agreement between the governments of Djibouti and Ethiopia and the UNHCR, the implementation of a repatriation programme was begun. The voluntary nature of this repatriation was widely questioned. (See Jeff Crisp's "Voluntary Repatriation Programmes for African Refugees: A Critical Examination", *Refugee Issues*, Vol. 1, No. 2.) Efforts to pressure refugees to leave the country began again when on July 29, 1986 refugees in Djibouti were issued a circular informing them that they had "no future in a refugee camp nor on Djiboutian soil." It continued by observing that "... the majority of you left your country for reasons which have ceased to exist today and therefore you should no more be considered as refugees." Refugees were reminded that the Ethiopian government had promulgated an amnesty law in favour of all repatriants in 1983.

Refugees were further informed that if anyone did not "accept to repatriate voluntarily", he must "request individually the continuation of his refugee status". Identification cards previously issued were declared no longer valid, and new ones would be issued to those who resolutely refused to repatriate and who passed the re-screening exercise. The circular informed the refugees that a special committee had been established to examine those requests and which would "take decisions rapidly which would not be subject to appeal". Those who passed the re-screening would be moved to a new refugee camp in the region of Obock, a region in which it would not only be impossible for refugees to cultivate land but where they would also be cut off from any other commercial activities that might help them support themselves.

The circular warned that those who refused to repatriate voluntarily and who did not pass the re-screening exercise must immediately leave Djiboutian territory. "They will not receive any assistance of any kind as opposed to those who will repatriate voluntarily. As of January 1, 1987 all old refugee cards, ration cards and asylum seekers' attestations will not be valid anymore." The circular, signed by the Minister of Interior, concluded with the following: "In the meanwhile and with immediate effect all programmes of assistance for resettlement to third countries are suspended."

Several organizations, including the British Refugee Council (BRC), forwarded strong objections to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Although the UNHCR was reportedly successful in persuading the Djibouti government to relent on the issue of resettlement of refugees in a third country, the repatriation programme began.

Is the Repatriation Voluntary?

As in 1982-83, there are contradictory reports from Djibouti concerning the voluntary character of the repatriation. It is very difficult to accept assurances now that the conditions under which refugees must decide whether or not to repatriate, which include the

removal of ration cards, are conducive to voluntary repatriation. Most alarming, as is the case everywhere in Africa, not all refugees are registered and in Djibouti, those who did not have identification cards had no protection, and were removed not as refugees but as "illegal immigrants".

As in 1982-83, over the past few months there have been calls for an independent monitoring of the repatriation. Given the number of disquieting reports from Djibouti one agency did send a staff member to assess the current situation in light of the Government of Djibouti's (GoD) circular. A report was presented to the BRC. As a result of this information, a British parliamentary committee proposed to visit Djibouti, but the Government of Djibouti has declined permission, giving the upcoming elections as the reason.

The report (most of which is reproduced here) emphasizes the reluctance of refugees to repatriate, pointing out:

- The resurgence of the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Party (EPRP) in the last eighteen months and the strength which its operations have gained in the rural areas, have provoked new levels of intolerance of any kind of opposition on the part of the Dergue.

- Many of the political refugees in Djibouti are there because of their own or their relatives' involvement with the activities of the EPRP, or merely because suspicions have been raised against them of such involvement, and the reprisals which they thus incurred are still fresh in their minds. The UNHCR branch office therefore lays itself open to disbelief and ridicule when it echoes the GoD's statements that they have nothing to fear from the Dergue and a full amnesty awaits them. Refugee confidence in the UNHCR is at an all-time low.

- An increase in the generally xenophobic attitude of Djiboutians is easy to detect at the moment, and may be at least partly ascribed to the forthcoming elections. However, it would be a mistake to see the government as a monolith with regard to the refugee situation since many of its members are not native-born Djiboutians but came themselves originally from Ethiopia, and many more are related to the Issa refugees who make up the majority of the Dikhil camp population. From a financial as well as a political point of view the refugees cannot be so easily dismissed: fortunes have been made and continue to be made by those working for ONARS who handle refugee resources and asylum applications.

- The anti-alien atmosphere has recently manifested itself in a series of round-ups of illegal immigrants in Djibouti town. The latest of these resulted on December 29, 1986 in 125 "argos" from Wollo being arrested, beaten and loaded into closed metal containers

on the train and deported. By the time the train reached the border, six had died of suffocation. Although there has been no formal registration of asylum seekers since the government's circular, some of these deportees may have been asylum seekers (ten of them had non-Muslim names and were therefore not "argos"), and refugees in Djibouti report that one of the dead was a registered refugee. It is hoped that the UNHCR is now investigating this claim. Whatever the case, GoD is highly embarrassed about the publicity given to the incident, which has certainly had an adverse effect on the repatriation programme.

Repatriation

There have so far been three repatriation trains, on December 8 and 19, 1986 and January 5, 1987. A total of just over 1,200 people travelled on these trains, and another train was scheduled for January 12th.

The campaign to get people to register for repatriation has been left largely in the hands of the Commissaire of Dikhil, a man well-known for his eccentric and irrational behaviour, and the Dikhil ONARS staff. The Commissaire has made much use of various harassment techniques to convince refugees that they are no longer welcome in Dikhil: he has driven through the camp with a megaphone announcing that all refugees must register, and that any who do not are in Djibouti illegally; he has been seen to slap elderly refugees and abuse them; last December there were frequent visits by parties of soldiers to the camp in the small hours of the morning, opening tents and shouting that people must leave, resulting in refugees spending the nights in the hills surrounding the camp for fear of being forcibly deported; ONARS announced that starting December 31, 1986 (the deadline mentioned on the circular), there would be no more water or rations whereupon the water was shut off in the camp for three days (rations are in any case two months in arrears).

Once registered, refugees do not have the right to change their minds. Five families who did so were visited by the Commissaire with a party of soldiers, who dismantled their aqals amidst much verbal abuse, and the Commissaire, hitting anything in range with his stick, loaded them and their belongings onto a truck, and took them off to catch the train.

Asylum seekers and political refugees have also received much "encouragement" to repatriate. Several asylum seekers have registered voluntarily (fourteen of whom are reported to have left the train and headed for Somalia), but one man who spoke out against the methods being used was forcibly registered and was due

to be repatriated on January 12th unless the UNHCR intervened. Several political refugees received papers "convoking" them to appear at the repatriation office to register, and when they presented themselves and refused to register, were told that they should inform the rest of their community that they would all have to repatriate.

One fact on which the UNHCR has failed to comment, but is commonly noted among the refugees, is that over 90% of those who have so far repatriated have been Gurgura people -- Somali agro-pastoralists, not related to the Issas and the Afars, who made up perhaps 35% of the Dikhil camp population. The two other groups of rural refugees, the Issas and the Afars, will not be repatriated because they have each made deals with the government, the Issas being ethnically identical and physically related to those in power, and the Afars through the intervention of Ali Mirrah, their Sultan, who sent his son from Jeddah where he is exiled to negotiate with GoD. An alternative arrangement has apparently been made by Ali Mirrah with the Government of Somalia to shelter the Afars, should the need arise. At a rough estimate, there are not more than about 700 Gurgura people left in Dikhil camp, and it may therefore be assumed that the repatriation is almost over in terms of those who are willing to leave.

Perceptions of Political Refugees

Since it is widely recognized that GoD will not force repatriation on either Afar or Issa refugees, it is assumed that the current campaign must be aimed against political refugees. The UNHCR had done nothing to dispel this view, giving no assurance about the safety of political refugees or about continuation of their status.

Many refugees have decided in the past six months that their situation, in the absence of such assurance from the UNHCR, is too vulnerable in Djibouti and they have left the territory by more or less hazardous routes. Some went by boat to Jizan, hoping to get from there to the Sudan: it is reported that one of these was intercepted by the Ethiopian navy and has been taken to Addis, while another fifteen are in prison in Jizan. Some left for Somalia on foot, and the fate of many others is not known.

The month of December was a period of real terror in Dikhil camp: almost daily visits by the Commissaire, announcing that their presence is illegal and he can do what he likes in Dikhil, summonses to the repatriation office compounded by nightly visits by the military giving heavy-handed encouragement to the

campaign. There is no permanent protection presence in Dikhil, and the Protection Officer, when asked about the situation during his weekly or fortnightly visits, has either refused to discuss it with them or has told them that it is better for them to repatriate.

There is much anxiety about the forthcoming re-examination of refugee status: the political refugees in Djibouti know what they went through to get accepted the first time, and dread a re-enactment of it. The UNHCR's platitudes, along the lines of "if you have a genuine case you have nothing to fear" hold little comfort for those who know that the UNHCR has no control over the asylum process.

Asylum Seekers

Asylum seekers are those who have entered Djibouti with the intention of gaining recognition as refugees, but to whom recognition has not yet been accorded. They theoretically enjoy the same rights of protection as do recognized refugees during this period.

It is certainly true that a fairly constant stream of asylum seekers has been making its way into Djibouti over the past few years, and that this flow has been reduced to a trickle since the ending of registration for resettlement in February 1986. It must therefore be deduced that a strong reason for seeking asylum in Djibouti has been, in the past, the lure of resettlement. However, this being the case, it must also be deduced that those who have entered Djibouti since February 1986, and especially since July 29, 1986, must have extremely good reasons for wanting to leave Ethiopia. Yet since the GoD's circular, the decision on who is allowed to enter the territory to seek asylum has been left to the border guards, with no supervision from UNHCR. Those who manage to convince these guards that they have a case (which usually involves substantial bribes), are then taken to Dikhil where there is currently no form of registration or issue of identity documents. The asylum process has been completely halted for the past six months; no rations, tents, or materials of any kind have been issued to those arriving since July. One meal a day is provided from a canteen run by the Protestant Church, and asylum seekers have been subject to the same "encouragement" to repatriate as other refugees.

Dikhil has been designated as the place where asylum seekers must register. If they more outside of Dikhil, asylum seekers are regarded as illegal immigrants and are under threat of summary deportation. The UNHCR has stated that it can offer no protection of any kind to asylum seekers outside of Dikhil.

Several asylum seekers have repatriated: it is assumed that these were people for whom life in Ethiopia presented a rosier prospect than continuing uncertainty in Dikhil. Under extremely tough material conditions (rations for those arriving before July 1986 consist of one cup of sugar, one cup of oil and 5 kg of rice per month), many have decided to risk going to Djibouti town in search of other solutions. Others chose more radical routes: on January 8th, four asylum seekers, two new arrivals, and two who had been waiting for refugee status for more than two years, left Dikhil to try to walk to the Sudan across the Danakil desert and Eritrea. Desperate measures such as these seem to be on the increase. There is little evidence to support the High Commissioner's bland statement in his letter to the BRC of October 20th that "asylum will continue to be given to new arrivals who meet internationally accepted criteria".

The UNHCR

The staff of the UNHCR Branch Office in Djibouti seems satisfied with the progress of the repatriation so far. They admit that some of the encouragement given to refugees to register has been a little heavy-handed but see this as being an essential part of the operation. They have been pleasantly surprised by the flexible attitude demonstrated by the Ethiopian government in allowing those repatriated to move to wherever they wish.

The Representative was unconcerned by the fact that eligibility to request asylum is being decided at the border by illiterate soldiers with no knowledge of international conventions: he held the view that genuine refugees will always find ways to cross. He stressed that no protection of any kind can be offered to asylum seekers who leave Dikhil, and was dismissive of claims that rations issued to them in Dikhil were below subsistence level.

On the question of the need to extend protection to genuine political refugees, the Representative offered the view that there were very few such refugees in Djibouti, and that only the Eritreans and Tigreans had a real case. He did not consider most Amharas to be genuine cases.

The attitude of the Branch Office staff to requests by refugees for clarification of their status can only be described as casual. They see no reason to give the refugees any such clarification at this stage. Nor do they see the need to point out that, despite what the GoD's circular states, refugees have not become illegal as of December 31st. They are still hopeful that a re-examination of individual refugee status will take place within the next few

months, and that the UNHCR will have some sort of decision-making role on the special commission convened for this purpose.

Final Comments

It appears that it is the deliberate policy of both the UNHCR and the GoD to keep refugees ignorant of their current status and entitlement to protection in Djibouti. The refugees' concern that the repatriation programme is being targetted largely at the political rather than the rural refugees has been rubbished by the UNHCR, who meanwhile hold the view that refugees who leave the territory under the pressure of this campaign, were only fortune-hunters in the first place. This is not borne out by the evidence. The fact that individuals will choose to put their lives in danger through the hazardous routes they are forced to take to leave Djibouti rather than risk protection being withdrawn and forced repatriation strongly implies both that their reasons for being in Djibouti are genuine, and that their fears of repatriation are real.

There has been a total breakdown of confidence in the UNHCR on the part of the refugees, who perceive the agency to be a lackey of the GoD, which in turn is perceived to be eager and willing to ingratiate itself with the Dergue by returning its political opponents.

The attitude adopted by the UNHCR is in keeping with the general hardening of line noted within it since the arrival of the new High Commissioner. This is of particular concern in relation to the status of asylum seekers, whose attestations became invalid as of December 31st. The UNHCR appears to accept no responsibility for these peoples' plight, despite the fact that any Ethiopian who would seek asylum in Djibouti during a repatriation exercise must have extremely compelling reasons for doing so.

It can be reasonably assumed that the repatriation exercise is nearly over and that at the end of it around 2,000 Afars and 3,200-4,000 Issas will be left in Dikhil camp with the tacit permission of the GoD. Having got rid of the Gurguras, the group of rural refugees which was perceived as being undesirable, it will now be important to monitor what further measures, if any, will be brought against the political refugees, and to what extent the UNHCR, within the context of the special eligibility commission, is willing and able to assure their protection.

The introductory background presentation preceding the bulk of this report was prepared by Barbara E. Harrell-Bond.

Improving the Standards of Human Rights and Refugee Protection in Africa

by Barbara E. Harrell-Bond and George Kanyeihamba

Introduction

In September 1986, under the auspices of the refugee Studies Programme, an international seminar on the implementation of the OAU and UN Conventions and Domestic Legislation Concerning the Rights and Obligations of Refugees in Africa was held at Oxford University. There were thirty-five participants from Africa, including academics and officials nominated by seventeen African governments. A number of eminent scholars, government officials, refugees, and agency personnel from Asia, Europe and the Americas were involved. The seminar focused chiefly on refugees in Africa, but one of its purposes was to acquaint participants with law, policy, and practice in all the regions of the world affected by mass exodus. Each African government representative presented a paper on the legal situation for refugees in their country.

Guest speakers reported on the situation for refugees in Southeast Asia, Pakistan, Canada, Europe, Central America, Britain, the US, and Mexico. Through films and lectures, the participants were able to consider a range of related topics: for instance, how different development models lead to oppression; the psychological consequences of authoritarian regimes; the rights of the child; the special problems of women refugees; torture; and the problems of adaptation to life in asylum.

The Theme

The overall theme was the law relating to the rights and obligations of refugees in African host countries. The participants were encouraged to contribute to discussions in their personal, rather than their official capacity, so that the recommendations arising from the seminar would provide fresh insights and influence positive change. Emphasis was placed on the elucidation of the practice of governments, officials, and field workers rather than on the theoretical norms prescribed by law.

The Law of Refugees

Zia Rizvi, Secretary-General of the Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues, opened the seminar with the keynote address entitled "New Dimensions of Uprooteness", which set one of the major themes of the meeting, i.e. the changing character of the problem of forced migration today which has moved beyond the capacity of either laws or present approaches to assistance to alleviate. In a second introductory address, George Kanyeihamba reminded the audience that the standards and concepts embodied in international human rights law were not an imposition of any one civilization, but rather reflect the values which arise from the best values in all societies.

Y. Makonnen, of the UNHCR, and I.C. Mponzi of the OAU, led the discussion on the OAU Convention concerning refugees. Africa has made innovative contributions to the law and practice of refugee protection and assistance, including its own definition of the term "refugee" propounded in the 1969 OAU Refugee Convention, which is broader than that contained in the UN instruments. Its standards are having a positive impact on other regions of the world.

The Hosts' Experience

Throughout the two weeks considerable time was given to discussion of refugee issues from the hosts' perspective. Emphasis was placed on the need for assistance which redresses the extreme poverty of local communities, who are, in many cases, as impoverished as the refugees. The presence of specialists and representatives of host countries from other regions of the world outside Africa added to the constructive, comparative, and not uncritical look at refugee policy in different countries. This was particularly the case when refugee policies in Europe and North America were discussed.

Not all countries represented were parties to the international conventions on refugees, namely the 1951 Refugee Convention, its 1967 Protocol and the 1969 OAU Refugee Convention. Some have no domestic legislation, although practice was sometimes in conformity to the Conventions. There were also differences between African countries in terms of which Ministry was responsible for implementing refugee law. In many cases, the concentration of African government officials was on status determination, rather than on administering assistance, despite the fact that most refugees in Africa are granted refugee status *en masse*.

The Refugee Experience

A number of sessions were devoted to learning about the refugees' own experiences through films and discussions often led by refugees themselves. These sessions were some of the most thought-provoking. Particular attention was drawn to the difficulties experienced by refugees and the special need for sensitivity in dealing with people who have undergone extremely distressing or traumatizing experiences. Besides looking at the commonplace problems of refugees, such as insecurity, unemployment, and other forms of deprivation, the participants went on to examine the psycho-social problems of refugees and the special needs of particular groups -- namely women and children. Among the many issues raised in these sessions, the following stand out: the persecution and deprivation of refugees; their frustrations at the loss of their former socio-economic status; factionalism among

refugees; the breakdown of social norms, particularly such problems as challenges to family loyalties; insecurity; ill-health. In addition, discussion covered the fallacy of making the over-simplified distinction between urban and rural refugees, the unfortunate tendency of dealing with refugees with condescending paternalism, and the necessity for minimizing hostility between refugees and local communities through public education. The necessity to avoid discrimination against the local population in matters of aid was also raised.

There were extreme differences between countries when it came to considering the topic of refugee participation, and the extent to which refugees were permitted to take responsibility for organizing programmes for their own people. The Sudan has taken the positive step, along with some other African governments, of formally recognizing refugee organizations and allowing them to function in the same way as other humanitarian agencies, not only in terms of importing duty-free material aid, but in taking responsibility for their communities' welfare as a whole. The SWAPO and ANC representatives were able to demonstrate to the participants the enormous advantages to the psychological health of refugee communities stemming from their being allowed to manage their own programmes of education, medical care, and income generation.

Of particular concern to the audience were the increasingly restrictionist policies of the rich nations of the world in both matters of granting asylum and assistance. The analysis of the reasons for these policies did not wholly satisfy the participants, particularly when they considered the depressing conditions facing refugees in the West who come from the less-developed world.

Teaching Human Rights

Participants were invited to discuss the power of the media as an instrument for curbing human rights abuses, including those of refugees. The role of the media in influencing public opinion through the use of images of helpless refugees and famine victims in order to raise cash for humanitarian work was discussed and illustrated with films.

The complex issues related to resettlement in Western countries were discussed and dramatically portrayed in two films: *Becoming American* and *El Norte*. Special sessions were devoted to the issues of education, publicity and the dissemination of information as well as on the implementation of law relating to human rights and refugees. Experiences of successful and innovative methods of disseminating legal information applied in Thailand and the Sudan were shared. The presenters emphasized that certain people needed to be identified and classified as target groups for education on human rights and the rights of refugees. These include government officials, refugees and local people. Samples of materials used to disseminate information in Thailand were shown to the participants and a useful discussion of these samples and how they are utilized followed the presentation. The experience of education and training on refugee law in the Sudan, together with the presentation on teaching human rights to police, prompted considerable discussion. Participants were convinced that it was important to extend this kind of training not only to the police, but to immigration

and prison officers, social workers, church and social work leaders, administrators and the local community; this was seen as most essential to the understanding and solution of refugee problems.

The participants were encouraged to reconsider the value of non-governmental agencies in acting as human rights watchdogs in their own countries. National and international organizations should be used to provide information exchange. Although participants were not wholly uncritical of the work of Amnesty International, it is one of the success stories in this field. A representative presented the seminar with information about how Amnesty collects and disseminates information; he also expressed Amnesty International's concern about forcible and secret repatriation and the likelihood of imprisonment, torture, or even execution for those forced to return to countries from which they had fled in the first place.

Seminar Resolutions and Recommendations

The Seminar culminated in a series of workshops during which small groups of participants formulated specific recommendations and adopted resolutions. A draft report of all the sessions, and the specific recommendations of the workshops, were presented at a plenary session under the chairmanship of George Kanyeihamba and, after lively discussions, were unanimously approved by the participants. Some of these resolutions break new ground.

Resolutions

- 1 The Seminar urges states which have not yet acceded to and/or ratified the international refugee instruments to do so.
- 2 The Seminar, having noted that certain states, including those which have ratified the international refugee instruments, have not always adhered to the rules and spirit therein, urges these states to do so.
- 3 The Seminar urges the states which have not yet enacted domestic legislation incorporating the international refugee instruments to do so by way of implementation and to take into account local conditions and circumstances.
- 4 The Seminar, having noted that certain aspects of the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol are outmoded, in that the definition of the term "refugee" is too narrow due to its detachment from present-day complexities and realities inherent in the phenomenon of exile, urges states to adopt new measures which take into account the foregoing, including the wider definition contained in the OAU refugee Convention, in particular relating to refugee status, displaced persons, and burden-sharing among states.
- 5 The Seminar notes with regret the increasingly restrictionist application and implementation of refugee law in the world, particularly in the developed states, and urges these states to be more liberal in that regard and to refrain from using regionalism as an excuse for denying asylum and sanctuary.
- 6 The Seminar urges states which have not done so to establish appropriate mechanisms to implement the law, including equitable screening procedures and procedures of judicial appellate system for determination of the status, rights and obligations of refugees.
- 7 The Seminar urges states to encourage and promote refugees' participation and consultation in the decision-making processes which affect them.
- 8 The Seminar, noting that there is an important distinction between a refugee and an immigrant, urges states to reflect this distinction in their laws and implementation procedures.
- 9 The Seminar, noting that inequality in international and economic relations is a major cause of violations of human rights and man-made disasters that lead to the uprooting of peoples and influx of refugees, urges the international community to redress the situation in order to allow for better economic development leading to better standards of living.
- 10 The Seminar, noting that every nation's growth and development depends on its youth, urges states to include special provisions in their national laws for the protection of the child.
- 11 The Seminar urges that countries of asylum disseminate refugee law by all available means both to refugees and to people involved in the implementation of such law, such as police, immigration officers, social workers and the like.
- 12 The Seminar appeals to states to assume their responsibilities for the situation of refugees, including eliminating conditions which lead to refugee flows, acknowledging their role in creating refugees, and assisting in finding durable solutions.
- 13 The Seminar, noting that voluntary repatriation is the most appropriate durable solution in certain instances, appeals to countries or origin and the international community to create the conditions of political, economic and social stability, including cessation of armed conflicts, and respect for human rights, which will promote voluntary repatriation.
- 14 The Seminar recommends that states agree

- that refugees are given opportunities to investigate freely whether conditions of stability and respect for human rights have been restored in the country of asylum and country of origin without forfeiting their refugee status.
- 15 The Seminar condemns any violation of human rights, especially the practice of torture, and recommends that host countries establish special programmes to treat victims of torture. The Seminar urges states who have not done so to adopt and ratify the Convention on the Elimination of Torture.
 - 16 The Seminar urges that refugees should not be placed in detention without formal criminal charges and a fair trial, according to international standards.
 - 17 The Seminar urges that host countries promote conditions which facilitate the movement of refugees both locally and internationally, consistent with their national security interests.
 - 18 The Seminar appeals to the international community to give development assistance to host countries so that they can create conditions providing employment opportunities for refugees which benefit citizens of the host countries and refugees.
 - 19 The Seminar deplors the use of images of refugees as helpless victims or "problems" in policy reports and fund-raising.
 - 20 The Seminar, recognizing that 95% of refugee matters are related to social welfare, recommends that governments ensure that provision is made for the implementation of social and economic rights.
 - 21 The Seminar urges that field officers of various descriptions who deal directly with refugees should be given practical and relevant training in refugee law, procedure and day-to-day refugee problems.
 - 22 The Seminar recommends that special efforts should be exerted by states, international organizations, state institutions, governmental and non-governmental groups to identify target groups such as police, immigration officials, administrators, security officers, prison officials and religious leaders for the purposes of training them in the field of human rights and refugee law.
 - 23 The Seminar, noting that women and children represent the majority of the refugee population, urges that women should be involved in making the decisions which affect their lives and that children should be specially protected.
 - 24 The Seminar appeals to UNICEF, host governments and specialized organizations to aid refugees in the design and implementation of programmes appropriate to the special needs of children in refuge and strongly recommends that these programmes take into account traditional cultural values and experiences as far as is practical.
 - 25 The Seminar urges host countries to ensure that security of refugee settlements in general and the safety of refugee children in particular, protecting them against kidnapping and all forms of abuse.
 - 26 The Seminar strongly condemns any armed attacks on refugees wherever they are, and further condemns those who aid and abet such attacks. The Seminar calls upon the international community to invoke the relevant UN instruments to condemn these attacks and impose the necessary sanctions.
 - 27 The Seminar urges the UNHCR to fulfil its mandate to protect refugees by reporting all such armed attacks to the UN General Assembly.
 - 28 The Seminar recommends that the UNHCR, the OAU, voluntary agencies and donor countries increase levels of financial and material assistance to host countries in order to augment their limited resources in catering for refugees, and in particular that the OAU Special Refugee Contingency Fund be increased.
 - 29 The Seminar calls upon African countries which have acceded to the 1951 UN Convention, its 1967 Protocol and the 1969 OAU Convention to incorporate the principles of refugee law embodied in these instruments, and take effective measures to disseminate refugee law to officers who deal directly with refugees.
 - 30 The Seminar notes that a major cause of refugee problems in the world is the denial of human rights. The Seminar urges those African states which have not done so to ratify the African Charter on Human and People's Rights and further urges all African states to establish mechanisms for the implementation and enforcement of the provisions of the Charter including the establishment of a Regional African Court of Human Rights to which aggrieved individuals and states can resort.
 - 31 The Seminar urges that domestic legislation on refugees in Africa make provision for rights of appeal to courts by refugees who are aggrieved by administrative decisions.
 - 32 The Seminar urges all states, and in particular the African states, in the spirit of African solidarity and as a way of implementing the 1979 Arusha Recommendations on the problem of refugees, undertake refugee burden-sharing, especially with respect to frontline states by virtue of the special circumstances of the refugee problem in the region.
 - 33 The Seminar recommends that the OAU make provisions for the dissemination of information about human rights and refugee laws amongst member states.
 - 34 The Seminar urges African states, international organizations, public states institutions, governmental and non-governmental groups to disseminate information on human rights and refugee law.
 - 35 The Seminar urges African countries to introduce projects for environmental protection to eliminate desertification and to increase food supply in order to lessen displacement of peoples.
 - 36 The Seminar urges African states to observe and respect human and people's rights as embodied in the African Charter on Human and People's Rights.
 - 37 The Seminar urges African states to improve their systems of transportation and communication links to convey early warning signals for refugee influxes, and to provide food storage facilities for refugee emergency and crisis situations.
 - 38 The Seminar calls upon African states to promote research in order to carry out proper planning and management of resources for refugees.
 - 39 The Seminar calls upon the OAU to extend its role from mere *ad hoc* refugee problems to comprehensive and developmental policies for refugees in Africa, and to provide information on the movement of refugees in Africa.
 - 40 The Seminar, recognizing that the racist regime of South Africa is a major cause of refugees in Africa, calls upon all states which have not done so to accede to and/or ratify the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.
 - 41 The Seminar, appreciating the participation of government officials at the Seminar, calls upon governments, international organizations and NGOs to take appropriate measures to implement the recommendations of this Seminar.

Refugees in Southern Africa*

Destabilization and Refuges in Southern Africa

by Diana Cammack

"When there is war you don't have time to plough. You are running here and there, in the mountains, under the rocks and so forth". This was the lesson learned by thousands of Zimbabweans during their war of independence and is the lesson being learned all across the subcontinent today by millions of people, victims of P.W. Botha's war of destabilization.

South Africa -- incapable of fighting a convention war on all fronts -- began in the late 1970s, after P.W. Botha's election, to devise other ways of obtaining its regional goals. The result can be labelled "low intensity" or "proxy" warfare, or, in other words, destabilization. The situation in southern Africa fits the definition of destabilization put forward by Bjorn Hettne in *Development and Peace* in the Spring of 1985: destabilization is "all kinds of efforts on the part of a powerful actor, short of open warfare and invasion, to weaken and eliminate another actor that for ideological, military-strategic, economic and political reasons is unacceptable, even if not constituting a real direct threat in any other way than providing a dangerous example or model that could be followed by others." This definition includes clandestine and indirect military activities, as well as activities in the economic, political and cultural field.

South Africa's policy of destabilization has as its goal the continued domination of the region by the white population of South Africa. It is, in effect, the culmination of the colonial era and an attempt to halt the decolonization process. This has both economic and political implications. It means, for instance, ensuring the maintenance of economic domination established in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries -- in terms of transport network, trade patterns, ownership structures and labour recruitment. It also means the continued political domination by whites by making sure that the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC), which is orchestrating the struggle against apartheid, is given no shelter, logistical support or bases in neighbouring states.

South Africa's aggressive policy is also meant to undermine the initiatives of the regional grouping of nine independent states -- the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) -- so as to make it more difficult for its member states (Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Angola, Mozambique and Malawi) to gain their economic independence and therefore be in a position to advocate sanctions.

Destabilization takes several forms: the destruction of economic infrastructure, such as blowing fuel depots, pipelines, and electricity pylons; disrupting transport by destroying bridges, roads, rail lines, locomotives, buses and trucks. The psychological and social well-being of both local and refugee populations are severely disturbed by raids carried out against neighbouring states by the South African Defence Force.

Surrogate dissident forces are given training, arms and logistical support by South Africa; they have been active in five neighbouring states: UNITA in Angola, "Super Zupu" in Zimbabwe, the Lesotho Liberation Army, the Mozambique Resistance Movement (MNR) and the remnants of the Mushala gang in Zambia. The targets of these dissidents include political leaders, government facilities, and projects funded by international donors and staffed by expatriate workers. Sometimes, as in Zimbabwe, white farmers and tourists are targets because their deaths create international news. In Mozambique and Angola the peasantry which supports their respective governments are the main targets of the MNR "armos bandidos".

Since 1978 there have been five different phases of South African destabilization. The first ran from 1978 to mid-1980 and included attempts by Pretoria to undermine the political and economic independence of neighbouring countries through the promotion of South Africa's "Constellation of States". A second phase, from mid-1980 until the end of 1981, was more aggressive, with South African sponsorship of dissident groups increasing, as were terrorist activities of South African commandos. The war in Angola was reopened and attempts to undermine the economic infrastructure which links Zimbabwe through Mozambique to the outside world were made.

More selectivity of targets was evident in the third phase, indicating that Pretoria had begun to differentiate between its neighbours and to fine-tune its policy. The conservative states of Swaziland and Malawi, potential collaborators, were offered incentives (land and loans) to conform to Pretoria's dictates, while Mozambique and Angola came under more ruthless attack. In Lesotho, where Chief Leabua Jonathon took an increasingly hard line against Pretoria, the capital city was raided and forty-two people were killed, twelve of whom were locals.

In early 1984 President Samora Machel of Mozambique signed the Nkomati Accord with South Africa, thus initiating a fourth phase. The embattled Mozambican government decided that after two decades of war and seven years of bad weather it needed peace in order to gain the breathing-space necessary to regenerate its economy. A period of "Pax Pretoria" followed, with the Angolans and South Africans also signing a ceasefire agreement and a previously negotiated non-aggression pact between Swaziland and South Africa made public.

On the surface, then, the signing of the Nkomati Accord marked the beginning of a period of regional peace and co-operation. But evidence subsequently brought to light confirms the view expressed by many a cynic at the time of the signing: Pretoria will never abide by the Nkomati Accord.

While Machel expelled members of the ANC from Maputo as promised in the Accord, South Africans extended the MNR's airstrip inside Mozambique. They continued to provide the "bandits" with communications equipment, medical supplies and arms. MNR leaders were brought to South Africa by submarine, car and airplane, and on at least three different occasions the South African deputy minister of Foreign Affairs flew into MNR headquarters inside Mozambique for talks with its leaders. A new transmission network for the MNR was set up by the South Africans, and a South African team went into the central province of Zambezia to train recruits. Also, some of the MNR were shifted from their bases inside South Africa's Transvaal province to Malawi to "take the heat off South Africa" and to enable the "bandits" to step up activity in the productive regions of northern and central Mozambique.

* The author of the next two articles wishes to thank the staff of the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre, Harare, Zimbabwe, for assistance provided.

The fifth phase of destabilization began late in 1984, not coincidentally about the same time Ronald Reagan was re-elected to the presidency of the United States. New incursions of "Super ZAPU" were recorded in Zimbabwe's southwest provinces, and the LLA, which has been inactive for months, re-emerged. The façade of "good neighbourliness", which characterized the earlier phase, suffered a fatal blow when Captain Wynand Du Toit, a South African commando, was captured by the Angolans in Cabinda, where he and his men had been on a mission to destroy an oil storage complex. Once more refugees became a target of Pretoria when in June 1984 the SADF raided the Botswana capital and killed a dozen civilians.

Meanwhile, Botha continued to press neighbouring states to sign agreements such as the Nkomati Accord or the Swaziland agreement. If he had had his way, the whole region would have expelled South African refugees and have allowed the South African army to patrol areas where the ANC were suspected to pass. The leaders on the Frontline refused to comply and in May 1986 the South African air force and SADF commandos raided three capitals -- Harare, Lusaka and Gaborone -- where homes and offices were destroyed and civilians killed. The target in Lusaka was the UNHCR-supported transit centre at Makeni, where eighty-six people were housed. While no one at the centre was killed by the cluster bombs or machine gun fire, a house some 300 metres away was damaged, killing two people (a Zambian and a Namibian) and injuring ten others.

The situation continued to deteriorate and in mid-October 1986 there were widespread warnings that South Africa was intent upon killing Samora Machel. On October 19th his plane was drawn off course by a bogus beacon and crash-landed in eastern South Africa near the Mozambican border, killing Machel and several of his close aids. Questions regarding South Africa's and the MNR's role remain, though South Africa has refused to continue with the international enquiry. Machel had been on his way home from one of several meetings with leaders in southern Africa, meetings aimed at reopening the Benguela railway line through Zaire and Angola to the sea and halting Malawian support for MNR bandits operating from that country. In December an agreement was reached between Mozambique and Malawi; since then, Malawi's support for the "bandits" has declined, and joint Mozambican-Tanzanian-Zimbabwean army operations in the northern and central provinces have begun to re-take MNR-controlled areas.

The cost of Botha's destabilization of SADCC states was upwards of US \$10 billion for the

years 1980-84. This amount exceeded that granted in foreign aid and loans to all nine SADCC states in the same period. According to the January 1987 report for UNICEF, "Children on the Front Line", another US \$15 billion in war damage, output losses, additional defence expenditures, and lost economic growth, was added to the total in 1985-86. The total amount -- now upwards of US \$25 billion -- is equivalent to the region's production in 1975. Put another way, the 1980-86 cost of destabilization is of the same order of magnitude as a whole year's production in the region.

The human cost is also staggering. Throughout the region peasant communities suffer as South African-backed dissidents sweep through areas, burning, raping, looting, murdering, and maiming suspected government supporters. In northern Namibia and southern Angola there is a full-scale war and descriptions of life there tell the tale.

Allister Sparks recently toured Angola and reported that in this war there are "few set pieces". Instead, it is a "hit-and-run affair that rages in farming villages and on peasant allotments". In the highlands, he explained, landmines are planted in fields and along footpaths. The result: last year there were at least 10,000 people mutilated. The Red Cross factory in Huambo manufactures limbs at the rate of sixty per week but is "still failing to keep pace with the highest per-capita rate of amputees in the world". In Angola there are at least 600,000 people displaced by war and dependent on assistance for survival. With an infant mortality rate of between 325 and 375 per 1,000, Angola ranks with Afghanistan (and Mozambique) as having the worst child mortality rate in the world. UNICEF estimated that in 1985, some 55,000 Angolan children under the age of five died because of war and destabilization.

In Namibia, one Angolan told his story to another reporter: "The South African soldiers forced us here. They say we were giving food to SWAPO (Namibian liberation forces) and they burnt our kraals and corn and threatened to kill us unless we moved to Ovamboland (northern Namibia). Later on UNITA came along and drove away our cattle." Another reporter wrote of northern Namibia in late 1985: "We drove . . . through a landscape that bore the scars of full-scale war. The countryside had been defoliated and depopulated by the . . . SADF . . . about a year ago in an effort to "pacify" the area. Only scattered remains of peasant communities were left. The South Africans have methods of dealing with rural inhabitants who refuse to leave voluntarily. First they destroy a village's water pump, a lifeline in Namibia's often arid

climate, giving villagers the choice of leaving or dying. As a last resort, there is a crude but effective technique of levelling the entire area with bulldozers."

The result of South Africa's regional aggression is that there are some 70,000 Namibians and 9,000 South Africans in Angola. There are nearly 20,000 South Africans in Swaziland, Lesotho and Botswana. In Lesotho and Swaziland political refugees are encouraged to move on as the security situation in both countries is unstable. Recently, for instance, South African refugees were abducted from Swaziland by South African agents and taken back across the border. In Zambia there are over 120,000 refugees, about 90,000 of whom are Angolans fleeing from the war there. There are some 3,000 South Africans but according to the UNHCR only four to five hundred of these are affiliated with the ANC. There are also in Zambia some 10,000 Zairians, 5,000 Namibians and upwards of 20,000 Mozambicans. The vast majority of the refugee population in Zambia is self-settled in Zambian villages, where problems of food supply and malnutrition are already rife.

Zimbabwe is refuge for at least 60,000 Mozambican refugees and has a population of a few hundred South Africans. In Botswana there are about 4,500 refugees, most in Dukwe camp. Three quarters of these are from Zimbabwe, many from the southwestern provinces of Zimbabwe where the government has taken stern action against dissidents. In the last year negotiations between the governments of Botswana and Zimbabwe led to the voluntary repatriation of several hundred Zimbabweans, and more should follow.

There is an intimate relationship between apartheid, the State of Emergency in South Africa, acts of destabilization and the generation of refugees. In an effort to retain power over a black majority population and influence over the political and economic affairs of the region, the white-minority regime has struck out at both its own people and its neighbours. Cloaked in the rhetoric of a struggle against a total onslaught of communists and their African agents, Pretoria's policy is to destroy any individuals or society which supports simple democracy in South Africa. It is expected by residents on the Frontline that the white regime will continue to resort to desperate acts to stay in power. Dr. Chiepe, Minister of Foreign Affairs in Botswana, put it most eloquently "The whole source of tension is apartheid policy [and] . . . until apartheid is dismantled, lock, stock and barrel, the confusion which this vile system generates inside South Africa will continue to spill over across the borders and threaten the peace and stability of the region."

The Displaced People of Mozambique

by Diana Cammack



Mozambican "displaced persons" meet to discuss shortages, 1986.

JENNY MATTHEWS/ICFAM (UK)

The crisis in Mozambique which has recently captured the world's attention is the result of a number of factors, some of long duration. Mozambique, a country about half again as big as California with a population of about fourteen million and a GNP per capita (1984) of US \$210, was left by its Portuguese masters with only US \$1 million in foreign reserves and gold, an annual GNP per capita of not much more than US \$100 and a population with an illiteracy rate approaching 98% and largely unskilled. All but 15,000 colonialists fled, many to South Africa, and in their bitterness they destroyed and paralyzed machinery. As they left they often simply removed a vital mechanical part; other times they destroyed repair manuals and business records in an effort to sabotage the Mozambican economy.

Mozambique tried to man its important industries and service sectors with local "dynamizing groups" and in the mid-1970s it was not uncommon to find people with only elementary school education running whole provincial health programmes or serving as bookkeepers for factories. In an effort to raise food production levels quickly by building

upon the abandoned plantations, the government decided to create and fund state farms. The peasant farming sector, on the other hand, was ignored.

Scarce foreign exchange was spent on importing large farm equipment, but the expertise necessary to run such farms was missing. Hence, yields necessary to make the projects cost-effective were not realized. Not only were state farms expensive, but they also diverted scarce resources away from other sectors of the economy. Consumer goods were not produced and so the peasantry, without such items as bicycles, radios, cloth or processed foods to buy, were unwilling to produce for the market. When they did generate a surplus, much of it was bartered directly for food and other scarce items. In this way, much of Mozambique's excess production crossed into Zimbabwe and Malawi where items were available for purchase.

By 1983 the government had realized its mistake. Since then it has tried to boost peasant production by making inputs more available and by increasing production of consumer goods. Currently the government is

negotiating loans with the World Bank and the IMF which will be used specifically to foster peasant production.

But it is two other factors which have seriously worsened Mozambique's already difficult situation. One is drought and the other is war. Rainfall in Mozambique, as elsewhere on the continent, has been abnormal since 1977, with years of flooding (such as 1978) and of serious drought, such as 1981-84, continuing in some places into 1987.

Drought victims began leaving in 1981, but it was not until 1983 that masses of displaced people began entering neighbouring states. They came by the thousands, arriving with dysentery, cholera, typhoid, malaria, bilharzia, leprosy and a host of other diseases. The journey through the dry bush was often fatal. A Zimbabwean aid worker said of the Mozambicans:

Some said they left their children on the way, dying of hunger and thirst . . . They could carry them, but they didn't have anything to give them. So the children died in their arms. [Then] they just [went] near the river [bed] where there is this sand that is thrown off by the rain. So they just do this with their hands [indicating a digging position] and they bury their children there then go away. And when a baby dies on a dry place where there is no river, the mother just goes behind a tree and puts the child down.

In Zimbabwe these people found shelter under trees, around mission hospitals, at bus stations, on farms and along roads. Initially they were fed by local communities and indigenous aid agencies. The food situation in Zimbabwe itself was already critical due to the drought, but still the government felt it had a duty to help the people who had sheltered Zimbabweans during their war against Ian Smith. By mid-1984 the government decided to move the people into government-run and internationally assisted camps. Today there are four camps in Zimbabwe and discussions are underway about a fifth. These shelter some 30,000 people, though at least that many live outside, on farms, in the bush, villages and towns of Zimbabwe.

Had the Mozambicans only to contend with the drought, it is likely that they, like others in

similar circumstances in Africa, could have done so with the assistance of outside aid. But the Mozambican situation is seriously complicated by war. This is the result of South Africa's regional policy, implemented by the MNR.

The MNR (also known as "Renamo" or "armos bandidos"), was created in the mid-1970s by the Rhodesians in an effort to combat the liberation forces of the now-ruling party in Zimbabwe, who had their rear base in Mozambique. It originated when the Rhodesians, with the approval of the Portuguese, brought together several reactionary elements. In 1978, following orders from Salisbury, it set up bases deep inside Mozambique and began to attack the country's infrastructure of roads and bridges as well as its railway.

By 1980, when Zimbabwe achieved independence, the Mozambican army had routed the bulk of the MNR. What saved it from collapse was the transfer of responsibility for it from Rhodesia to South Africa. Planes were sent to pick up personnel and equipment, which were ferried to a new base in the Transvaal. Its new orders were basically the same: to attack the Mozambican infrastructure so as to cripple the Zimbabwean economy by destroying its lifeline (the "Beira corridor"), through Mozambique to the sea. SADCC was also a target. South Africa did not want to see the nine states gain enough economic independence, especially transport and trade independence, to be able to survive sanctions against South Africa. The MNR leadership sought to undermine the Maputo government, force it into a coalition where several key ministries and provincial posts were held by MNR leaders and post-colonial legislation and policy decisions overturned. To undermine the Maputo government the population had to be alienated, the economy ruined and the will to fight destroyed.

To accomplish this the MNR adopted a policy of destruction and fear. For instance, mutilation -- cutting off noses, ears and breasts of opponents -- became official policy and is still practiced to a large extent today. People are abducted from their villages to serve in bandit units as fighters, porters, farmers and prostitutes. There has never been a real attempt by the MNR to "win the hearts and minds" of the peasantry or to build an alternative socio-economic or political structure. The goal, instead, is to destroy.

And destroy they have done. For instance, in

1982 alone, nearly 500 schools were closed, turning out nearly 100,000 students. One hundred health posts were destroyed along with 140 villages, which affected over 100,000 people. By the end of 1985, one quarter of Mozambique's health facilities had been ruined and 40% of the primary schools abandoned or destroyed, putting 20% of the pupils out of school. In 1982-83, some 900 rural stores were closed, which disrupted the supply of goods to over four million people. Between 1980 and 1985 the national cattle herd, half of which belongs to the peasantry, was reduced by 40%. Special targets are health workers (hundreds have been killed or maimed), teachers, priests and party officials. Overseas volunteers (*cooperantes*) are also targeted, as are their aid and development projects: between 1981 and March 1986 over one hundred of these people have been kidnapped, wounded, killed, or all three. The situation has continued to deteriorate since, especially in the central and northern provinces.

Naturally the Mozambican army and the militia try to protect the people, but this sometimes has mixed results. A Canadian volunteer working in Mozambique explained that: "... what was happening in terms of the peasants was that in rural areas, the bandidos would be coming into the villages in the night, holding meetings and saying to the villagers: 'you have to stop being involved in any kind of structures attached to FRELIMO [the ruling party] and then we don't want to see you selling things, we don't want you going to health posts, or attending party meetings or things like that' and telling the villagers that 'if you stay in these villages [which are FRELIMO inspired] we are going to come in, burn them down and kill you. We want you to go and disperse yourselves in the bush, and live like you used to, before FRELIMO came'. But, said the *cooperante*, what happens to these people is that when FRELIMO comes back into the area, FRELIMO would say: 'We want you to go back into the villages and if you go to work on your *mashambas* [plots], you go out and work only in the day, and at night, as far as we are concerned, people walking in the bush are bandits.'"

He then provided an example of a village in the north where the MNR came in, burnt down three or four huts, killed a half-dozen people and left. The rest of the villagers fled into the bush. Not long afterwards the army swept through the area, rounded up the people and put them back into the village and stationed a militia there to protect them. Things went

well for several weeks and so the militia was removed and the bandits returned, killed a lot more people, burnt some more huts, and sent the people back into the bush. In a situation such as this, people are likely to leave in search of security.

A Mozambican woman seeking refuge in South Africa explained why she had left: "Ten Renamo men came to our village and left with all our food. At night five returned and locked forty of us in one building while they stole everything else in the settlement. Later they handcuffed our husbands and forced them to lie face down on the ground. They crushed their heads with mealie grinders while we and the children watched. Nineteen people were killed. We were not allowed to bury our dead, but were told we must leave them to rot."

It is a war such as this that has forced an estimated quarter-million Mozambicans to flee into neighbouring states while nearly four million more remain, displaced and facing starvation. In Zimbabwe, the Mozambicans are welcomed, as they are in Zambia, where at least 20,000 have joined the 90,000 Angolans. Mozambicans are less welcome in Swaziland, Malawi and South Africa.

The trip into South Africa is fraught with dangers. Many people must walk across Kruger National Park, a wild game park known for its predators. Near the border they face off mines and then an electrified fence. Skeletons litter the border and farmers on the South African side report hearing mines going off day and night.

Once inside the country they are considered illegal aliens and only when they reach one of the "homelands" are they safe. There -- in Gazankulu, kaNgwane or KwaZulu -- they are provided with food, blankets and medical aid at reception centres, and land is allocated to them by local headmen. If caught outside the homelands they are liable to be repatriated: some 1,500 are sent back each month. Yet some 50,000 have managed to reach one of the homelands to be registered, while another 20,000 await registration. An estimated 150,000 others are living illegally outside the homelands (in the "white areas"), and because they are considered illegal work seekers, they can be repatriated when caught.

But not everyone arrested by the immigration squads is sent back. Some, like Sam Ngomane,

On Repatriation: Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose

by Barbara E. Harrell-Bond

are taken to prison and from there sent to work on white farms. Sam Ngomane, for instance, was arrested in October 1983 and, after several days detention, was turned over to white farmers, for whom he worked for a year for an average salary of R 30 (about US \$15) per month.

Refugees who find their way to Swaziland are, upon arrival, screened to determine that they are political refugees and not just seeking work. About half are turned back. The rest are sent to Ndzevane, where today there are about 5,000 Mozambicans. Naturally, some try to settle in villages with members of their extended family, but because the government is opposed to their integration into Swazi society, they are generally rounded up and sent to reception centres. Some others have found work and housing on the large sugar estates that dot Swaziland's countryside.

The war shifted north in 1986 after the bulk of the MNR moved into Malawi and the MNR headquarters at Gorongoso were captured by a joint Mozambican-Zimbabwean army operation. This accounts for the decline in the number of refugees reaching Swaziland recently and the massive influx of Mozambicans into Malawi and Zambia.

Permanent settlement of Mozambicans inside Malawi is discouraged by the government there. Already overcrowded and with one of the highest child malnutrition rates in the world, Malawi does not wish to play host to refugees created by a war which it has fostered by supporting the MNR. By the end of 1986 some 200,000 Mozambicans had had to take refuge there, but most returned as soon as possible, complaining of inadequate food rations and high child mortality rates.

While the situation facing Mozambicans in each of the neighbouring states is difficult, the millions who remain and who have been displaced by the war face death, torture and starvation. Here crops are burnt or stolen, transport of goods and relief supplies disrupted, hospitals and orphanages poorly supplied. But the Mozambican, Zimbabwean and the Tanzanian armies are on the offensive, clearing areas of bandits. International aid agencies have begun a major relief effort and grain, abundant in Zimbabwe, is being purchased by international donors for delivery in Mozambique. Agricultural implements and inputs, along with fuel, clothes and household necessities are needed. But most of all, it is peace that is in short supply and until Mozambique gets this much-deserved peace, refugees will continue to pour across the borders.

In October, I visited Uganda and spoke with Banyarwanda refugees who have been there since 1959. Uganda is considering offering citizenship to these people, and one of my interests was to ask people I met just how they might respond to such an offer. As one put it, "Even if I can never go home, why should I deprive my children and my grandchildren of their homeland. I will never become a Ugandan." While it may not be "pragmatic" or "practical", every refugee I know longs for all of those symbols which are bound up in the notion of home.

It is interesting how strong is the tendency for Europeans to forget their own recent history. Today, however, there are not only differences in scale and locality, but also in the attitude of the wealthier host and donor nations. Then, countries outside of Europe were willing to receive large numbers of refugees, and vast amounts of capital were poured into Europe to promote its rapid recovery. Another, and very important, difference between post-war Europe and many refugee-producing parts of the world today, was that the promise of political stability encouraged investment and the rebuilding of Europe.

Humanitarian refugee agencies often lament their own lack of a "institutional memory" and their tendency to re-invent the wheel each time they are called to respond to a new refugee crisis. It is only through the publication of independent research that such a memory will be developed. It is through an analysis of past mistakes and successes that progress can be made.

We believe that historians have an important role to play. As Howard Adelman has noted, "... historical research into past attempts to solve refugee problems is invaluable if mistakes are not to be repeated. In that sense, refugee research shares a kinship with the refugees themselves. For it operates, if it does so at all, with little sense of its own history. Milan Kundera, the famous Czech exile writer, ... describes the function of forgetting or repressing one's history. It allows the past to be invented and old solutions to be 'reinvented'. In all the invention and artifice, culture is destroyed. We live in a fabricated world, rootless in time and in space, floating in a dream world of fantasy and not reality."

Let us think a bit more about the role of independent academic study of refugees and why up to now there has been no accountability for the work undertaken by the humanitarian community -- and, why the incredible resistance to inde-

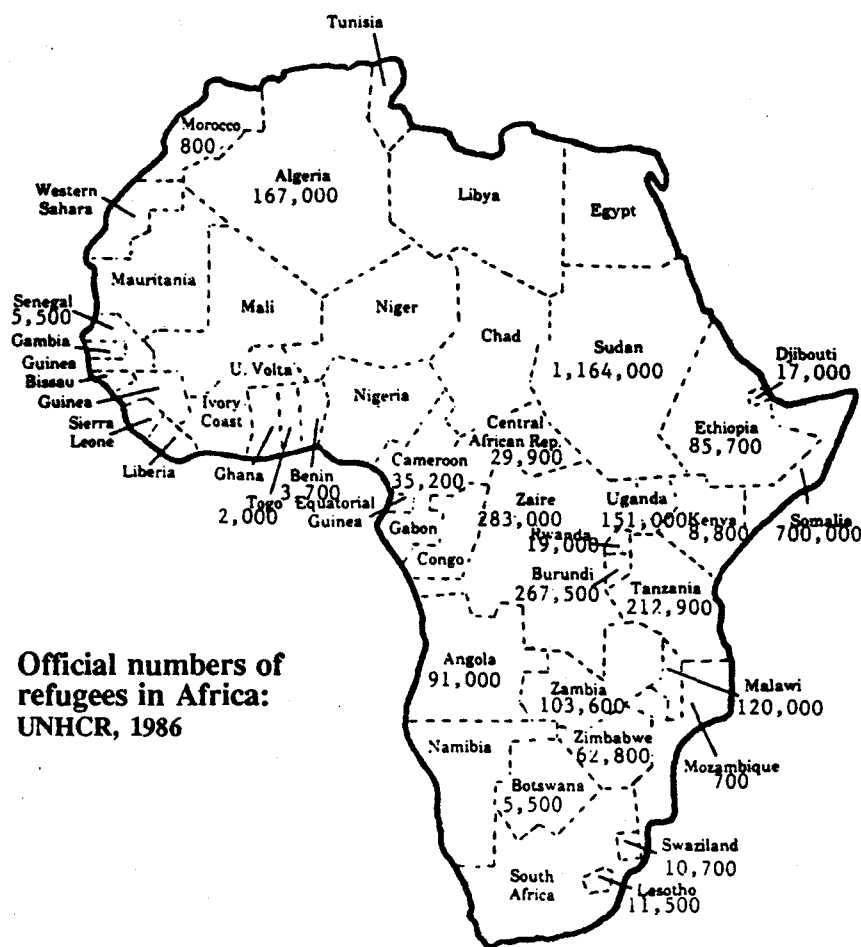
pendent research. During your meetings you will be talking about forced repatriation after the Second World War. You will be discussing events in which many of the actors are long dead if not forgotten. For your data you have relied upon interviews with survivors and upon archives which contain materials which would not have been available to you at the time these events were taking place. You will be exposing actions and events which will reveal enormous injustices and breaches of basic human rights which happened some forty years ago. You will be seeing the results of actions which were designed to serve political "interests" rather than the needs of people. Some of these actions were taken by those who were called humanitarians as well as by the politicians.

What if you had written your papers at the time these crimes against humanity were being committed? What were scholars doing at that time? What are they doing today? Very few people are aware that the same practices continue today. How many of you are aware that even while we talk in this open forum about the past, secret meetings are taking place at which much more ambitious plans are afoot to "solve" today's refugee problem? The strategy, once again, and which is already being implemented in Africa, is repatriation. It is called voluntary, but one of the incentives for people to agree to go home, is that ration cards have been taken away from the refugees.

I believe that you will find that contemporary approaches to repatriation differ very little from the period you are studying at this conference which you have so bravely labelled "forced", not voluntary repatriation. The challenge I would like to put to you as historians is to ask you to point your readers towards the contemporary situation and to make your findings accessible to aid practitioners in the field. Refugee research must be rooted in history. The historical material exists to provide those roots and your work during this conference will belie the claims that the material is lacking. Though no two refugee situations are comparable, there are lessons we can learn from the past.

The above are excerpts from Barbara E. Harrell-Bond's address, "Forcible Repatriation: The Continuing Relevance of the Subject" which opened the Canadian-funded symposium "Forcible Repatriation After WWII" held at the Oxford University Examination Schools, Oxford, England, March 20-22, 1987.

How Many Refugees in Africa?



Official numbers of refugees in Africa: UNHCR, 1986

No-one really knows how many people have been forcibly uprooted by political instability and war, but the estimated numbers of refugees hosted by African countries are shown on the map. These do not include the possibly additional thousands labelled "illegal aliens" and hounded by unfriendly hosts, or the millions of people who have been uprooted within their own national boundaries by the same causes. Most alarming, the numbers of uprooted people in Africa are increasing.

Why Are There So Many Refugees in Africa?

The majority of refugees in Africa are the result of the continuing struggle for self-determination and independence. The efforts of South Africa to destabilize the southern African region are producing even more refugees. The oppressive policies of so many African governments and their consequent political instability which produce refugees are directly linked with their extreme poverty and economic dependence. The escalation of arms sales to Africa exacerbates all of these problems.

Who Assists These Refugees?

Most -- at least 60% -- do not receive any direct help from refugee assistance programmes. They live by dint of their own determination to survive, with the help of their hosts who are often themselves desperately poor. There are indigenous non-governmental agencies and religious bodies which do their best to mitigate the suffering of refugees. The host governments which give asylum to refugees bear the greatest economic burden for assisting them, by giving them access to services, providing land, and by permitting the agents of international humanitarian assistance to utilize their resources to help refugees. International humanitarian assistance is paid for by a few governments (the US is the largest donor) and private contributors who support the work of the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and international voluntary agencies. As one refugee put it, "This is a great contradiction. We are fed by the same governments which make great profits from selling the arms which made us refugees."

What Are African Refugees' Main Problems?

They are powerless. Decisions about their fate are taken by governments and international agencies without consultation. Many thousands are highly skilled, yet assistance to refugees in Africa is limited largely to helping them become self-sufficient in agriculture. In addition to the psychological sufferings associated with the trauma of being uprooted and the insecurity associated with their status, they share all the other problems of grinding poverty which affect the majority of the members of the host society. Money for assisting refugees is not even-handedly available for all. Rather the amount of humanitarian assistance is heavily influenced by the political interests of the "club" of donors which support refugee agencies.

What Are the Solutions to the Refugee Problem?

The prevention of forced migration requires political will and radical changes in the world of economic order. The "solutions" which the UN High Commissioner promotes are voluntary repatriation, integration in the country of first asylum, and resettlement in a third country. Neither refugees nor most governments in Africa are enthusiastic about the idea of integration as a permanent solution. Europe and North America, which had a tradition of welcoming refugees, are fast closing their doors to people who seek asylum. At the moment, the greatest emphasis is on repatriation, but refugees are unwilling to return home until the political conditions in their countries have changed and security can be guaranteed.

Why Is So Little Known about Some African Refugees?

The foreign policy interests of the donor governments have an enormous influence on the extent of information available about refugees everywhere. This is nowhere more true than on the African continent. Few people in the West know much about the Sahrawi refugees in Algeria. Why? Because their war for self-determination is being fought against Morocco. When Ugandans were fleeing Obote's regime in 1982-83, information about this emergency was actively suppressed. Refugees are usually located in areas which are the most inaccessible. Furthermore transport and communication to these areas is often controlled by international agencies. Academics have neglected studying refugee issues, and when they do, they often fail to disseminate information to the general public.

Refugee Policy Legislation, May 5, 1987

On May 5, 1987, the Minister of Employment and Immigration and the Minister of State (Immigration) presented a bill to Parliament to establish a new set of procedures for refugee determination in Canada. The following are the highlights of the Bill:

1 **Initial hearing:** Every arrival in Canada who claims to be a refugee will be seen within a few days by a panel of two people: one, a member of a newly created Refugee Board; the other, an immigration adjudicator to listen to the (oral) claim.

1a The main function of this hearing is to screen out several types of claimants. The following types will be rejected:

1a1 Those who arrived from a "safe third country" (as determined by the Cabinet) who had a reasonable opportunity to lodge a claim there.

1a2 Those judged to have "no arguable basis for their claims" would be returned.

1a3 Those recognized as refugees of another country.

1a4 Those who previously had been rejected as a refugee claimant, except where the claimant has been out of Canada for more than 90 days.

1a5 Those who are already subject to orders for removal from Canada.

The above decisions require the unanimous decision of the two-member panel.

1b The above negative decisions imply removal of the claimant within seventy-two hours.

1c There is right of appeal of the (negative) decision if given leave by the Federal Court to make such a claim on points of law.

1d If one or both members of the two-person panel decides that the claim is arguable, the claimant will be referred to the Refugee Board for an oral hearing.

2 The oral hearing for the claimant will be in the presence of two members of the Board. If the claim is accepted by one or both Board members, the claimant is officially accepted and may apply for landing (the official status for all immigrants) in Canada. If both Board members decide negatively, the claimant is deported. There is right of appeal of a negative decision if given leave by the Federal Court to make such a claim on points of law. Persons will be removed from Canada while their appeal to the Federal Court is being considered. They would be represented by legal counsel.

3 If granted an appeal, the claim will either be accepted or rejected. Those accepted for landing will return to Canada at government expense.

These steps represent three levels to "protect the new refugee determination system against abuse". In contrast with the present system, only three steps, instead of a maximum of eight, are available in the claim process. The system is designed to prevent claimants from prolonging their stay in Canada by exercising appeals.

After initial examination, the Inter-Church Committee for Refugees has severely criticized the legislative proposal on three grounds:

First, **inaccessibility:** The legislation "seeks ways to return (claimants) before a full evaluation can be made. Secondly, **non-independence of decision-makers:** As a whole, the decision-makers are not specialized in Canada on refugee determination or related international matters. They are part of an overall immigration control procedure. Thirdly, **no meaningful appeal:** The Federal Court is not an independent appeal body. Its role would be unworkable because leave must be granted for an appeal and only then on matters of legal procedure, not on the merits of the case.

Citing a short-cutting of human rights practices and standards of justice in Canada, the Committee calls for the withdrawal of the legislation and its replacement with means to "uphold humanitarian tradition as a symbol of hope in a dark world".

Refugee and Humanitarian Programmes, December 31, 1986

	Government Sponsored Refugee Admissions	Announced Allocations	Privately Funded* Refugee Admissions	Special Programme Landings	Claims in Canada RSAC	Total
Eastern Europe	3,404	3,100	1,952	-	20	5,376
Indochina	3,931	3,200	2,059	-	11	6,001
Africa	846	1,000	318	-	83	1,247
Middle East	305	900	342	1,636	418	2,701
Latin America	3,422	3,200	232	704	377	4,735
Others	238	300	164	262	503	1,167
Reserve	-	300	-	-	-	-
Total	12,146	12,000	5,067	2,602	1,412	21,227

* Includes those arriving at ports during the calendar year with immigrant visas, and where known, those processed abroad on an emergency basis who enter on the strength of a Minister's Permit pending landing after full compliance with the Act and regulations is demonstrated. (Data from *Refugee Affairs*, Immigration CEIC, March 4, 1987)

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The Refugee Studies Programme, Oxford University

The Refugee Studies Programme was established in 1982 at Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford University, out of the need for fresh directions and practice. An independent forum has been created where experience is shared by academics, practitioners, refugees, agency workers, and representatives from host governments. Through project design, training, research, public debates, publications and seminars, the RSP seeks to help host countries and refugees break the present cycle of growing dependence on international agencies.

A major objective of RSP is to stimulate the development of parallel programmes in other parts of the world, in particular in countries hosting large populations of refugees. The Refugee Studies Programme at Juba University in the Sudan was established in 1985. Similar initiatives have begun at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, the University of Zambia, Makerere University, Uganda and the Colegio de México. The RSP is also a member of the International Refugee Documentation Network, which aims to widen the availability of information and academic literature in this field. The Refugee Documentation Project at York University and the RSP have been in contact since 1982 and formalized their collaboration in 1985 through the co-

sponsorship of the international symposium, "Twentieth Century Refugees in Europe and the Middle East". Together with Lund University, Sweden, they were the co-founders of the Inter-University Consortium for Refugee Research (ICRR), which was joined by the Center for Migration Studies. The first product of the ICRR is the *Directory of Current Research*, which will be updated annually. The RSP actively encourages links and co-operates with the many other centres in Europe and North America, such as the Department of Sociology, Carleton University, where refugee research is being conducted.

An independent evaluation of the impact of emergency aid policies was undertaken by Barbara E. Harrell-Bond in *Imposing Aid: Emergency Assistance to Refugees* (Oxford University Press, 1986). In a recent study for WFP in the border camps in Thailand, Josephine Reynell pin-pointed some disturbing facts about security and the psychological abuse of children. A study in Uganda was undertaken in October for the EEC by the RSP jointly with a Ugandan academic. *Refugee Issues*, a series of working papers published in conjunction with the British Refugee Council, is now in its third volume.

Since 1985 thirty-one visiting fellows, both academics and practitioners (many refugees), have been attached to the RSP, representing twenty-one nationalities. Fellows have access to all the resources of the University, and are expected to share research and experience and to participate in the RSP seminars and special lectures.

The RSP is committed to contributing to the resolution of conflict through public debate, bringing together as many sides of a dispute as possible. In the past year there has been a conference on the Western Sahara at which both the Sahrawis and Moroccans participated; another, titled "The Dilemma of Incompatible Priorities" concerned resettlement policies in Ethiopia; and more recently a meeting was called in conjunction with the Middle East Centre and Medical Aid to Palestinians to draw attention to the urgent situation in the refugee camps in Lebanon.

Most recently an international symposium was held in Afghanistan which brought together 189 refugees, scholars, government officials from both Pakistan and Iran, representatives of agencies working on the borders, and nationals from within Afghanistan itself.

A highlight in Autumn 1986 was a major speech by the UN High Commissioner on the need for political will to resolve today's refugee problem.

CANADA'S PERIODICAL ON REFUGEES
REFUGEE

c/o Refugee Documentation Project, York University
4700 Keele Street, North York, Ontario M3J 1P3

I wish to become a friend of the Refugee Documentation Project for the 1987-1988 academic year. I understand that all friends receive *Refugee* as well as information on the research activities of the RDP. My cheque for \$25 (or) made payable to the Refugee Documentation Project is enclosed.

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