

Hussein Solomon

MIGRATION AND SECURITY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

1. INTRODUCTION

The end of bipolarity, seen so graphically in the tearing down of the Berlin Wall in November, 1989, did not bring about the Francis Fukuyama's much vaunted "End Of History" thesis. The Abachas and Mobutus remain in power whilst the Abiolas languish in prison. At a time when the issue of human rights has come to occupy centre-stage, the world has witnessed gross human rights violations in East Timor, Chechnya, Algeria, Burma, Nigeria, Zaire, Zimbabwe and a countless other states. In an era of unprecedented globalization, aggressive ethnic nationalism has reared its ugly head. Rwanda, Burundi, Srebrenica, Tuzla and Zeppa all bear testimony to this sad fact.

But, this is not all. The aforementioned factors have also resulted in the mass displacement of millions of people. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), one in one hundred and fourteen people is displaced in the world today.¹ Southern Africa is no exception to this world-wide trend.

Hussein Solomon is a Senior Researcher at the Institute for Defence Policy, Midrand, South Africa. An earlier version of the paper was presented at the *Salzburg Seminar on Involuntary Migration* held at the Schloss Leopoldskron in Salzburg, Austria from 8-15 July 1995. The author is grateful to the Foundation for Global Dialogue (FGD) for support in this respect.

-
1. Presentation by Dr. Hania Zlotnik, Head of the Migration and Population section, Population Division of the United Nations to the *Salzburg Seminar on Involuntary Migration*. Salzburg, Austria. 9 July 1995

What this study aims to do is to contextualize regional population movements within a global framework; to expose the underlying root-causes and effects of such migrations, and to arrive at policy-related conclusions. The context of the paper is the Southern African experience.

2. THE GLOBAL CONTEXTS

There are five main types of migration occurring in the world today. These are:

- i. Intra-state population movements,
- ii. East-West population movements,
- iii. South-North population movements,
- iv. North-South population movements,
- v. South-South population movements²

2.1 Intra-state Population Movements

It is estimated that there are 20 million internally displaced people in the world today. Many are victims of ethnic strife: good examples are Liberia, Ethiopia, Somalia, the Balkans or former Soviet Union. Others are victims of civil strife as can be evinced in the case of Afghanistan.³ South Africa, together with Sudan, has the dubious honour of sharing joint first position for having the largest internally displaced populations in the world - four million.⁴

Several factors account for South Africa's unusually large internally displaced population. Consider these - ecological, drought, economic, the migrant labour system, forced removals, and the violence in KwaZulu-Natal and on the East Rand. These suggest the

2. S. Bearman (1993), *Strategic Survey 1990-1991*, London, Brassey's for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, pp. 41-46.
3. H. Solomon (1995), "Migration in Southern Africa: A Comparative Perspective," *Indian Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 5 No. 2. p. 13.
4. *World Refugee Survey 1994*, "Washington, D.C. United States Committee for Refugees.

manifold and complex reasons which 'push' people into internal migration. Interestingly, too, these same factors are - in differing combinations - to be found in other parts of the world.

It is important to note that there exists a functional relationship between internal migrants and the global situation. The recent events in the former Yugoslavia demonstrate the point. The civil war first internally displaced large number of people, these then decided to cross borders, resulting in large number of refugees in Hungary, and asylum-seekers in Germany.

2.2. East-West Population Movements

The destruction of the iron curtain has erased the physical barriers between rich and poor Europe, ceasing to enclose a total of more than 400 million people from the River Order to Kamchutka.⁵ These momentous changes have been accompanied by tremendous instability: ethnic rivalries, irredentist pressures, nationalist disputes and economic hardship. All this served to fuel migratory pressures from the former Eastern Bloc to Western Europe.⁶ In 1989 alone, 1.2 million people left Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) to reside in Western Europe. By 1991 this figure moved to 2 million⁷ and by 1992 another million was added to this figure.⁸ It is important to note here, however, that these figures include legal and illegal migrants.

5. F. Heisbourg (1991), "Population Movements in Post Cold War Europe," *Survival*, Vol. 33, p. 35.

6. F. S. Larrabee (1992), "Down and Out in Warsaw and Budapest: Eastern Europe and East-West Migration," *International Security*, Vol. 16 pp. 6-7; G. Loescher (1992), "Refugees and International Security," *Adelphi Papers*, No. 268, p. 3.

7. Bearman, *op.cit.*, p. 41

8. Jonas Widgren (1995), "Shaping a Multilateral Response to Future Migrations," Paper presented to the *Salzburg Seminar on Involuntary Migration*, 11 July 1995, Salzburg, Pretoria.

2.3. South-North Population Movements

Poverty, civil and political strife, environmental pressures coupled with a myriad other variables have all combined to fuel population movements from the South to the North.⁹ Thus, by 1991, 182,300 Africans and 107,500 Asians were legally residing in tiny Belgium. In 1990, there were 417,000 Asians and 165,2900 Africans legally living in France. Figures for other European countries confirm this trend.¹⁰

2.4. North-South Population Movements

Another smaller, but equally significant, trend in population movements has recently come to the fore: the movement of individuals from first world countries to the developing world. The fundamental difference in the flows between South-North and North-South is that in the latter case the movement is not forced but voluntary. People who move from North to South are not so much responding to 'push' factors in areas of origin as to 'pull' factors in area of destination. Another crucial difference is that specific countries are targeted for immigration purposes: these are generally stable politically and are economically well-off (or have the potential to grow in that direction) relative to other third world states. One such country attracting immigrants from the North is South Africa. For example, between 1984 and 1994 approximately half of all immigrants came from Europe.¹¹ This trend seems set to continue in the post-27 April 1994 period.

2.5 South-South Population Movements

The largest category of population displacements, however, occur between developing countries. By 1991, it was estimated that there

9. Loescher, *op.cit.*, p. 16.

10. *World Population Monitoring*, Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat, New York, 23 February 1994, p. 388.

11. Alida Casteleijn (1995), "Migration Trends in South Africa," Paper presented to the Seminar on *Migration Management in South Africa*, hosted by the International Organisation for Migration and the United Nations Population Fund, Pretoria, 22 August 1995, p. 6.

were 30 million refugees and internally displaced people in the developing world.¹² The reasons for this movement and their choice of destination would be discussed below. What is important to note here, however, is that the movement of people generally (and of illegal immigrants, in particular) into South Africa is of the South-South variety.

3. TYPOLOGY OF MOVEMENTS

Before this paper can proceed further, it is important to identify the various types of migrants and understand the relationship between the different categories. First, we have the contract labour migrants. These are of the same variety as Germany's *gastarbeiters* or guest workers. As the name suggests, a contract is drawn up between an employer, for example the South African Chamber of Mines, and the prospective foreign labour. According to the contract, the employer undertakes to pay the foreign worker a certain amount of money and the contract labourer migrant undertakes to work for the employer for a fixed period (usually between 12 and 18 months) after which he/she is supposed to return to their country of origin.

According to Gomel¹³, a distinction should be drawn between migration, the permanent relocation of individuals from one place of residence to another, and temporary emigration, which largely consists of contract migrant labour and students. Hence, if one were to apply Gomel's view of the situation in Southern Africa it would mean denying the presence of 165,825 of the region's people toiling in South African mines and a further 100,000 employed in the Republic's agricultural sector.¹⁴ Such an assessment, however, would not do justice to the situation in both Europe and Southern Africa

12. Bearman, *op.cit* pp. 46-47.

13. G. Gomel (1992), "Migration Toward Western Europe: Trends, Outlook Policies," *The International Spectator*, Vol. 27. p. 67.

14. Hussein Solomon (1995), "Migration in Southern Africa: A Comparative Perspective," *Indian Journal of African Studies*.

where a strong relationship exists between contract migrant labour and illegal immigrants. In both Europe and South Africa, one finds foreigners legally entering the country as contract migrant labour and then overstaying their contract period. For example, in South Africa, 750,000 people classified as illegal immigrants or illegal aliens are persons overstaying the validity period of their temporary residence permits.¹⁵

Another category of migrant is the asylum-seeker. Asylum is literally a sanctuary or place of refuge. Asylum-seeking refers to a quasi-legal process where one **state** grants protection to a national or nationals of another. In international law, however, this can be challenged by a request for extradition. Where no such extradition treaty exists between two states, however, there is no legal duty to extradite. The primary difference between the refugee and the asylum-seeker, is that rights of asylum belong to states and **not** to individuals. This, in spite of the fact that Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) does give individuals a right to asylum. But as the Declaration took the form of a **resolution** of the General Assembly, it is not legally (though it may be morally) binding on states.¹⁶ At the time of writing, I have been unable to get the number of asylum-seekers residing in South Africa. However, it is thought that the figure is negligible given the stringent procedures the Government of National Unity sets to discourage this particular group from entering the Republic.¹⁷

Next we have the legal migrant. Here one can identify two sub-categories. First, we have the brain-drain of South African professio-

-
15. George Orr (1995), "Migration Management," Paper presented to the seminar on *Migration Management in South Africa*, hosted by the International Organisation for Migration and the United Nations Population Fund, Pretoria, 22 August 1995, p. 1.
 16. Graham Evens and Jeffrey Newnham (1992), *The Dictionary of World Politics: A Reference Guide to Concepts, Ideas and Institutions*, Harvester-Wheatsheaf, New York, p. 22.
 17. *Report on Immigrants, Refugees and Displaced People* Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference, Justice and Peace Department, March, 1995, Pretoria, pp. 2-5.

nals and businessmen emigrating to Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand. In 1994, 10,235 citizens left the Republic.¹⁸ Second, we have the brain-drain of African professionals and businessmen from the rest of the continent into South Africa. For instance, in 1994 25.4% of all immigrants into the country came from Africa.¹⁹ The quality of these legal immigrants is evinced in the fact that in 1991, alone, 200 doctors left Zimbabwe to settle in Botswana and South Africa.²⁰ This, in turn, holds serious long-term consequences to our neighbours' economies.

There are other categories of migrants, of course: the illegal immigrant, the refugee and the so-called environmental and economic refugees/migrants. Given the interconnectedness of all these categories of migrants, they will be discussed together as opposed to making artificial barriers between the various types.

Who is an Illegal Immigrant?

This might sound like a banal question. It could, for instance, be argued that it is self-evident that an illegal immigrant is one who is residing within the country illegally. Such a view would be strengthened by a perusal of this country's Aliens Control Act, 1991. This Act stipulates that one is an 'undocumented immigrant' or 'illegal alien' if one:

- i. enters the Republic of South Africa (RSA) at a place other than a port of entry;
- ii. remains in the RSA without a valid residence permit;
- iii. acts in contravention of his residence permit;
- iv. remains in the RSA after the expiry of this residence permit;
- v. is prohibited from entering into the RSA; or
- vi. becomes a prohibited person whilst in the RSA.²¹

18. Casteleijn, *op.cit.* p. 4.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

20. K. Makombe (1992), "Brain-Drain: Cause for Concern," *Southern Africa Research and Documentation Centre*, 14 April, p. 1.

21. *Aliens Control Act No. 96 of 1991*, Republic of South Africa.

Others holding similar views - that one can make a distinction between an illegal immigrant and a refugee - contend that one can make such a distinction based on the causes prompting a person to leave his/her country, and to settle in another:

"It is possible to argue that there is a difference between **refugees** who have been driven from their own countries in large numbers as a result of a national crisis and **illegal immigrants** who make a primarily individual decision to come to South Africa. While such an individual decision may reflect the conditions faced by people in the home country, this would be different from the crisis-driven nature of refugees. Refugees are only in a position to return home when the crisis in their own country has been resolved, whereas illegal immigrants would not be dependent on a political/military resolution."²²

These sentiments reflected above can also be found in current definitions of the term 'refugee'. The 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees defines them as:

"persons who are living outside their country because of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion."²³

But this 1951 UN definition is problematic. Woehlecke,²⁴ for instance, notes that the Convention was originally intended as a regulation of the European refugee problem after the Second World

21. *Aliens Control Act No. 96 of 1991*, Republic of South Africa.

22. H. Toolo and L. Bethlehem (1994), "Labour Migration to South Africa," Paper presented to the *Workshop on Labour Migration to South Africa*, hosted by the National Labour and Economic Development Institute (NALEDI). Johannesburg, 31 August 1994, p. 5.

23. H. Solomon (1993), "In Search of Canaan: A Critical Evaluation of the Causes and Effects of Migration Within Southern Africa, and Strategies to Cope with them," *Southern African Perspectives*, No. 24, Centre for Southern African Studies, University of the Western Cape, pp. 3-4.

24. M. Woehllecke (1992). "Environmental Refugees," *Aussenpolitik*, Vol. 43. No. 3, pp. 287-288.

War and that it is no longer applicable today where economic refugees (i.e., those fleeing poverty and economic hardship) and environmental refugees (i.e., those fleeing ecological catastrophe) make up the bulk of its numbers.

Loescher²⁵ further elaborates :

"in many developing countries which have few resources and weak government structures, economic hardship is generally exacerbated by political violence. Thus it has become increasingly difficult to make hard and fast distinctions between refugees [as defined by the 1951 UN Convention with its political bias] and economic migrants."

In the same vein Austria Surkhe²⁶ notes that the key criterion determining refugee status is persecution, usually an act of government against an individual. This excludes those fleeing from generalized conditions of violence, insecurity and oppression, as in the case of, say, Zaire. It also excludes the inhabitants of states where violence is externally induced. South Africa's destabilization of the Frontline States, throughout much of the 1980s, through its support of proxy groups - such as Renamo in Mozambique; Unita in Angola; the Lesotho Liberation Army in Lesotho; and the Mashala Gang in Zambia - are good examples of externally induced unrest.²⁷

Despite the legal distinction between refugees and illegal aliens, which is primarily based on the reasons for fleeing their home country, the UNHR notes that:

"There are as many reasons for moving as there are migrants. A particular set of reasons, involving persecution and the lack of protection, distinguishes the refugee from other migrants. In practice,

25. Loescher, *op.cit.* p. 7.

26. Quoted in Solomon (1993), *op.cit.* p. 4.

27. Hussein Solomon (1994a), *Change and Continuity in South Africa's Foreign Policy, 1978-1991*, unpublished M.A. dissertation, University of Durban-Westville, p. 169.

it is often difficult to pick out a certain cause for departure. People leave their homes as a result of a complicated mixture of fears, hopes, ambitions and other pressures which can be hard, if not impossible, to unravel.

Even for refugees the reasons for flight are normally complex. The immediate cause of an exodus may be individual persecution, armed conflict, campaigns of repression, the violent collapse of civil society or a dozen variations on these themes. Behind these phenomena lie deeper and often interrelated patterns of political, economic, ethnic, environmental or human rights pressures, which are further complicated by the interplay between domestic and international factors."²⁸

The UNHCR also admits the difficulties in sustaining a distinction between political migrants (or refugees in the formal sense) and environmental and economic migrants (which form the bulk of illegal immigrants). For example, the UNHCR clearly illustrates the linkage between environmental degradation and refugee flows:

"The deterioration of the natural resource base, coupled with demographic pressure and chronic poverty, can lead to or exacerbate political, ethnic, social and economic tensions which in turn result in conflict that force people to flee. Africa, for example, accounts for 10% of the world's population and hosts over 29% of its refugees. It is no coincidence that those parts of the continent that are most affected by soil erosion, drought and other environmental problems are also the main theatres of armed conflict, recurrent famine and consequent refugee movements."²⁹

But, this is not all. The UNHCR goes on to explain why the dichotomy between refugees and non-refugees is so hard to sustain, with particular reference to economic migrants:

28. United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (1993), *The State of the World's Refugees*, New York, Penguin Books, p. 13.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

"It can be difficult to make a clear distinction between refugees and non-refugees. It has always been common for large-scale economic migrations to be accompanied by politically motivated exile or flight, and vice versa. The level of economic discontent that gives rise to emigration also gave rise, in many cases, to protest or resistance against the system of government that perpetuates, tolerates or is powerless to correct conditions of deprivation.

The distinction between refugees and economic migrants is difficult when people flee from countries where poverty is perpetuated by the political system. In Vietnam, political repression was combined with economic stagnation (depended by an economic boycott led by the United States) in a pattern that sustained an outflow of boat people for 15 years³⁰."

Thus, the pace of global events has increasingly rendered the distinction between refugees and illegal immigrants as superfluous. This necessitates a more inclusive definition for the term 'refugee'. Of course, there are more inclusive definitions. For instance, the 1969 Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Convention on Refugees notes that a person is a refugee if:

"...owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part of whole of his country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his country of nationality."

The debate surrounding the distinction between illegal immigrants and refugees is not simply of academic interest. It has a bearing on the type of policies the government pursues, the type of treatment meted out to illegal immigrants/refugees, and the conditions under which they live.

At present, Pretoria, though a member of both the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, is neither a signatory to the

30. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees nor the 1969 OAU Convention on Refugees. However, legislation is on the cards, which if ratified by the cabinet will result in South Africa acceding to both these refugee regimes³¹.

4. COMPREHENDING THE MAGNITUDE AND IMPACT OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT ON THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Estimates of the number of illegal immigrants residing within the Republic range from two to eight million³². The wide discrepancies in the estimates of illegal immigrants inside the country exposes the central problem any study into the problem of illegal immigration faces: the illegal and clandestine nature of this form of population movement provides an inadequate basis for quantifying migration.

But, whether they number two or eight million, it can be convincingly argued that illegal aliens have a largely negative impact on the South African state and on the lives of ordinary South Africans. The large concentration of illegal immigrants places an inordinate burden on the state, decreasing its capacity to deliver impoverished South Africans from their misery. In other words, it has been suggested that the presence of illegal aliens has an adverse effect on the capacity of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) to improve the lot of ordinary South Africans³³.

Various examples underscore this point. One of the priority areas identified in the RDP is housing. The government is not only attempting to provide services and to upgrade facilities in squatter areas but also trying to provide houses for all South Africans. However, it has been estimated that 80% of illegal aliens reside in

31. Interview with Mr. Penuel Maduna, Deputy Minister of Home Affairs, 30 March, 1995.

32. *The Economist*, 4 March 1995; Toolo and Bethlehem, *op.cit.*, p.5; Maxine Reitzes (1994), "Alien Issues," *Indicator South Africa*, Vol. 12, No. 1, p. 7.

33. Reitzes, *op.cit.*, p. 7.

informal housing settlements and squatter camps³⁴. Given the fact that it is extremely difficult to distinguish between the alien and the citizen in a squatter community, illegal immigrants come to benefit from the facilities and houses provided under the RDP, at the cost of the South African tax payer.

Illegal immigrants also place additional strains on the health system of the country (another RDP priority area) in two ways. First, clinics, (for example, in Kangwane and Gazankulu) which were established to deal with the demands of local inhabitants, are "overstretched" due to the demands placed on them by thousands of Mozambicans residing in the area. Since they are mostly destitute or come from strife-ravaged areas, these illegal immigrants need much more attention than the locals. All this at the expense of local citizens³⁵.

Second, illegal immigrants place an additional strain on the health services by carrying diseases with epidemic potential into the country. For instance, cases of malaria in the Northern Transvaal and other cases of chloroquine resistance have been associated with the movement of migrants from Mozambique. The idea that illegal immigrants causes epidemics is borne out in the case of the Nsanje district of Malawi - 15 kilometers from the Mozambican border. There cross-border migration resulted in both sides of the border having nearly the same percentages of AIDS, malaria, cholera and tuberculosis cases³⁶. On the point of AIDS, Schutte³⁷ exposes a causal link between illegal immigrants and the spread of the HIV virus in the country. The fact that it is estimated that 27% of the total population between the ages of 15 and 60 will be HIV positive in the year 2000

34. D. Schutte (1993), "Migration: The Status Quo and Prospects for Southern Africa," *ISSUP Bulletin*, University of Pretoria, p. 9.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

36. Hussein Solomon (1994b), "Changing Patterns of Migration in Southern Africa," in M. Venter (ed.) *Migrancy and AIDS*, Cape Town, Medical Research Council, p. 22.

37. Schutte, *op.cit.*, p. 8.

holds serious consequences for the economy of the country - decreased economic productivity, increased demands of the health system of the state, etc³⁸.

A relationship also exists between illegal immigrants and the crime rate. Police sources note that 14% of crime within the borders of the Republic involve illegal aliens. These crimes are generally gun-running, drug-trafficking, prostitution and money laundering³⁹. Crime, and the violence associated with it, has an adverse effect on the economy in two ways. First, rising crime and violence reduces investor confidence. Second, state resources which would have gone into RDP projects have now to be channelled into the security apparatus of the state. In this, it is important to note that the first budget of the Government of National Unity (GNU) has witnessed a significant increase in the South African Police Services (SAPS) budget.

Illegal immigrants are also said to have a negative impact on the domestic labour market. In the absence of reliable data it is not possible to quantify the impact of illegal aliens on various sectors of the labour market. However, it is clear from interviews with various union officials that many workers that feel the presence of vulnerable illegal foreign workers has a depressing effect on wages. This, union officials argue, results in local people having decreased access to employment⁴⁰. Illegal immigrants are generally active in the following sectors of the economy: agriculture; hotel and restaurant; construction; domestic; and informal trading⁴¹. The following case illustrates the point. In August 1994, the owner of Cafe Zurich in Hillbrow

38. Randall Packard (1994), "AIDS in Africa - Old and New Questions," in M. Venter (ed.) *Migrancy and AIDS*, Cape Town, Medical Research Council, p. 8.

39. Reitzes, *op.cit.*, p. 8.

40. Government sources note that 33% of the economically active population is unemployed, see Orr, *op.cit.*, p. 1.

41. For further details on the impact of illegal immigrants on each of these sectors of the economy see Toolo and Bethlehem, *op.cit.*, pp. 4-6.

dismissed 20 South African waiters, and employed 20 Zairois in their place. The latter received no wages and simply lived on the tips they received⁴².

But these are not the only effects. Rising anti-foreigner sentiments has been on the increase in Europe and in the United States. This can be seen in the growth of the neo-Nazi support base in Germany and increased attacks on non-European foreigners. These same sentiments are to be found amongst 'Skinheads', attacking Pakistanis on the streets of Birmingham and amongst neo-Fascists attacking people with a darker pigmentation on the Iberian peninsula. More disturbingly, however, is that these sentiments have found respectability in mainstream political discourse. Consider here, Jean-Marie le Pen's ultra-nationalist National Front. Standing on a strong anti-immigrant platform in the 1992 French elections, the National Front secured nearly 15% of the vote⁴³.

Since 27 April 1994 South Africa, too, has seen a rising tide of xenophobia against foreigners generally and illegal immigrants in particular. This xenophobia is manifested in numerous ways. It can be seen in the fact that on the streets of Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban foreign hawkers have been verbally abused and physically assaulted. It can also be seen in the recent spate of attacks on Mozambican miners by members of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). Neither are these sporadic incidents of 'foreigner-hating'. A survey by the Human Sciences Research Council in October, 1994 found that 56% of South Africans thought that the government should act more strictly against illegal immigrants. By February 1995, this figure increased to 72%⁴⁴.

The reason for this rising tide of xenophobia is two-fold. In the recent past, the apartheid state served to divide South Africans: racial

42. This was told to the author on 31 August 1994 by Mr. Hilton Toolo, a researcher employed by the National Labour and Economic Development Institute (NALEDI), Johannesburg.

43. Heisbourg, *op.cit.*, p. 36; *The Economist*, 15 February 1992.

identity as opposed to a broader South African national identity was stressed. With the advent of a new democratic government and in the interests of nation-building; the Government of National Unity repeatedly stresses our common South Africanness. This new nationalism - no matter how benign - creates a dichotomy between 'insider' and 'outsider'. This, in turn, sets the basis for discrimination against foreigners. But such an account of South African nationalism still does not adequately explain the ferocity of anti-foreigner sentiments in the country. Conflict generally arises where there is a scarcity of resources. In South Africa, a third of the adult population is unemployed. In this situation people want to blame somebody or something. In the past, it was easy to target the apartheid state as the source of one's misery. With the advent of a democratic government - foreigners have become the scape-goat.

This xenophobia, however, has serious implications for domestic and regional politics. These anti-foreigner sentiments can have an adverse impact on domestic political stability. Already there exists a marked degree of tension between political parties on how one should approach the issue of illegal immigrants in the country. The same HSRC survey revealed that members of the Inkatha Freedom Party, the National Party and the Freedom Front are pushing the adoption of a far tougher posture towards illegal immigrants than their African National Congress' counterparts⁴⁵. Thus, the question of illegal immigrants well occupies a central platform around which political parties mobilize for the 1999 elections. On the other hand, should any political party seek to exploit this xenophobia amongst the voting public and manage to gain political office on a tough anti-immigrant stance, it will hold serious consequences for regional relations. The truism of this statement is borne out in the following case. In 1994, alone, South Africa forcibly repatriated 12, 931 illegal Zimbabweans

44. Chris de Kock, Charl Schutte and Diane Ehlers (1995), *Perception of Current Socio-Political Issues in South Africa*, Pretoria, Centre for Socio-Political Analysis, Human Sciences Research Council, pp. 22-23.

residing in the country⁴⁶. This prompted Zimbabwe's Deputy Minister of Industry, Simon Moyo, to ask Pretoria to slow down the repatriation of illegal Zimbabweans; saying that rapid repatriation would have disastrous consequences for his country where two million people are unemployed⁴⁷.

5. COPING WITH ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

5.1 The Utility of Current Strategies

The ending of apartheid; South Africa re-entry to the world community; its relatively developed economy and infrastructure have made it a magnet for those fleeing famine, drought, economic deprivation, environmental degradation, conflict, persecution and human rights abuse in Southern Africa, and, indeed, Africa. The scale of the problem of illegal immigration seems overwhelming: some reports indicate that illegal immigrants are entering the country at the rate of one every ten minutes. Government figures show that 90, 692 illegal immigrants were deported to 39 countries in 1994. This constitutes more than a 100% increase from 1988 when 44, 225 illegal aliens were forcibly repatriated. Some 81,000 came from Mozambique and nearly 11,000 from Zimbabwe. Others have come from further afield in Africa, Eastern Europe and Asia⁴⁸.

Existing methods of immigration control, registration and deportation are hopelessly deficient. The control immigration officer for the Johannesburg region, Gert Vosloo, said that his department was netting less than 10% of illegals.⁴⁹ In 1994, alone, it cost R210 million - a tenth of the entire amount budgeted for the RDP - just to house, educate, police and give medical care for illegal Mozambicans.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

46. Fax to the author from the Ministry of Home Affairs.

47. Reitzes, *op.cit.*, p. 9.

48. Fax to the author from the Department of Home Affairs, 10 January, 1995.

49. Reitzes, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

The estimated costs of simply catching and repatriating illegal Mozambicans, alone, passed the R120 million mark - and most come back in any case!⁵⁰

It is apparent that South Africa's policy towards illegal immigrants, epitomized in the Aliens Control Act (No. 96) of 1991 is in definite need of being overhauled. Three considerations should guide the new South Africa's approach to illegal immigrants.

First, it should start on the pragmatic premise that the current policies based on the stick approach are not working; and to the extent that it signifies South Africa living **against** its neighbours as opposed to living **with** its neighbours - it is counterproductive to regional relations.

Second, it should be informed by the fact that no country that is a relative oasis of prosperity next door to great poverty can stem the tide of its impoverished neighbours illegally penetrating the country's borders. This is a fact that Americans futilely patrolling the Rio Grande know full well.

Finally, it should proceed from a moral consideration. "Apartheid did not only bring discrimination, misery and repression to South Africans; the region's people also fell victim to barbaric destabilization policies which left nearly two million dead, displaced millions more and inflicted damage estimated at US\$ 65 billion on the economies of our neighbours.⁵¹ Destabilization, obviously exacerbated emigration pressures in these countries. To that extent, the region's displaced is as much South Africa's responsibility as it is Mozambique's or Zimbabwe's.

But, the question remains how do these three considerations look in practice. It should be noted here, that the primary reason for the failure of current strategies to curb illegal immigration is that it is fighting symptoms (illegal immigrants) as opposed to directing its

50. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

attention at the sources of insecurity (poverty, ecological catastrophe, human rights abuse and civil strife) which generate these population movements in the first place. Thus migration and security are intimately linked.

What follows in the next section, is to show how migration fits into the new debates concerning security; and how these new theoretical insights could form the basis from which concrete proposals could be made to manage the problem of illegal immigration.

5.2 New Paradigms of Security

During the Cold War a military-oriented interpretation of security dominated the study of international relations in the western alliance in general, and the United States, in particular. However, defining security in terms of state stability and military prowess has proven incapable of understanding; threat security other than those deriving from military confrontation.⁵²

In the current global environment, threats to security and states are increasingly political, social, economic and environmental; and military responses are becoming almost entirely inappropriate and counterproductive.⁵³ In short the utility of military force in global affairs is declining as its costs rise and perceived benefits decline. It is becoming increasingly apparent that real security needs to be concerned not only with defence but also with the pursuit of democracy, sustainable economic development, social justice and the protection of the environment⁵⁴.

-
52. Xavier Carim (1993), "Strategic Perspectives for Southern Africa in the 1990s: Theoretical and Practical Considerations," *Southern African Perspectives: A Working Paper Series*, No. 23, Bellville, Centre for Southern African Studies, University of the Western Cape.
 53. Joseph Romm (1993), *Defining National Security: The Non-military Aspects*, New York, Council on Foreign Relations.
 54. Simon Dalby (1994), *Contesting an Essential Concept: Dilemmas in Contemporary Security Discourse*, Ontario, Canada, The Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University, pp. 4-5.

Many of the daily threats to peoples lives - economic collapse, political oppression and overpopulation - cannot be solved by traditional statist and militaristic approaches. New and imaginative approaches are required. To persist with an outmoded perspective is to reinforce the *status quo* and to accept that there is no stronger basis for human coexistence than genocidal fear.

Thus, broadening the definition - and, therefore, the agenda -of security to include social, economic and environmental factors, presents, in effect, a challenge to the *status quo*. It is a recognition that, in some instances, rather than providing security to its citizens, the state has been a major cause of insecurity. It also reflects an awareness of the interdependence of security and the need for holistic conceptions of security to express its political, social, environmental, and economic dimensions. Further, as more and more problems emerge on a global scale, the need for transnational solutions intensifies. Ultimately, to widen the security agenda is to accept that human life is more important than state security. It dislodges the state as the primary referent of security and sees states as merely as means and not the ends of security⁵⁵.

Alternative approaches to security and peace require holistic, non-statist, non-militaristic underpinnings. An appropriate perspective would also examine established power relations and the totality of social relations in a historical manner. It would also be based on explicit normative values designed to guide strategic action towards an alternative order. Privileging power and order is always at another's expense and is, therefore, inherently unstable.

New security thinking is not exclusionary, but speaks for humanity as a whole. It exhibits clear normative commitments to

55. Ken Booth (1994), "A Security Regime in Southern Africa: Theoretical Considerations," *Southern African Perspectives: A Working Paper Series*, No. 30, Bellville, Centre for Southern African Studies, University of the Western Cape.

emancipation from the tyrannies of war, poverty and oppression. In this view, emancipation and security are inseparable.⁵⁶

6. CONCLUSION

In summary, the key aspects of the new thinking on security must include the following:

- * security is concerned not only with defence, but with the pursuit of democracy, sustainable economic development, social justice and the protection of the environment;

- * threats to security arise not only from armed forces or challenges to sovereignty and territorial integrity, but also from poverty, oppression, injustice, and ecological degradation;

- * since threats are primarily political, social, economic and environmental and since they derive from regional rather than strictly internal sources; policies should be less state-centric and more attuned to meeting the basic needs of the people.

This holistic approach to security is critical since it reveals the intrinsic links between peace, development and regional insecurity. For instance, economic decline that results in the emiseration of the population will inevitably fuel political and social unrest, which itself may 'spill over' across borders. At the same time, national development strategies that ignore that the region operates as a *de facto* single economy are short-sighted.

Deep historical links, forged during the colonial and apartheid eras, have bound the region in a myriad of ways and no country, including South Africa, can hope to cut itself off from the region. This South Africa is beginning to realize. For instance, given that the average Mozambican, hundreds of thousands of Mozambicans routinely migrate illegally into South Africa in search of better life opportunities⁵⁷. Although this poses difficult challenges for the

56. Ken Booth (1991), "Security and Emancipation," *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 4.

57. *The Economist*, 4 March 1995, p. 48.

success of South Africa's Reconstruction and Development programme (as noted above), it is also abundantly clear that South Africa cannot remain immune to developments across its increasingly porous borders.

Employing such a security paradigm to deal with the question of illegal immigration into South Africa; would necessitate the adoption of a long-term comprehensive sub-regional approach to the question of illegal aliens. In doing so, the concerns of the illegal immigrant and the concerns of the state can be bridged; as the approach is premised on two caveats. First, that illegal aliens do not really want to leave their countries of origin but feel compelled to because they find that the 'push' factors are so great that it leaves them with no other option but to cross national frontiers. Second, it recognizes that large numbers of illegal aliens in a country places an inordinate burden on the state; adversely affecting its ability to deliver socio-economic benefits to its citizens. However, it rejects the notion that one can solve the problem of illegal immigrants by the adoption of coercive measures such as enforced repatriation.

The approach bridges the concerns of the illegal immigrant and the state by seeking to address the various causes which give rise to population movements. In the Southern African context this would entail, amongst others: regional economic development, a respect for human rights, and the creation of an environmental regime. Invariably, this is a long-term project and, it should be noted that, any serious cooperative effort to reduce migratory pressures must stay the course in the face of shorter-term contradictory results. But, it is equally obvious that if this is not done the haemorrhage will continue. After all, South Africa will continue to be a Canaan for illegal immigrants if we continue to be a relative oasis of plenty in a desert of poverty. South Africa will still serve to be a haven for illegal immigrants as long as civil strife, violence, ethnic chauvinism and a general lack of respect for human rights continues to be the order of the day in the region.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arnold, H. (1992), "South-North Migration and North-South Conflict," *Viertaliahresbeichte*, No 127, March.

Adepoju, A. (1994), "Preliminary Analysis of Emigration - Dynamics in Sub-Saharan Africa," *International Migration - Quarterly Review*, Vol. 32, No. 2.

Booth, K. (1991), "Security and Emancipation," *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 4.

Booth, K. (1994), "A Security Regime in Southern Africa: Theoretical Consideration," *Southern African Perspectives: A Working Paper Series*, No. 30, Bellville, Centre for Southern African Studies, University of the Western Cape.

British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (1991a), "Vietnamese Migrants in Hong Kong," *Background brief*, London, August.

British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (1991b), "Vietnamese Migrants in Hong Kong," *Background brief*, London, November.

Baynham, S. (1993), "South Africa and the World in the 1990s," *South Africa International*, Vol. 23, No. 3, January.

Bearman, S. (1993), *Strategic Survey 1990-1991*, London, Brassey's for the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

Bureau of Public Affairs (1989), *Gist - A Quick Reference Aid on U.S. Foreign Relations*, United States Department of State.

Carim, X. (1993), "Strategic Perspectives for Southern Africa in the 1990s: Theoretical and practical Considerations," *Southern African Perspectives: A Working Paper Series*, No. 23, Bellville, Centre for Southern African Studies, University of the Western Cape.

Casteleijn, A (1995), "Migration trends in South Africa," Paper presented to the Seminar on *Migration Management in South Africa*, hosted by the International Organisation for Migration and the United Nations Population Fund, Pretoria, 22 August 1995.

Chidoware, R. (1991), "Refugees and Exiles in South Africa," *Southern African Research and Centre*, 22 May.

Chidoware, R. (1993), "The Effects of ESAP on Workers," *Southern African Research and Documentation Centre*, 18 May.

Collinson, S. (1994), *Europe and International Migration*, London, Pinter Publishers for Royal Institute for International Affairs.

Dalby, S. (1994), *Contesting an Essential Concept: Dilemmas in Contemporary Security Discourse*, Ontario, Canada, The Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University.

Davenport, R. (1991), *South Africa: A Modern History*, Hong Kong.

Davies, R. (1990), "A Statistical Profile of the SADCC countries in the 1980s," *Southern African Perspectives*, No. 3, Centre for Southern African Studies, University of the Western Cape.

De Kock, C. (1995), *Perceptions of Current Socio-political Issues in South Africa*, Pretoria, Centre for Socio-political Analysis, Human Sciences Research Council.

Eberstadt, N. (1991), "Population Change and National Security," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer.

Evans, G. and Newnham, J. (1992), *The Dictionary of World Politics: A reference guide to concepts, ideas and institutions*, Harvester-Wheatsheaf, New York.

George, S. (1992), *The Debt Boomerang - How Third World Debt Harms US All*, London, Pluto Press with the Transnational Institute (TNI).

Gersony, R. (1987), *Mozambique's Refugee Problem*, U.S. Department of State's Bureau for Refugee Programs.

Gomel, G. (1992), "Migrations Towards Western Europe: Trends, Outlook, Policies," *The International Spectator*, Vol. 27.

Hamilton, K. A. and Holder, K. (1991), "International Migration and Foreign Policy: A Survey of the Literature," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 26.

Head, J. (1994), "HIV/AIDS, poverty and social structure," in Venter, M. (ed.), *Migrancy and AIDS*, Cape Town, Medical Research Council.

Heisbourg, F. (1991), "Population Movements in post Cold War Europe," *Survival*, Vol. 33.

James, W. (1994), "Migrancy Patterns and the Mining Industry," in Venter, M. (ed.), *Migrancy and AIDS*, Cape Town, Medical Research Council.

Korner, H. (1991), "Future Trends in International Migration," *Intereconomics*, January/February.

Kuwali, S. (1992), "The Food Situation in Southern Africa," *Southern Africa Political and Economic Monthly*, Vol. 6.

Larrabee, F.S. (1992), "Down and Out in Warsaw and Budapest: Eastern Europe and East - West Migration," *International Security*, Vol. 16.

Leistner, E. (1993), "Migration of high-level African manpower to South Africa," *Africa Insight*, Vol. 23. no.3.

Loescher, G. (1992), "Refugee Movements and International Security," *Adelphi Papers*, No. 268.

Makombe, K. (1992), "Brain Drain - Cause for Concern," *Southern Africa Research and Documentation Centre*, 14 April 1992.

Matthews, K. (1992), "Human Rights and Refugees in Africa," *The Monthly Planet*, November.

Meissner, D. (1992), "Managing Migrations," *Foreign Policy*, No. 86.

Opitz, P.J. (1991), "Refugee and Migration Movements," *Aussenpolitik*, Vol. 3.

Orr, G. (1995), "Migration management," Paper presented to the Seminar on *Migration management in South Arrica*, Hosted by the International Organization for Migration and the United Nations Population Fund, 22 August 1995.

Packard, R. (1994), "AIDS in Africa - old and new questions, in Venter, M, (ed.) *Migrancy and AIDS*, Cape Town, Medical Research Council.

Papademetriou, D.G. (1991), "South-North Migration in the Western Hemisphere and U.S. Responses," *International Migration*, Vol. 29, No. 2.

Reitzes, M. (1994), "Alien Issues," *Indicator South Africa*, Vol. 12, No. 1.

Rodee, C.C., Anderson, T. J., Christol, C.Q. and Greene, T.H. (1976), *Introduction to Political Science*, Tokyo, McGraw-Hill Kogakusha Ltd.

Romm, J. (1993), *Defining National Security: The Non-Military Aspects*, New York, Council on Foreign Relations.

Schutte, D. (1993), "Migration: The Status Quo and Prospects for Southern Africa," *ISSUP Bulletin*, University of Pretoria.

Solomon, H. (1993), "In Search of Canaan: A Critical Evaluation of the Causes and Effects of Migration within Southern Africa, and Strategies to Cope with them," *Southern African Perspectives: A Working Paper Series*, No. 24, Bellville, Centre for Southern African Studies, University of the Western Cape.

Solomon, H. (1994a), *Change and Continuity in South Africa's Foreign Policy, 1976- 1991*, unpublished M.A. dissertation, University of Durban-Westville.

Solomon, H. (1994b), "Changing Patterns of Migration in Southern Africa," in Venter, M. (ed.) *Migrancy and AIDS*, Cape Town, Medical Research Council.

Solomon, H. (1995), "Migration in Southern Africa: A Comparative Perspective," *Indian Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 2.

Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference (1993), *Mozambican Refugees in South Africa*, Johannesburg, Masungulo Project.

Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference, Peace and Justice Commission (1995), *Report on Immigrants, Refugees and Displaced People*, Pretoria, SACBC.

Southern African Labour Commission (1992), *Fifth Report on Economic and Social Aspects of Migratory Labour in Southern Africa*, February.

Speth, J. G. (1992), "A post-Rio Compact," *Foreign Policy*, No. 88.

Suhrke, A. (1992), *Towards a Comprehensive Refugee Policy: Conflict and Refugees in the Post-Cold War World*, Bergen, Norway, Chr. Michelsen Institute.

Tafirenyika, M. (1992b), "Mozambican Refugees in Malawi - will they ever return home?," *Southern Africa Research and Documentation Centre*, 29 June.

Toolo, H. and Bethlehem, L. (1994), "Labour Migration to South Africa," Paper presented to the *Workshop on Labour Migration to South Africa*, hosted by the National Labour and Economic Development Institute (NALEDI), 31 August 1994, Johannesburg.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (1993), *The State of the World's Refugees*, New York, Penguin Books.

United Nations Spotlight on Humanitarian Issues (1992), *Enlarging the UN's Humanitarian Mandate*, New York, United Nations, December.

UNPAAERD (1991), "Extracts from Economic Crisis in Africa: Final Review of the UN-PAAERD (United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development)," *Backgrounder 5*, A Centre for Southern African Studies Resource publication.

Van Hear, N. (1994), "The Socio-Economic Impact of the Involuntary Mass Return to Yemen in 1990," *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1.

Vale, P. (1993), "Southern Africa's Security: Some Old Issues, Many New Questions," Paper delivered at the Seminar on *Confidence and Security Building Measures in Southern Africa*, Organised by the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs, Windhoek, Namibia, 24-26 February 1993.

Vale, P. and Solomon, H. (1993), "Migration and Global Change: Understanding the Tsunami Effect," Paper presented to the Seminar, *Migration: Sources, Patterns, Implications*, Organised by the Witwatersrand Branch of the South African Institute of International Affairs, Johannesburg, 6 May 1993.

Widgren, J. (1995), "Shaping a Multilateral Response to Future Migration, hosted by the Salzburg Seminar, Schloss Leopoldskron, Salzburg, Austria, 11 July 1995.

Woehlcke, M. (1992), "Environmental Refugees," *Aussenpolitik*, Vol. 43, No. 3.

World Refugee Survey (1994), Washington, D.C. United States Committee for Refugees.

Zlotnik, H. (1995), "Global Circumstances: The Theory and Practice of Measurement of International Migration," Paper presented to the *Seminar on Involuntary Migration*, hosted by the Salzburg Seminar, Schloss Leopoldskron, Salzburg, Austria, 9 July 1995.

Periodical Publications

The Christian Science Monitor, Boston, 7 January 1990.

The Christian Science Monitor, Boston, 27 November 1990

The Christian Science Monitor, Boston, 19 February 1991.

The Christian Science Monitor, Boston, 2 May 1991.

The Economist, London, 15 February 1992.

The Economist, London, 4 March 1995.

Indian Ocean News, Perth, 9 January 1993

International Herald Tribune, Paris, 29 September 1989.

Moto. Harare, No. 97, 1 February 1991.

Newsweek, New York, 23 November 1992.

New York Times, 12 August 1990.

New York Times, 12 February 1993

New York Times International, 24 January 1991.

Noticias, Maputo, 21 September 1991.

South, Cape Town, 25 April 1992.

South, Cape Town. 3 June 1994

Sowetan, 23 August 1993.

The Washington Post, 23 October 1990

The Washington Post, 23 November 1990

The Washington Post, 26 November 1990

The Washington Post, 24 April 1991

The Washington Post, 6 June 1991

The Weekly Mail, Johannesburg, 5 June 1992

The Weekly Mail, Johannesburg, 24 June 1994

The Weekly Mail, Johannesburg, 3 December 1994.

Primary Sources

Basic Agreement Between the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Concerning the Presence, Role, Legal Status, Immunities and Privileges of the UNHCR and its Personnel in the Republic of South Africa, 6, September 1993.

Media Release by Mngosuthu Buthelezi, Minister of Home Affairs, 2 December 1994.

Resolution on Migrant Labour, Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). International Policy Conference. Johannesburg. 21-23 April 1995.