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THE CARIBBEAN ON THE MOVE:  
UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS IN THE HEMISPHERE

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(The views and suggestions in this paper are those of the author, and  
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Introduction: A Caribbean Case Study

"You're looking at a person who is satisfied with life and with what she has been able to accomplish. From now on I'm not going to work anymore." Rocío, a Colombian woman of 46, is on her way back to her country after having worked in the U.S. as a domestic servant for six years. She is my seatmate on an Avianca flight from New York to Bogotá. Since her story illuminates so many of the facets of the current debate on undocumented workers, it is worth telling in some detail.

From a small suburb of Medellín in the province of Antioquia, Rocío has not made a single visit home to see her husband and five children during these six years, not even for Christmas, because of her status as an immigrant without papers. Now she sighs with satisfaction -- even though she is a bit nervous about taking an airplane trip -- at the prospect of being very shortly with her family in her native city.

A short, dark woman with faintly negroid features, Rocío is dressed in a simple manner, but wears a well-cut suit, modish shoes, and has her hair styled in the latest fashion. No one would suspect that she is a domestic servant. As the plane takes off, she makes the sign of the cross. I assure her that everything is going to be all right, and after the hostess has served our breakfast, we settle down to talk.

"I never thought I would stay so long," she confides. "As a matter of fact, this doll you see here in my bag already is three years old. I bought her for my daughter, the youngest of my children, a long time ago when I first was thinking about returning to Colombia. As things turned out, I couldn't go then for reasons I'm going to explain; now my daughter

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is 11 years old, and I don't know whether she likes dolls anymore. She was only 5 when I left."

A bit worried, the mother continues her story. "The fact is that my husband couldn't find a suitable house at a price we were able to pay; so he had to take another much more expensive house, and that is why I stayed three years longer. We paid 370,000 pesos (about \$10,600 U.S.). But now it's all paid for; I made every payment out of my wages.

"I've also managed to furnish the house completely, and I'm taking back with me a television set, electric iron, sewing machine and many other things. Since we have friends in the customs, they'll let us through without paying any duties. I paid \$200 dollars in overweight baggage, besides \$250 in air cargo for other things.

"You bet this means I had to save just about all my salary, \$95 a week! I really haven't done much of anything else during these years except work and save money. Well, yes, once in awhile I made short trips -- I love to travel and see new places -- organized by the parish. Two trips, one to Miami and another to Washington, D.C. But outside of this, really not much of anything. I saved all my money.

"You see, there just wasn't any other solution for us. We're poor people, of the lower class; my father was a bricklayer, and neither my husband nor I were able to go to school. To tell you the truth, even though my husband is a good man, he does like to drink and he has an eye for women. I am the strong one in our family, in fact, and I decided to go alone, knowing very well that if he went along we would not be able to save enough. I'm very disciplined, you see, and then we had to think also about the children and who would take care of them. We did find a very responsible, older

woman to look after them, but that's not like having one of the parents with them. So I decided myself, as I said, to go alone, and he just had to be satisfied with that.

"But now I don't know how they're all going to react at seeing me again, especially my husband. I'm a little nervous, even though I took some tranquilizers. Please, you'll have to excuse me."

Some tears escape, in spite of Rocío's efforts, but after a bit she composes herself and continues her story. "Just think of it! I haven't even seen it, and now I'm going directly to my new house, a house I've never seen! Well, of course I talked with my family by telephone once in awhile, and every month I sent the money for the house to my eldest son so he could make the payments. Just think! -- he's 22 years old, and I left him as a young boy of 16. Today he's a man. But I have the satisfaction of knowing that through my efforts he's now an automotive mechanic and very soon he's going to get married. My next son also is about to graduate as a mechanic, and my third child, my daughter, wants to study nursing. That's the reason I'm taking back a sewing machine. I'm going to do alterations and some dress-making so that she can study. But never again am I going to work outside my home, no señora!

"How did I get work up there? Well, my sister was also working as a domestic servant, and she got me the job in the home of a rich woman who was a friend of her own employer. This woman has several boutiques, and at that time her little girl was only 11 years old. She couldn't leave her alone after her return from school in the afternoons. And her son was only 17. So I went on a tourist visa -- although my sister and my brother are settled and they have resident visas.

"I ended up loving that little girl just as if she were mine, and sometimes she made me think of my own children. At night, I would think about them, and I can tell you that pretty often I would cry, not in front of my employers. They really liked me a lot, and appreciated and respected me. The whole family was very nice to me. I did part of the cleaning, sharing that with the señora, and all of the cooking.

"One thing which impressed me a lot was the fact that they left everything unlocked, even when I had just arrived and they didn't know me. Including money just left lying around. They also had a lot of lovely, valuable things, and I liked to open the drawers and admire them when I was doing the cleaning, and they never seemed to mind. Before I left, they gave me a dinner and invited their relatives who had gotten to know me over the years, and also my brother and sister.

"Being a servant in the United States isn't like being a servant in Colombia. I don't have any hesitation about saying what work I did there; everyone in my neighborhood in Medellín has always known about it. Since I'm a person of the lower class who doesn't put on any airs, they certainly weren't going to believe that I went to work in anything better. Moreover, this is honest work, and I'm not ashamed of having done it. On the contrary, I'm proud of what I've been able to accomplish.

"Go back to the United States? Ayyyyy, no señora! I'm 46 years old, and I'm never going back even for a visit. Well, since I was there so many years without a visa, they aren't going to let me in anyway. But I don't care. If my brother and sister want to see me, they'll just have to come to Colombia. I'm never ever again going to leave my family, or my house, or my town."

Overview: A Caribbean Perspective

Western Hemisphere migration is not a new phenomenon. By the turn of the century peoples of the Caribbean -- populated in previous centuries through importation of slaves and indentured workers for the sugar plantations -- were moving out from the islands in massive numbers. They were responding not only to the push of natural population increase and depression in the sugar industry, but to the pull of new economic opportunities in the less-populated territories nearby.

The building of the Panama Railroad and Canal attracted thousands. Other jobs opened up with the development of the sugar industry in Cuba -- not under the same strictures of competition with the European sugar-beet industry as the West Indian -- and of the banana plantation in Central America. (For two analyses of Caribbean population history, see Harewood {1975} and Roberts {1955}.)

Bryant-Laporte (1972:8) documents the departure of 146,000 Jamaicans in the early 1900's from their homeland: 46,000 left for England, and the rest for Panama, Cuba and Central America. Many West Indians also came northwards to the U.S. in these years.

When the United States government decided not to import Chinese to the Isthmus of Panama, first Jamaica, then Barbados, Martinique and Guadeloupe, and later every West Indian country supplied men and women to work (and many to die of malaria, yellow fever, dysentery and accidents) on the Railroad and then on the Canal. By 1913, black workers in Panama reached a peak of some 46,000, including several thousand black women who laundered, cooked and worked as prostitutes (McCullough: 1977:559).<sup>1</sup>

An interesting sidelight on the migration of West Indians to Panama is the fact, as McCullough recounts (p. 473) that unskilled North American white workers, even those at the bottom of the pay scale, could not be enticed to the "death trap" of Panama. Nor could black men in the U.S. be recruited because of strenuous opposition from southern congressmen who did not want their region drained of its cheap labor supply.

By 1920, according to Harewood (1975:4), the first great movement, representing a large net emigration out of the Afro-Caribbean, was spent. Because of changes in U.S. immigration laws and the world wide depression, migration would not become so massive again until after World War II. Indeed, Harewood thinks that there was some net return to the West Indies after 1929. But this does not mean that the movement back and forth among the islands and the contiguous countries ever ceased.

In recent decades, high rates of emigration from the region once again are being registered. Movement out of the Caribbean now represents a large percentage of the natural increase in the 14 countries of the West Indies.<sup>2</sup> Those leaving the region totalled an estimated 20 percent of those born between 1943 and 1960, and 52 percent between 1960 and 1970 (Beckford 1977:11), providing an important safety-valve to relieve what might have become intolerable population pressures. In the ten years following 1960, the region lost a total of 1.2 million persons, equivalent to nearly one-third of its population at the beginning of the decade (Roberts: 1974:6). Since 1962 when the movement of West Indians to the United Kingdom began to be curtailed by the Commonwealth Immigrants Act, the streams going northwards to the United States and Canada have accelerated (Beckford: 1977:11). In 1962, for example, 618 persons left the Commonwealth Caribbean for Canada; in 1970,

12,456 were admitted (Department of Manpower and Immigration:1972).

Hispanics also have been part of the movement northwards. Substantial numbers of Latin Americans were registered as entering the U.S. after 1900, although their proportion of the total was negligible until the 1930's. In that decade, because they had free entry which Southern and Eastern Europeans no longer enjoyed, Latins began to catch up. Between 1931 and 1960, only 12 percent more of the former entered the U.S. than the latter (655,000 Southern and Eastern Europeans; and 576,000 Latin Americans {Taeuber and Taeuber 1971: 93}). Segal (1975:17) puts total emigration from the Hispanic and Afro-Caribbean as at least 2,878,000 since 1950.

Domínguez (1975: 12), Hendricks (1974: 38) and others suggest that emigration has long been perceived by Caribbean peoples as integral to the economic and social life of the region, and an accepted stage of the person's life cycle as well. Hendricks observes that for Dominican students, "the almost universal assumption, especially among older children, is that one day they will go to New York themselves." An increasing number of Colombians regard a period in the U.S. as part of their life plan (Chaney: 1976: 31). González (1970) documents the intricate folklore and traditions which have grown up in the Dominican Republic around the process of obtaining a U.S. visa -- or outwitting the authorities when the legal path to emigration is blocked.

It would be a distortion to suggest that personal motivations alone govern the movement of Caribbean peoples. Nevertheless, over many generations migration has become an ordinary, acceptable and everyday response to the structural problems posed by high birth rates, scarcity of land, restricted job and educational opportunities and simply the sheer crowding

of the Caribbean and Central American region. Emigration is, moreover, a response that has become acceptable to many governments in lieu of a planned population policy. (Five of the works cited above give the best background and most complete bibliographies on the Hispanic and Afro-Caribbean peoples who make up present-day migrant streams to the U.S.: Beckford, Bryce-Laporte, Domínguez, Hendricks and Segal. Three other recent works should be added: Beckford {1975}, Bryce-Laporte and Mortimer {1976}, and Cruz and Castaño {1976}. For more detailed information on the population composition and demography of the region, see Harewood {1975} and McCoy {1977: } )

While migration itself is not a new phenomenon in the region, what is "new" is the apparently record number of undocumented migrants moving throughout the Hispanic and Afro-Caribbean (defined broadly to include Colombia, Venezuela and Guyana) and Central American countries -- and the large number now coming northwards. Colombia is one of the most interesting cases, illustrating that the movement is not solely between the Caribbean and the U.S., but a regional problem. Estimates are that some 800,000 to 1 million Colombians have crossed the long, permeable border between their country and Venezuela, to take the place of Venezuelan peasants who have departed to their own booming cities -- "wetbacks" without a river to cross. Perhaps another 60,000 Colombians have gone to Ecuador, and some 300,000-350,000 to the U.S. (Cruz and Castaño 1976: 75-78).

Most of those coming to the U.S. have, paradoxically, entered since 1965 when a quota was for the first time imposed on Western Hemisphere migrants. The quota on legal migration was, of course, not solely responsible for the increasing influx of illegal aliens. The new U.S. law coincided with a period in the Caribbean when other factors coalesced to increase the

flow: growing population pressures; increasing numbers entering the job market; the impact of the immigration restrictions imposed by Great Britain on West Indians, cutting off all but a few of the most skilled by August, 1965 (Domínguez 1975: 11); cheap air fares. An additional ingredient may have been the attainment of a "critical mass" of most Caribbean nationality groups in major U.S. population centers.

Such "colonies" now are large enough so that new arrivals can expect to be sustained for several months while they get their bearings. They use the extensive networks of relatives and friends to find employment. The Dominican colony has even worked out a consensus on acceptable time limits for this process, and has evolved ways for getting the timid out to hustle for a job after a decent orientation period. Hendricks documents how some groups in New York talk daily by shortwave radio with their home villages in the Dominican Republic, exchanging information on the current state of the job market; births, deaths and illnesses; arrivals and departures; the soccer scores and the contrasting temperatures.

Moreover, adjustments to the Immigration Act of 1965, carried out in the last months of the Ford Administration, probably have had the effect of bringing more Hispanics and West Indians to eastern seaboard cities as legal migrants, since they are not generally attracted to the southwest. As Cruz and Castaño (1976: 112-13) document, for Colombians and other Hispanics -- as for immigrants in general -- until recently the United States and "New York" were practical equivalents:

New York is not only the city in the United States with the highest number of Colombian immigrants, it also was their first destination. We must remember that before,

much more than now, for many Colombians -- and for other Latin Americans, too -- the United States automatically meant New York. Anyone talking about a trip to the United States was thinking of a trip to New York.

The existence of both the legal and illegal migrant streams from the Caribbean has been obscured by concern over the southwest border where the largest numbers of the undocumented enter the U.S. from Mexico. Yet Hispanics -- both legal and illegal -- have added perhaps 1 million persons to the greater New York City metropolitan area, bringing the total Hispanic population there (including Puerto Ricans) to perhaps 2 million. The West Indian total -- with Haiti, Jamaica and Barbados probably contributing the largest numbers -- reach perhaps another million. By now, Afro-Caribbean and Hispanic migrants have fanned out over the country, particularly to Miami, Chicago and Los Angeles, but the eastern cities still have the largest colonies.

Another interesting new twist is the fact that for over a decade, as Domínguez documents (1975: 13), women migrants have been overwhelmingly in the majority from both the Hispanic and Afro-Caribbean. Cohen (1977: 27) calculates that Hispanic women from Central and South America represent as many as two-thirds of the total migrants from these regions, and that most are women with established households in their place of origin. While I believe her estimates to be high, there is little doubt that women form a greater or lesser majority of the migrants in all nationality groups, a fact that reflects the same reversal of internal migration trends noted throughout Latin America itself (Elizaga 1970; Fox and Huguet 1977: 11-13). (For a

discussion of internal migration in Latin America and elsewhere, and its relation to the growing phenomenon of the woman-based household throughout the developing world, see Buvenić and Youssef {1978} and Chaney {1977}.)

A U.S. Perspective: Some Statistics

A major underlying concern, not always confronted openly, in relation to the growing numbers of Caribbean migrants is what Bryce-Laporte (1977: 18) has called their "sharp visibility." The new migrants (defined by Bryce-Laporte as those who have come since the 1965 Immigration Act) not only are thought to be less "selective," but they are racially and ethnically distinct as well. While we do not really mind if immigrants are poor, we apparently mind very much if they are brown, yellow or black and if they are carriers of a distinct set of cultural traditions. Scare headlines, reminiscent of the "yellow peril" journalism of an earlier era, announce "silent invasions" and "brown tides" washing in upon us (the latter phrase was used by Benjamin F. Holman, director of Community Relations Service, U.S. Justice Department, in a New York Times interview, April 9, 1976).

The proportionate decrease of European migrants and the corresponding increase of migrants from the Americas and Asia have accelerated to the point where a trend noted only by a few scholars in the early 1970's has begun to emerge as a public policy issue. As Bryce-Laporte notes (1977: 21),

The data make it apparent not only that the ethnic composition of the United States is likely to change, but also such concomitants as language, folk culture, religion, ethnic concentrations, and even political influences....

Studies already have begun to show significant shifts in

the ethnic composition of certain job and professional categories in the United States { and } recent world and national crises have shown such groups to be far from inactive politically, whether it be of an elective, pressuring or conspiratorial nature.

What are some of these trends, and can they be expressed in meaningful numbers, even if the overall dimensions of the migrations cannot? We do have some key data, and four sets of statistics will be examined here: the far-reaching changes in the sources of immigrants to the U.S. since 1783; the numbers of Caribbean and Latin American legal immigrants for the past century; population projections for selected Caribbean and Latin American countries, and some indicative labor market and density statistics for Central America.

In the decade 1820-1830 (the first period during which immigration records were kept), 70 percent of all migrants to the U.S. originated in Europe, and only 10 percent came from the Americas. By 1969-75, only one quarter of the immigrants were of European origin, while 45 percent came from the Americas and 28 percent from Asia. Figures for the Americas include Canada which accounted for about 60 percent of Western Hemisphere immigrants before 1965. After the 1965 Act went into effect, immigration from Canada fell sharply, while the share from Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean increased, as did overall numbers. (Warren 1976:6). Table 1 gives a decade-by-decade breakdown of immigration to the U.S. from 1783, while Table 2 compares percentages from the Western Hemisphere and other world areas for the past hundred years.

TABLE 1: IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES, 1783-1975

Period*	Total Number	Percent From			
		Europe	Americas	Asia	Other***
1783-1819	250,000**				
1820-1830	151,824	70.1	7.9	x	22.0
1831-1840	599,125	82.7	5.6	x	11.7
1841-1850	1,713,251	93.2	3.7	x	3.1
1851-1860	2,598,214	94.4	2.9	1.6	1.1
1861-1870	2,314,824	89.2	7.2	2.8	.8
1871-1880	2,812,191	80.8	14.4	4.4	.4
1881-1890	5,246,613	90.3	8.1	1.3	.3
1891-1900	3,687,564	96.4	1.1	2.0	.5
1901-1910	8,795,386	91.6	4.1	3.7	.6
1911-1920	5,735,811	75.4	19.9	4.3	.4
1921-1930	4,107,209	60.0	36.9	2.7	.4
1931-1940	528,431	65.8	30.3	3.0	.9
1941-1950	1,035,039	60.0	34.3	3.1	2.6
1951-1960	2,515,479	52.7	39.6	6.0	1.7
1961-1968****	2,589,772	34.8	53.7	10.1	1.4
1969-1975	2,668,186	24.2	45.1	28.3	2.4

Source: Based on Annual Reports of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, Metropolitan Insurance Company, 1976.

\* Data relate to fiscal periods ending June 30, except prior to 1871 when the period ended either on September 30 or December 31.

\*\* Estimated by William J. Bromwell, History of Immigration to the United States, 1856.

\*\*\* Includes areas not specified.

\*\*\*\* The 1965 Immigration Act went into full effect June 30, 1968; this accounts for the larger numbers in comparison to the subsequent period.

x Less than .05 percent

Note: Data prior to 1906 relate to country of origin; thereafter, to country of last permanent residence. Figures for the Americas include Canada, which accounts for about 60 percent of Western Hemisphere immigrants before 1965.

TABLE 2: IMMIGRANTS ADMITTED TO THE UNITED STATES, 1875 TO 1975

Characteristic	Year Ended June 30									
	1875	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1971	1975
Number of Admissions	227,498	487,918	878,587	805,228	97,139	51,776	205,717	271,344	370,478	386,194
Percent of Total Admissions										
<u>Male</u>	61.5	67.9	64.9	55.8	41.8	35.3	48.3	44.7	46.6	46.8
Area of last permanent residence										
<u>North America</u>	11.6	.9	10.4	14.8	30.0	39.5	19.4	44.4	40.2	39.0
Canada	10.5	.1	6.5	9.0	22.8	22.2	12.6	17.5	6.1	2.9
Mexico	.3	.1	2.3	3.8	3.4	5.5	3.0	15.3	13.6	16.2
West Indies	.8*	.7	1.5	1.7	2.6	9.0	2.8	7.6	18.0	17.3
Other	+	+	.1	.3	1.2	2.8	1.0	4.0	2.5	2.5
<u>South America</u>	.1	+	.4	.6	1.7	4.3	1.7	7.0	6.1	6.3
<u>Europe</u>	80.4	96.1	85.4	80.2	63.7	51.2	72.7	39.0	24.7	18.8
<u>Asia</u>	7.3	2.9	3.6	3.9	3.5	3.5	3.5	7.3	26.5	33.4
<u>All Others</u>	.6	.1	.2	.5	1.1	1.5	2.7	1.4	2.5	2.5

+Less than .05 percent

\*Bermuda only

Source: Various immigration reports from the United States Treasury, Labor, and Justice Departments, Metropolitan Insurance Company, 1976.

Mexico with its projected population increase from 62 million in mid-1976 to 254 million by the year 2020 (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 1978) quite rightly is eyed with concern by U.S. policymakers. Some share of concern also ought to be directed towards the Caribbean where population, because of rapidly-declining mortality rates and continued high fertility, is growing at an equally-rapid pace. Life expectancy also has increased dramatically; for example, in Barbados, life expectancy for women increased from 31.9 years in 1921 to 70.8 years in 1970 (UNICA 1976: 7). Projections presently being used by the IBRD for its future development plans are startling, including a doubling of Colombia and Costa Rica's populations by 2005; a tripling of Jamaica and Panama's by the same year, and even larger multipliers and more distant "levelling off" dates for other key countries. Table 3 pulls out from current IBRD projections those countries which currently contribute substantial numbers to the migrant streams -- or might do so in the future if they experience economic recession, i.e., Venezuela when her oil bonanza runs out in 15 years. Combined populations for Central America, the Caribbean and Colombia will total a possible 177 million by 2040, compared to a total of 54 million inhabitants in mid-1976. Some 65 million of these additional people could be on the scene as early as 2005. If Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela -- all presently sources for probably modest-sized migrant colonies in the U.S. -- are added in, a grand total of 332 millions is reached.

TABLE 3 PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES OF "STABLE POPULATION" LEVELS (IN MILLIONS)\*

<u>Country</u>	<u>Population Mid-1976</u>	<u>Stationery Level with NRR = 1 date</u>	
		<u>Population</u>	<u>Date</u>
<u>South America</u>			
Bolivia	5.8	25	2040
Colombia	24.2	53	2005
Ecuador	7.3	31	2025
Peru	15.8	56	2025
Venezuela	12.4	43	2010
<u>Central America</u>			
Costa Rica	2.0	5	2005
El Salvador	4.1	13	2015
Guatemala	6.5	26	2025
Honduras	3.0	20	2040
Nicaragua	2.3	12	2025
<u>Caribbean</u>			
Dominican Republic	4.8	17	2015
Haiti	4.7	19	2035
Jamaica	2.1	6	2005
Trinidad & Tobago	1.1	2	2005
Panama	1.7	4	2005
Mexico	62.0	254	2020

Source: World Bank 1978, xeroxed.

\*The stationary population size for each country has been estimated by the component method of population projection at five-year intervals until the overall population growth rate declines to zero. For this purpose, life expectancy at birth was projected as in the projection for the period 1975-2000 and extended beyond the year 2000 until female life expectancy at birth reached 77.5 years. For all subsequent years, this value was kept constant. To project fertility rates, the year in which the "net reproduction rate" (NRR) is likely to reach unity was first obtained on the basis of the country's total fertility rate in the year 2000.

In the face of the population projections just given, it may seem superfluous to ask the reasons Caribbean peoples are on the move in greater numbers than ever before in history. Nevertheless, translating the figures into just two of the most obvious consequences is instructive: employment and density. As Fox and Huguet (1977:11) recently noted in a study carried out for the Inter-American Development Bank, by the year 2000 the Central American labor force will more than double from its current 6 million to nearly 14 million. Translated into new jobs which must be created, this means that each year between 1995 and 2000, Salvadoreans will need 106,000 new jobs annually (compared to 50,000 in 1970-75). Comparable figures for Guatemala are 117,000 compared with 56,000; Honduras, 72,000 compared with 28,000; Nicaragua, 51,000 and 20,000; Costa Rica, 33,000 and 23,000, and Panama, 29,000 and 15,000. These figures, as Fox and Huguet note, take into account only jobs for new workers entering the labor force, not the tremendous backlog of un and underemployment and the large numbers of women already seeking to enter the labor force.

Bass (Inter-American Development Bank: 1978) estimates that rural unemployment in Central America is between 40 and 45 percent, reaching in a few countries even 50 to 60 percent. In many cases, he says, these people migrate to the cities to find jobs, but simply become the urban unemployed.

Population distribution also affects people's propensity to migrate, particularly from the rural areas where there is no land. The "soccer war" in 1969 between Honduras and El Salvador was not fought over fútbol but over the 300,000 Salvadoreans living in Honduras; population densities in the latter country were only 23 per square kilometer, but 170 in El Salvador. By the year 2000, density in El Salvador will reach 420 inhabitants per square kilometer, not far behind present densities in Bangladesh and Java (Fox and Huguet 1977: 2-3).

Colombians on the Move: Policy Issues

Colombians are among the principal groups on the move to other parts of the Americas; as already noted, substantial numbers are leaving to go to Venezuela, Ecuador, Panama and the United States. Many of these also are persons without proper immigration documents. Thus, Colombians make an interesting case study for examining the policy implications of these migrations not only for the United States, but also for other sending societies and the inter-American system. Rather than try to include the entire Caribbean in the discussion which follows, it will be more useful to examine the issues, in some depth, in relation to one country. Much of what will be said would hold true for other Caribbean and Latin American nations.

The new migrations pose a complex set of economic, political and legal issues similar to those which surfaced earlier in Europe's industrialized metropolitan centers which are receiving their former colonials and/or other Third World nationals to undertake the menial tasks which persons born in the host societies no longer wish to do. Among the most crucial policy issues are the following:

1. Development predicated on the adoption of capital-intensive productive technologies and the resultant high rates of un and underemployment in many countries, pushing persons into migrant streams which no longer stop at national boundaries;
2. The politically volatile issue posed by the growth of large proletarian diasporas, "underclasses" of foreigners (many without proper documents), living and working within the borders of more prosperous Western Hemisphere countries -- complicated in many cases

by sharp differences in racial and ethnic characteristics.

3. The implications of the new migrants' presence for the continued growth of the host economies, and the relation of the host country's labor force to the imported laboring hands;
4. The loss to the sending region of so many of their citizens, a significant proportion of whom have been trained at the expense of the sending society, balanced to some degree by the remittances sent to the home countries and the possibility that many migrants may return with new skills and material resources.

The above resumé grossly simplifies and abridges what are complex and controversial issues. What I propose to do in this paper is to fill out and shade in these contentions through information from a study recently carried out on the Colombian migrant group. Many of the assertions in the following exposition are tentative; they are based in large part on the results of a collaborative project carried out by a U.S. team, working with a counterpart research team headed by Ramiro Cardona of the Corporación Centro Regional de Población in Bogotá (1976a and 1976b). (A methodological note: for the CCRP, the project provided opportunity for a pilot study which was part of a larger research design to study the out-migration of Colombians to neighboring countries in South and Central America {this study is underway, funded by a United Nations grant}. For our team, the project represented a unique opportunity for host country social scientists to collaborate with colleague, of the sending society and thus to view the migration process from both perspectives. While the U.S. team's emphasis centered on the problems of Colombians in the United States, we did not believe we could understand

their situation unless we took into account the fundamental mechanisms generating the migration in the sending society. It is interesting to us that our Colombian colleagues have, in turn, sought the collaboration of Venezuelan counterparts for their own work on Colombian migration to Venezuela. For a discussion of the situation of Colombians in New York City, see Chaney 1976a, 1976b, and 1977a.)

#### The Dimensions of Colombian Migration

What has been Colombia's contribution to the over 11.3 million persons of Spanish origin in the United States (this total, taken from the latest Current Population Reports {U.S. Bureau of the Census 1977} presumably would not include very many of the perhaps 4-8 million illegal aliens in the U.S. since the 11.3 figure is based on a 5 percent sample of the 1970 Census, and most experts believe that most non-documented persons evade Census enumeration in the first place).

It is not possible to disaggregate the total numbers of Western Hemisphere immigrants from the earlier years; all South Americans were lumped together by the Immigration and Naturalization Service in its reports, and the old handwritten records from which the reports were constructed no longer exist. In 1926, country breakdowns were initiated, and these show Colombia has consistently contributed a large share of South Americans admitted to the U.S. Indeed, Colombia has been in the lead for the past 25 years (except for two years when Argentina sent slightly more immigrants), with Colombians legally admitted to the U.S. accounting for 35 percent of the total South Americans during the period 1951-1975. From 1926 through 1975, Colombians admitted as legal immigrants totalled 121,256 (Cruz and Castaño 1976: 93-98).

In order to understand the policy implications of Colombian migration, it is important to sketch its total dimensions as well as we can. In Colombia, there is possibly more concern about migration to the U.S. because, as Cruz and Castaño suggest (1976: 77), while it is not the largest, it is believed to be by far the most selective. Representing far greater numbers is the over-the-border migration of Colombian agricultural workers into Venezuela, by now adding perhaps a million persons to -- and accounting for about one-tenth of -- the population of the neighboring republic. As noted earlier, this migration apparently follows the classic step or fill-in pattern; as Venezuelan campesinos depart for the booming centers of their own country, Colombians move in to take over their jobs in the agricultural sector on the other side of the long, permeable border. Many highly-skilled persons also go to Venezuela; most lately, large display ads in the Bogotá newspapers invite, among others, technicians from Colombia's highly-developed textile industry to emigrate.

It is logical that steady, if not spectacular numbers of Colombians have been going to their former territory of Panama since the end of the 1920's (Cruz and Castaño 1976, quoting Villegas {1974:75}). More recently, perhaps 60,000 Colombians -- with or without papers -- have arrived in Ecuador because of the jobs created by the new petroleum enterprises.

The panel of experts<sup>3</sup> created for our own study of the Jackson Heights Colombian colony in Queens, New York, tell us that Colombian immigrants in significant numbers began arriving there in the 1940's; however, the oldest inhabitants came to Jackson Heights just after World War I. We have exact figures on the numbers before 1965, since obtaining a permanent resident visa was as easy as getting a tourist document for Latin Americans before the Immigration Act of that year went into effect (see Cruz and Castaño

{1976: 99} for a discussion of the minimum restrictions imposed). Massive numbers of Colombians, totalling perhaps 150,000-250,000 in the greater New York City metropolitan area, and smaller colonies in Chicago (Walton: 1973), Miami, El Paso and Los Angeles, have come since around 1960 -- with total numbers reaching as many as 300,000-350,000 {?} in the United States.<sup>4</sup>

Not only have Colombians been on the move beyond their country's borders, but this movement was preceded by a great deal of internal migration which continues to the present day. In the CCRP survey (Cruz and Castaño 1976: 199-203), 65 percent of those migrating to the U.S. had migrated internally at least once. In looking at both aspects, the Colombian and North American team members participating in our recent collaborative project concluded that the distinctions often made between internal and international migration are artificial, as Singer (1974: 128) has suggested. Because of the (relatively) short journey and cheap airfare -- and the large "beach-head" of Colombians clustered in Jackson Heights, Elmhurst, Corona and Woodside -- there is little reason now for migrants to hesitate to cross international borders. I have likened the Colombian colony with its center at 82nd Street and Roosevelt Avenue in Jackson Heights -- "Chapinerito," named after a middle-class suburb of Bogotá -- to a distant province of Colombia (Chaney: 1976: 59-60), and believe the migratory processes probably are more similar than different, whether the destination is inside or outside Colombia's borders.

Colombians on the Move:  
Structural Perspectives

At the level of personal motivation (where most migration studies have concentrated) people almost always can "explain" why they leave their home

place. Not surprisingly, the cause most often is perceived to be lack of economic opportunity in the place of origin and/or greater opportunity in the place of destination, rather than the unintended outcome of political and economic decisions about development, taken in the developed countries. An analysis of the policy issues posed for the inter-American system by movements of skilled and unskilled Afro-Caribbean and Latin American persons towards the richer countries of the region must, however, center on these mechanisms which create the "push/pull" factors in the first place.

During the 1960's, capital-intensive development strategies in both agriculture and industry promoted throughout much of the Third World by the industrialized metropolitan countries failed to generate sufficient employment opportunity for millions who today survive by crowding into the low-productivity, low-paid service sector. In advanced countries, such persons would remain unemployed and draw unemployment or welfare benefits; in developing countries they swell the ranks of veritable new armies of the unemployed or "self-employed" (who may, however, on many days have no work to do at all) (Morse 1970: 4-5; Thiesenhusen 1971; Bairoch 1973).

In the Third World, as is well documented by now, most rural populations move directly from agriculture to the service sector. Not all tertiary sector employment is marginal, but as Amin observes (1974: 61), only in developed countries does the service sector resemble the secondary (in terms of wages, working conditions, benefits, productivity). In countries of the periphery, the tertiary sector has undergone a process of "hypertrophy," becoming swollen and distorted so that the proportion of the work force occupied in tertiary activity is much greater than in the secondary. On the

periphery, the tertiary sector contains a much greater proportion of marginal occupations than in the center countries. Growing numbers of "surplus" people in the Third World must invent service jobs in the interstices of the economy to stay alive. They shine shoes; wash and watch automobiles {while their owners shop or eat in a restaurant}; sell cheap consumer items, magazines, lottery tickets; cook and sell finger foods on the street, often duplicating services already offered by the formal, organized labor sector.

In Colombia, the introduction of modern agricultural methods and machinery tended to exclude from the market all those who could not afford the new technology, contributing to an ever-accelerating movement of people towards the cities. The agrarian reform program of the 1960's (much less radical than its public image) affected relatively few of Colombia's peasants; moreover, most analysts now agree that even if it had succeeded, the effort would have had little effect in stemming cityward migration because there simply was not enough land to give sufficient numbers of peasants plots of viable size. An added ingredient was the high rate of population increase (3.6 to 3.2 percent annually) during the preceding two decades. As a consequence, some 25-30 percent of the work force in Colombia is un or under-employed.<sup>5</sup>

Rapid population growth coupled to incomplete and/or aborted land reforms thus compound the problem and accelerate the rhythm of rural-to-urban migration within countries. But many people do not stop at their own frontiers; as noted above, there probably is little reason to go on making distinctions between internal and international migration except for those who must concern themselves with sorting out the legal consequences. The same "push/pull" factors created by events in the international political/economic system

impel millions of such people across their own borders; they are leaving the less-developed countries in the southern halves of the two hemispheres to seek work in the industrialized nations to the North. Thus, commodity agreements, balance of payments problems and world monetary policies form only one set of issues in the current North/South negotiations; in the long run, the exportation and importation of cheap laboring hands -- like some new raw material -- may lead to far more volatile international political confrontations between the rich and the poor nations, if not to the "nuclear blackmail" predicted by Heilbroner (1975: 42-43).

To be effective, new legislation on the migrant situation will have in some fashion to treat the issue not as strictly an internal problem, but to recognize that the U.S. helped -- through exportation of capital-intensive development technologies throughout the 1960's -- to create the problem. The only long range, viable solution may be the advanced nations' acknowledgment that the time has come finally to allow the Third World a truly autonomous development through the inauguration of a new world economic order of just prices for raw materials, generous transfer of technology (particularly small and intermediate scale) and political/material support for those societies which are attempting to attain a more equitable distribution of income and a better standard of living for their poor. "Cutting off the alien problem at its sources," as some have suggested, may indeed be the only viable, long range solution -- but this involves generous assistance in helping create employment-generating agricultural and industrial enterprises, not erecting Berlin-type electric fences (or their equivalent) between rich and poor nations.

Proletarian Diasporas: Their Functions in the International System

The movement of poor persons towards the more prosperous world areas is by no means new: as Davis (1974: 56) points out, by the 16th and 17th centuries "the world as a whole began to be one migratory network dominated by a single group of technologically-advanced states." As a result, he says, the latter countries eventually were able to start the industrial revolution and "enormously enhance their world dominance." Today world migration has not diminished as had been predicted, but has shifted direction: instead of flowing from the crowded, industrial European countries, it is flowing towards developed countries everywhere.

Thus, Armstrong (1976: 393) observes, "proletarian" and other types of diasporas -- distinctive collectivities or even separate societies with strong links to their own homelands -- are not anomalies, slated to disappear. A deeper historical perspective, he suggests, leads to the conclusion that "multiethnic societies are the norm rather than the exception." He quotes Braudel's generalization that historically "a standard stable partnership" grew up between a poor region with regular emigration and an active town; as the supply of those who were nearby (and ethnically and linguistically similar) was exhausted, recruits were drawn from further and further away:

The origins of the new citizens in a lively town like Metz or Constance for example (the latter from 1367 to 1517)... would disclose a wide area associated with the life of the town {which} left the lowly tasks to new arrivals....Like our over-pressured economies today, it needed North Africans or Puerto Ricans at its service, a proletariat which it quick-

ly used up and had quickly to renew. The existence of this wretched and lowly proletariat is a feature of any large town (Braudel 1973: 24, quoted in Armstrong 1976: 406).

Armstrong is not alone in characterizing the succession of ethnically distinct proletarian diasporas in successfully modernizing polities as crucial to the maintenance of international equilibrium. What is particularly significant for policymakers is his contention that since 1945 the movement of persons from the Third to the First World has been largely unplanned (and perhaps designedly so?):

From the standpoint of internal politics, the progression {of labor recruits from regions further and further distant} has been largely the result of nondecisions. Certain Western European governments have facilitated migration and in a few instances (Franco-Algerian agreements) have actively promoted it. In general, however, it has been undirected market forces which have shaped the nature of labor migration. In spheres where politics have the capacity to initiate policies, failure to act may be just as political as positive action (1976: 407; the emphasis is Armstrong's).

Certainly the fact that we are suddenly "waking up" to find hundreds of thousands of Hispanic and Afro-Caribbean peoples living among us -- many of whom apparently have been here for many years and/or who have made multiple visits -- would appear to support Armstrong's contention that no planning was involved (except, perhaps, the decision until recently not to recognize the problem because it was politically expedient to provide friendly Latin

American governments a safety-valve to relieve their population/unemployment pressures).

So far as Afro-Caribbean and Latin American migration to the U.S. is concerned, we face today a near vacuum of information on the implications for the host society of these large, apparently increasing, proletarian diasporas. What are the consequences of the presence of so many different groups, many of which appear determined not to shed their ethnic identity nor their links to their homelands, but to remain with their "feet in two societies," as North and Houston (1976: 83) express it? Other Western Hemisphere countries face similar problems.

Unlike the immigrants of former times who were separated from the old country by a long and arduous sea journey, thousands of the new immigrants from the Afro-Caribbean and Latin America -- even if they are as far away as Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru -- arrive in three-five hours on jet airplanes, and most are only a {comparatively} cheap excursion fare away from repeated visits "home." It is possible, indeed, as Cornelius (1977: 7-8) and Fitzpatrick (1971: 196) have speculated in relation to Mexicans and Puerto Ricans that persons who arrive from nearby countries are not migrating, but "commuting." Even if pending legislation would cut back on the absolute numbers making up present-day migrant diasporas (and there is no indication of how this would be accomplished), the groups may continue to be replenished by a constant circulation of new persons arriving to take the place of those who have made their stake and returned to their homeland. Some theorists hold that a population constantly reinforced by new waves of immigration tends to conserve its ethnic identity much more tenaciously than one in which the bulk of the immigrants arrived in an earlier period. Not only do we need to know much more about the situation of the proletarian diasporas presently

in our midst, but we also must study the strategies involved in such migration variations as "commuting," "trial" migration and "visiting," and what implications these apparently wide practices have for the receiving societies.<sup>10</sup>

So far as Colombians in Queens are concerned, most apparently do plan to return some day to Colombia; my own interviewees say that the great majority of their compatriots would not be in the U.S. at all if they could find satisfactory employment in Colombia. If they are professionals -- as many of the earlier migrants in the years following World War II tended to be -- they come not only for the higher wages, but also because they want to work in hospitals, laboratories or industries with the latest equipment and techniques. If they are less-educated -- and our data show that Colombian migration probably has become less selective since 1965 -- they come to earn good wages for several years so that they may (in order of priority) educate their children, buy a house in Colombia, accumulate certain consumer goods and save for a stake to take back -- for example, to buy a truck and start a hauling or moving business; to open a restaurant, grocery store or boutique. Many also send back substantial remittances to their relatives in Colombia, and some are buying homes there. The fact that circumstances often cause repatriation to be postponed again and again -- until the return sometimes takes on an almost "mythic" quality -- does not alter the fact that the desire to go back to Colombia remains very much in the immigrants' thoughts and calculations with many implications for their adjustment and accommodation to U.S. society.

The same air carriers that bring the new immigrants from Colombia to New York City also bring a constant supply of newspapers and magazines; políticos of the Liberal and Conservative parties in Colombia; Colombian beauty queens, soccer stars and musical/dance conjuntos {bands} -- as well

as grandmothers and grandfathers, aunts and uncles, brothers and sisters, and friends of various degrees of intimacy who come to visit and often to look over the situation with a view of their own possible future migration. They also inform their "Chapinerito" friends and relations of the latest happenings in the capital and/or their provincial city or town.

As a result, most Colombians -- even if they have resided in the U.S. for many years -- appear to be much better informed about the politics, sports, latest music and dances, and gossip of Colombia than the affairs of the host society in general, or even of New York City and their immediate community. As one of my experts' panel remarked, Colombians live "pegados" -- glued to happenings in the homeland. What is not yet clear, since the bulk of the Colombian migrants have arrived since 1960 -- is whether the second generation now coming to adulthood will remain in sufficient numbers and strive to preserve significant aspects of Colombian culture while making the necessary accommodations to the dominant society. One theme repeated over and over again -- and recently reiterated by a group of Hispanic teachers well-acquainted with Colombian children in the public schools -- is the desire of many Colombians to send their children back to Colombia to be educated. They wish their children to have a Colombian education not only because they believe it to be superior (traditional colegios {high schools} still stress classics, philosophy, languages and religion), but also because they fear the drug culture and believe that the New York City schools do not properly socialize their children to such key Colombian values as deference to authority, obedience and respect. Now that the City University system of New York has begun to charge tuition, there is less reason not to consider sending sons and daughters back to Colombia for college.

The search for "roots" -- and the accentuation of hispanic and black cultural values in U.S. urban areas -- may well mean that the second generation also will remain alienated and will adjust in quite different, as yet unpredictable ways, to the dominant culture. As Piore (1973: 25-31) speculates, it may be that the extent to which metropolitan countries succeed in preventing a second generation from growing up and being socialized to the host country's norms (as the second generation blacks and Puerto Ricans have been in the Northern cities of the U.S.) will determine whether they will avoid explosive class/racial clashes such as the U.S. experienced in the 1960's.

Again, all these questions are on the agenda for future research; we simply do not know enough about the internal life of these proletarian diasporas to be able to say very much at all about their present or future behaviors, or even whether we are dealing with a migrant labor stock or a labor flow. As Piore further notes (p. 25):

The flow-like character is an outgrowth of a labor force with little permanent attachment to the destination, engaging in a continual movement back and forth between the origin and the destination, and when at the destination always planning to return home shortly. It is the flow-like character which makes the jobs acceptable: the temporary nature of their stay renders the labor force indifferent to the lack of security and advancement and the periodic visits home reinforce the perspective of the home labor market, in which the jobs have much higher relative status....It is basically the fact that the second generation is a fall-out from this flow, with a

permanent attachment to the destination, that distinguishes it from its progenitor, making its size unresponsive to economic opportunities and creating the possibility of tension and conflict between opportunities and aspirations.

Imported Laboring Hands: Relation  
to the Host Country Labor Force

A third major policy issue posed for host societies by the movement of Caribbean and Latin American peoples is in some respects the mirror opposite to that in the countries they leave behind. Turning from the periphery to the center, we find (as Piore {1973: 25} among others has noted) a paradoxical shortage of workers for low level jobs. Industrial society, as Piore suggests, has always tended to generate a set of jobs unacceptable to the native born; these have been filled in the U.S. first by immigrants, then by black labor from the South, and more lately, by rural Puerto Ricans (and in the Southwest by Mexicans). Many developed countries solve this problem by importing contract labor or by tolerating illegal immigration. Persons who have become "surplus" in their own economic systems join a flexible international labor pool, to be transferred like some kind of new raw material from the hinterlands of the international economic system to the metropolitan centers.

Even in the case of those relatively privileged migrant workers who do factory work, migrant labor is much more economic at times than the other option: opening a branch of a multi-national concern (or locating an agribusiness) within the borders of a Third World economy. In using migrants, the metropolitan center can take up slack capacity already in place, rather than risk building and equipping new plants.<sup>6</sup>

But only a few of the new immigrants find work in factories; typically they take on the residue of low-skilled, low-salaried jobs that defy automation (or simply are not worth automating because cheap laboring hands are available) -- as restaurant workers, day laborers, construction workers, street cleaners, janitors and custodians, parking lot attendants, baggage handlers, truck and gypsy cab drivers and, particularly for women, domestic service. This is true regardless of qualifications; as the North and Houston study cited above notes (1976: 152-53), occupations of both the legals and illegals differ significantly from what they did in their homelands; the percentage doing white-collar work drops sharply, the percentage in skilled blue-collar increase slightly, but those in semi-skilled operative jobs increase significantly. In other words,

Respondents' concentration at the bottom of the U.S. labor market, with more than three-quarters employed in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs, contravened the heterogeneity of the study group....Hence the American labor market apparently tends to homogenize at a low level an otherwise more heterogeneous but still predominantly low-skilled work force.

Recent independent studies confirm that Hispanic migrants generally are grouped near the bottom of the prestige and earnings scale (see Gray 1975; Hendricks 1975; United States Census Bureau 1977).

So far as the Colombians are concerned, whatever their qualifications (and there is the same phenomenon of downward mobility already noted) the majority apparently go to work in "factorías" or desire to do so. Not only are the salaries better, but factory work is viewed as "un poco más decente"

-- a bit more decent than washing dishes in a restaurant. Others work in a great variety of jobs -- for example, there appear to be many mechanics, and the Colombian universally is considered to be highly skilled in this trade. Of course, some migrants prosper, and there are cases of successful entrepreneurs and professionals -- some of them women -- in the colony. (Interestingly, Colombian married women show higher indices of employment outside the home in the greater New York City metropolitan region than either married women in the general population or Puerto Rican women {Powers and Macisco 1976, Table 5}. This poses interesting questions on the changing role of Colombian women, probed in greater depth in Chaney 1976: 40-43). The travel agent and the real estate broker (mostly persons, again including women, who came in the years before the large influx of Colombians in the 1960's) are perhaps the best examples of the business and leadership elite; the few Colombians of any prominence in cultural, community and political (mostly related to Colombian politics) affairs come principally from their ranks.

Mainly, however, the Colombians as all the new immigrants do, perform needed and useful services which, however, bring low rewards and little prestige or recognition. Despite the fact that they often are viewed as competitors, it appears that relatively few "take jobs away" from North American workers. Admittedly, at a time when U.S. unemployment rates are high, resident workers might gladly take on some of these tasks temporarily. But it is the long-run trends, working themselves out since the mid-1950's if we take the European experience into consideration, that we are considering here. (For a useful discussion of the European experience, see Böhning {1972} and Power {1976}). Just as immigrant groups have always done, the vast majority are hardworking people who have taken on the necessary, but disagreeable and low-paid tasks that the citizens do not want to do, except

as Piore notes (1973: 25) in periods of dire unemployment. Moreover, as Cornelius and others have pointed out, we may well face within the next six to ten years another period of labor scarcity; thus, any proposals to shut off the migrations permanently (even presuming that such measures could be enforced) might be highly detrimental to the host society economy, in the long run. Even in the short run, as many of those who cry out the loudest against the immigrants for political reasons must know very well, if the Hispanics who have come to New York City in the past 15 years suddenly were to depart tomorrow, the city would cease to function. As Charles Keely has remarked, in every era of economic decline, the illegal alien is discovered all over again.

Nor are the migrant groups always the "drain" on the welfare and unemployment systems that they so often are claimed to be. As the North and Houston study already cited several times above confirms, the largest majority of the illegals do not appear to depend on resources outside their own networks for assistance; nor do they always even claim those benefits which they have earned. (Part of the reason for this is the fact that many illegals, particularly in the Southwest, are single, male, seasonal laborers.) The survey North and Houston did for the U.S. Labor Department demonstrates the following (1976: 118; 66):

- 51% earned less than \$2.50 per hour.
- Between 20 and 25% appear to have been paid below the minimum wage.
- 77% had social security taxes withheld.
- 73% had Federal income taxes withheld.
- 44% paid hospitalization insurance.
- 31.5% filed U.S. income tax forms.

- 27.4% used U.S. hospitals or clinics.
- 7.6% had their children in U.S. schools.
- 3.9% collected one or more weeks of unemployment insurance.
- 1.3% secured food stamps.
- .5% received welfare payments.

(See Note 7 for a description of the survey group.)

Our observations and interviews among the Colombians confirm that they fit the above profile -- rather high on their contributions to the system, low in their claims upon it. For every person who avoids the withholding tax (either through working "off the books" or through claiming an excess of dependents), there are probably two others who do not file for their tax refunds because of their irregular status; the national, as well as the state and local governments, are net gainers. As well, a large proportion of social security taxes never will be collected in the form of pensions by those who work in the U.S. for a few years, then return to their home countries. Finally, the influx of Colombians and others into Jackson Heights has not changed the low indices of persons on welfare; in Jackson Heights, welfare dependency remains minimal. It is higher in North Corona and East Elmhurst.

During the next few months we will be engaged in a great debate as Congress considers the various aspects of the Carter proposals on the immigration question. In order to assess the relative merits of amnesty (and the effective dates of entry in order to be eligible), work permits, contracts, penalties on the employer, etc., we need to know much more about the real effect of the presence of the new migrant groups on this country's labor market. As a Wall Street Journal editorial remarks, most of the outcry

raised against the illegal aliens -- based, as it is, on unreliable data, is nonsense, inspired by organized labor and by people who erroneously believe there are only a given number of jobs and a limited amount of work to be done. And so they have resorted to disseminating fairy tales about a problem whose effect cannot really be measured (May 2, 1977).

It would appear that the academic community has an obligation precisely here, to assist in filling the information vacuum so that policy decisions which will be taken in the coming months -- and which may "fix" the question of immigration for aliens, legals and illegals alike, for a long time to come -- may be made in the light of realistic evidence and accurate data.

#### Policy Implications for the Sending Society

In the beginning, among the policy issues suggested as particularly crucial, was a fourth consideration: the cost/benefit to the sending society of the out-migration of its citizens. Again, we know little about this question because very little research has been done from the sending country perspective. One of the current aspects of the CCRP's present investigations concerns this issue, and so I do not intend here to deal with this question at any length, but merely to raise some final considerations. Probably the crucial "import" is remittances, while the "export" is professionals.

On the question of remittances, President Alfonso López Michelsen of Colombia, on his 1975 visit to the Colombian Colony where he had campaigned

the previous year,<sup>6</sup> estimated that during the 18 months of his government, Colombians in exile had sent back in Venezuelan bolivares, Bolivian sucres and United States dólares, the equivalent of \$250 million to their homeland:

....para el país es altamente satisfactorio y en cierto modo increíble, el aporte que todos ustedes están haciendo a la balanza de pagos y al Banco de la República, cuando le venden sus dolares al Banco de Bogotá o cuando mandan su chequisito a sus familiares en las distintas ciudades de Colombia. (It is highly satisfactory for the nation and in some ways incredible the support that you all are giving to the balance of payments and to the Bank of the Republic when you sell your dollars to the Bank of Bogotá {which has an office in New York City} or when you send off your little check to your relatives in the various cities of Colombia.)

López added that the contribution was so important for the development of Colombia that in some years all that the country received for coffee, services, silver, gold and petroleum did not total such a sum. "You are all adding your grain of sand to contribute to the growth of your country in this way," he added.

So far as the migration of professionals is concerned, this has been the aspect of the problem which has been highlighted most, both in research and in the press. In the case of Colombia, the majority of earlier Colombian migrants admitted to the U.S. under paid employment categories fell overwhelmingly into professional, technical or kindred occupations. Many still

do, although if the undocumented are taken into account, there is some evidence that Colombian migration has become less selective. How can we get behind the cliché of "brain drain" to see what the migration of professionals really implies for both the sending and receiving societies? Cruz and Castaño (1976: 146-52) make a strong case that, at least for Colombian medical doctors, "brain drain" may be a spurious issue; their evidence shows that most Colombian doctors return to their homeland and, indeed, the years they spend in the U.S. have come to be regarded almost as a normal pattern -- a kind of unofficial, advanced "residency" which gives them added prestige on their return to Colombia, additional training and a stake for setting up their consultorios.

Do other professionals also return with new technical competence? Should immigration policy take more into account the desire of health, scientific, engineering and other professionals to work outside their countries for a time and, indeed, where the U.S. has shortages, regularize the practice with (for example) three-five year professional visas which would be non-renewable and which would preclude applying for a permanent resident visa at least until several years had elapsed after the return to the home country? Would such a plan have some positive aspects for both the sending and receiving countries?

So far as Colombia is concerned, it would seem that the authorities there need to concern themselves not only with the long range issues of economic development which will, of course, affect the high rates of out-migration, but also in the short run with the current problems of the emigrants. An Institute of Emigration as outlined by Colombian President

López Michelsen on several occasions, or some other mechanism designed to deal with emigration are urgent necessities -- and this proposal has the advantage of being the one suggested by leaders of the President's own party in Queens. Those who plan to emigrate from Colombia need orientation and some manner of regularizing their status by work contracts or other legal arrangements which will assure them just wages for their years of labor abroad and relieve many of the necessity to emigrate without proper documents. Those already abroad need some entity to defend their interests. Finally, those who wish to return to their home country need assistance in making their arrangements and in reorientation to life in the home land. The migration of certain professional persons -- and of the less highly trained as well -- if it can be regularized, need not always be negative for the sending country, the host country and the migrant him/herself.

. . . . .

We have considered, however briefly, four of the major policy issues involved in the increasing movements of Afro-Caribbean and Latin American peoples to the U.S. and to other countries of the region, with Colombians as the case study. What becomes clear in this discussion is the fact that we are suffering not only from an information vacuum, but from a diplomatic vacuum as well. Unless the issues raised here -- and others as urgent -- can be worked out in careful, sensitive negotiations between and among the countries concerned, the inter-American system will suffer not only severe tensions (they are present already), but perhaps irreparable damage. For our own country, these questions cannot be unilateral matters, to be decided exclusively on the basis of what is most advantageous for us in the short run. If we go forward to frame new immigration laws without the necessary

consultation, we will in the long run reap a harvest of great bitterness and perhaps even of open confrontation in the Americas.

There is some evidence that the United States has begun to take the issue more seriously. Abelardo L. Váidez, the Agency for International Development's Assistant Administrator for Latin America, recently called for a "greatly spurred development of rural and urban areas in Latin America and the Caribbean" as one step towards solution of the problem of undocumented workers. "This migration of refugees from poverty" will continue, he speculated, "unless there is more equitable distribution of income in those countries and unless there is a better access to markets of the developing countries. We need to encourage more opportunities for trade and investment in order to make it possible for people to make a living in their own countries." Váidez added that he believed the AID agency's new determination to provide assistance to the poor majority in developing countries would have an effect on the migration problem. (Address to the Committee on International Education of the Border States Universities Consortium, December 6, 1977)

John J. Gilligan, AID Administrator, also is on record as advocating similar measures particularly in relation to Mexico. There have been several consultations between Mexico and the U.S., although no agreements have been reached on any future aid programs. Measures, Gilligan suggested, might include reduction of tariffs and import quotas on Mexican goods, technical assistance, and help in increasing [labor intensive] jobs in agriculture and industry in Mexico's border area, as well as in central Mexico. (Address to the City Club, San Diego, November 30, 1977)

These so far are only tentative statements. Yet the fact that we finally are reaching the talking stage on an official level indicates at least that the problems outlined in this paper now are out in the open, part of the policy discourse. In the coming months it is to be hoped that more concrete steps can be taken toward discovering and implementing solutions.

## NOTES

1. Almost all the <sup>un</sup>skilled pick-and-shovel workers were black men, with Barbados supplying the majority -- 20,000. As McCullough recounts (p. 472), many Jamaicans had been left stranded in Panama after the French effort to build a canal collapsed, and the Jamaican government refused to allow any further recruitment on the island. About 80 percent of the black workers were illiterate, and a strict segregation of the races was practiced. Wages were ten cents an hour, a dollar a day. Some 5,600 lives were lost, 4,500 of these black employees. White Americans who died numbered about 350. (McCullough 1977: 610).
2. Beckford's list includes Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Belize, Montserrat, Turks & Caicos Islands, St. Kitts, Barbados, Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Dominica, Bermuda and British Virgin Islands.
3. Included in the panel were educators, clergy, entrepreneurs in ethnic and other business enterprises, politicians, real estate and travel agents, journalists, and members of the sports/social club network of Jackson Heights.
4. I dislike playing a "numbers game," but it is hard to evade completely the question of "how many?" I compromise by giving the highest and lowest estimates of the experts consulted on this study.
5. Many of the panel of experts in Queens share the common conception that "La Violencia" was the principal cause of the arrival of Colombians in the 1950's and 1960's. During a period of about 10-12 years, this phenomenon of the Violence, widespread armed insurrection and guerrilla activity in the rural areas stemming from complex political and social roots (see Fals Borda {1969} for the best account of the period), precipitated large-scale movements of people within Colombia. Studies of internal migration, however, indicate that the rural population took refuge in the nearby towns (not only from the Violence, but from the poverty and misery of the countryside), while the residents of these smaller urban places headed for the cities and the capital. Thus, while it seems improbable that the Violence had any direct effect on Colombian migration to the U.S., there is strong evidence that the resultant uncertainty and malaise indirectly spurred migration during this period.
6. Just how complicated this can get is illustrated by Piore (1973: 18 and 35), who notes that in the Boston area, the employment of Puerto Rican immigrants, especially in the shoe, textile and garment industries, indeed was seen by some of the employers he interviewed as the alternative to moving abroad. At the same time, agricultural interests in Puerto Rico were lobbying for the importation of Colombian coffee workers to take the place of the rural Puerto Ricans who no longer wanted to do this kind of work and had gone to Boston (and elsewhere) to work in factories!

7. The North and Houston study is based on data gathered in 1975 in interviews with 793 apprehended alien persons at 19 different sites; the interviewers were bilingual. Since the dimensions of the population are unknown, the interviewees cannot be considered a representative sample; still, as the report makes clear, there is nothing to suggest that the characteristics and labor-market experiences of the respondents are radically different from other persons without documents in the U.S. labor force.
  
8. As is well known by now, Colombians abroad vote in their national elections not by absentee ballot but in their consulates throughout the world (in several elections, the consulate in New York has arranged voting facilities conveniently along Roosevelt Avenue in Jackson Heights). There is even a myth that Colombian presidential elections could be decided by the vote in the Colony. Turnout is, however, rather meager considering the large amounts of publicity this feature of Colombian life abroad generates: about 5,000 voted in the last elections, in spite of the fact that many thousands more would have been eligible.

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