

sponse to the threat to its stability, the regime tends to increase its repression, which in turn increases the reaction. There is therefore a mutually-reinforcing spiral of repression and instability.

When the state of repression within a country is serious enough to cause major outflows of refugees to a neighbouring country or countries, the stability of those countries may be threatened. This is particularly the case where there are territorial claims by one country on the other or aspirations to the territory of one on the part of the other. The refugees can be judged by the receiving country as constituting a potential fifth column. Such events can lead to further serious deterioration of relations between the countries in question. It can even lead to conflict.

**Indochinese  
Refugees**

As an example, we might consider the situation which is commanding international attention – the continuing exodus of people from the countries of Indochina. That exodus – tragic in its human proportions – is causing great strain on the countries providing first asylum to the refugees, and risks increasing further the instability of the region.

The number of Indochinese who have fled their countries of origin since 1975 has reached 900,000. Of these, 200,000 have been resettled in China and 300,000 primarily in the U.S.A. but also, in significant numbers, in France, Australia and Canada. A further 150,000 Cambodians are in Vietnam awaiting repatriation. As well, 265,000 Indochinese refugees are in temporary asylum in camps throughout South-east Asia.

**Causes**

What has caused these movements?

**Cambodia**

The atrocious conditions in Cambodia under the Pol Pot regime resulted in an outpouring to Vietnam and Thailand of approximately 190,000 people. Well-founded reports suggested a situation in Cambodia of seldom-paralleled barbarity. Killings had been indiscriminate and the population existed in a state of fear and misery. I might note that Canada took an unprecedented action in presenting a report on the situation to the UN Human Rights Commission and calling for an immediate investigation. Later at the UN General Assembly the Secretary of State for External Affairs urged that international opinion be brought to bear on the Cambodian Government for the sake of the victims of its actions.

The flow from Cambodia continues, but its nature has changed. The present conflict there involving Vietnamese troops and Cambodian Khmer Rouge forces continues to generate a major influx of Cambodians into Thailand. Some are supporters of the former Pol Pot regime, but others are helpless civilians caught up in the turmoil of the conflict.

**Laos**

In the case of Laos, some 140,000 of its people have fled to Thailand. It is little known in Canada that the Laotian Government, assisted by an estimated 50,000 Vietnamese troops garrisoned in Laos, has over the past several years conducted a systematic campaign against the hill tribe people. There have been persistent violations

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