RESPONSE TO PROFESSOR JOLY'S PAPER

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The paper addresses two critical issues which emanate from an inflow of individuals and groups who either leave their countries out of a need to better their social and economic life chances or run away from unbearable conditions which might include persecution and unfair prosecution. Two issues arise out of this state of affairs in the host communities:
– integrating the newcomers into society; and
– assimilating them into citizens.

The first is relatively non-threatening to the host communities in that it only calls for social and institutional arrangements which are not that taxing to the resources of the host country. The second is threatening in that it challenges the allocative capabilities of the host country, and depending on the resource capabilities, the host country might be unable to meet the called for, or expected ethical obligations.

I will proceed to discuss the two propositions of integration and assimilation in perspective. From a Western European or past colonial perspective both assimilation and integration raise different questions than is the case if one views these two propositions from an African, South American or for that matter, Asian perspective. I will leave out guest workers because they present a different set of circumstances. On the whole they are guests and the most that host communities can do, is to be good hosts. Those guests who choose to remain permanently in the host countries become immigrants who compete for citizenship with the host country's nationals.

Regarding refugees, there is something definitive about them, since they have a status clearly defined in international law and, to an extent, provisions for their upkeep are enshrined in the same law.

Coming back, then, to immigrants: who constitutes the majority of immigrants into both Britain and France? The two countries appear to be

experiencing problems of immigration more than the rest of Europe simply because both were huge colonial empires. Their immigrants come mostly from former colonies, and secondly because colonial relations were largely race relations the newcomers bring in with them a race relations problem in a changed contest. The theatre is now at home instead of being in a distant colonial outpost. Economically and socially immigrants from former colonies have a sound moral claim to make against the host countries. The passing of the 1948 Nationality Act which made Commonwealth immigrants British citizens has to be viewed within this context. The same applies to the metamorphosis of Nationality laws from France. Put crudely, colonial powers had extracted sufficient resources from colonies and it was time to pay back. The big question is how much? I think this will always be a vexed issue. Probably until problems of inequality are solved – and will they ever be?

Hence with regard to both the integrative and allocative functions, there is an ethical obligation on the part of former colonial host countries to prepare themselves appropriately for the "compensatory phase". And fortunately there are resources to make this possible. Mechanisms for doing this have to range from the creation of a national psyche to the provision of equitable goods and services to the pulled-in guests turned citizens.

The position changes totally when one brings in the question of Africa, South Africa and Asia where the scale of international exploitation through colonisation is probably miniscule and the moral or ethical claims are, therefore, absent. Under these circumstances, immigrants are first almost refugees without the refugee status, and secondly their condition calls more for assimilation into citizenship than for integration into society. Further the problem has sociological on top of economic dimensions. Sociologically, while immigrants into both France and Britain are relatively articulate in the languages of the host countries, have political clout and can be integrated into the social fabric with relative ease were it not because of race, African immigrants in particular are not. The problem is, therefore, aggravated by both sociological and economic or resource factors.

For instance let us take the case of South Africa with its migration problems arising from political and economic instability in Zimbabwe, Mozambique, the Congo and for that matter, Nigeria. On its own, South Africa has a huge economic backlog manifest in a shortage of housing and rapidly growing unemployment. None of the immigrants that "invade" South Africa can make ethical claims for "payback" time. Admittedly South Africans were refugees in some of these countries during apartheid, but

they had the status of refugees and were more a burden of the United Nations than of the host countries. Nor did South Africans compete with their host nationals for scarce resources save to present a security threat from the South African regime which had serious international constraints to effect that threat. It did in a few instances but this was more of an exception than the rule. The question is: how does South Africa integrate and assimilate its African immigrants, given both the social and economic dimensions without jeopardising its own capacity to survive? There are serious economic and political consequences.

So far for the integration and allocative problems of host countries. The paper does not address a separate set of problems in sending countries. It is often assumed that it is the entrepreneurial and better qualified section of the population that finds migration as a possible alternative. If we accept this proposition, the consequences of emigration to the sending countries could be disastrous with regard to skills and human resources. For instance South Africa is presently experiencing a serious drain in medical and nursing resources in the human sphere as individuals migrate to Britain and North America either temporarily or permanently. This ushers in problems of a very different sort – problems of a deprivation of the very resources needed to create equity which is both an economic and political necessity to redress inequalities.

In conclusion, there is the issue of globalisation without global governance, i.e. global penetration without a global authority with capacity to legislate/regulate and dispense. The United Nations has neither the capability to regulate globalisation nor the resources to remedy the impact of globalisation on victims. For instance, how does one empower developing and often incapacitated states to cater for immigrants temporary and permanent when they (developing states) are themselves in need of assistance to cater for their own nationals?