U.S. limits on imports linked to wave of immigrants from poorer countries

St. Petersburg Times (Florida)

July 25, 1990, Wednesday, City Edition

Times Publishing Company

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. 3A

Length: 487 words

Byline: REENA SHAH

Body

When America shuts its doors to clothes from Mexico, coffee from Central America and sugar from the Caribbean, it compels these regions to pour out more of a major illegal export: their people.

People migrate from villages to cities and across national borders looking for opportunities to better their lives, and the best way America can stanch the inflow of undocumented workers is to boost the economies of its impoverished neighbors, says a federal commission report released Tuesday in Washington.

"The only way to bring about lasting change is through accelerated economic development," said Diego Asencio, a former assistant secretary of state who chaired the Commission for the Study of International Migration and Cooperative Economic Development. "And the only way to do that is to promote international trade."
Congress authorized the commission as part of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. The commission consisting of scholars and government and church officials was asked to study the problem of illegal migration and suggest ways to prevent it.

The report warns that although creating jobs in other ***countries*** could check the flow of migrants after generations, the results could be paradoxical in the short run. An initial boost in prosperity could "stimulate migration by raising expectations and enhancing people'***s*** ability to migrate," the report says.

The ***United States*** already offers some preferential trade agreements, such as the Caribbean Basin Initiative, which gives its southern neighbors duty-free access for manufactured goods. But economic problems in the region outweigh such small trade incentives.

Although nations such as Mexico and the Dominican Republic are producing more goods for export, there are few markets for them.

The ***United States***, their major trade partner, has quotas on items such as clothing that favor older trade partners like Taiwan and South Korea. It also has quotas that restrict ***imported*** sugar from the Dominican Republic, even though it is cheaper and subsidies to ***U.S.*** companies end up costing the American consumer $ 3-billion a year. Because of American sugar quotas, the Dominican Republic exports less than one-fourth the sugar it did 10 years ago.

And without an assured market for their exports, jobs in these nations dry up. Governments use their skimpy earnings to pay interest on their huge foreign debt and cut spending in areas such as housing and health, forcing people to migrate.

But "the single most important cooperative measure the ***United States*** could take is to correct its own fiscal deficit," the report says. In the 1980s, America became the largest user of the world'***s*** savings, and its massive borrowing has made credit more expensive for ***poor*** nations.

Classification

Language: ENGLISH

Subject: ILLEGAL ***IMMIGRANTS*** (90%); IMMIGRATION (89%); ***IMPORT*** TRADE (89%); EXPORT TRADE (89%); AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS & ***IMPORTS*** (78%); FOOD EXPORTS & ***IMPORTS*** (78%); TRADE TREATIES & AGREEMENTS (78%); TRADE DEVELOPMENT (77%); INTERNATIONAL TRADE (77%); PUBLIC DEBT (77%); JOB CREATION (76%); LEGISLATION (76%); AGREEMENTS (76%); IMMIGRATION LAW (76%); FOREIGN LABOR (76%); COMPANY EARNINGS (76%); ECONOMIC NEWS (75%); TERRITORIAL & NATIONAL BORDERS (72%); ECONOMIC STIMULUS (71%); MANUFACTURING OUTPUT (71%); EMPLOYMENT GROWTH (71%); ***IMPORT*** CONTROLS (67%); EXTERNAL DEBT (60%); RELIGION (53%); TREATIES & AGREEMENTS (50%)

Industry: AGRICULTURAL TRADE (90%); AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS & ***IMPORTS*** (78%); FOOD EXPORTS & ***IMPORTS*** (78%); MANUFACTURING OUTPUT (71%); BUDGET DEFICITS (60%)

Geographic: ***UNITED STATES*** (97%); DOMINICAN REPUBLIC (93%); CARIBBEAN ISLANDS (92%); KOREA, REPUBLIC OF (79%); CENTRAL AMERICA (79%)

Load-Date: November 13, 1992
