UNIVERS STATE, REFUGEES, ASYLUM SEEKERS
NEWSLETTER #3, December 17, 2015.


COMPiled BY DICK BENNETT FOR A CULTURE OF
PEACE, JUSTICE, AND ECOLOGY

(#1, August 2, 2014; #2 Nov. 24, 2015)

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Contents Refugees, Asylum Newsletter #2 (November 24, 2015)

Contents Refugees, Asylum Newsletter #3

Christianity and Refugees: See Newsletters on Jesus

Countries Rescuing Syrian Refugees and How Well?
Canada 25,000 Syrians
Other Countries and UNHCR, Google Search

US Should Take More
Dick, US Should Harbor More Refugees
Daalder, And More Syrians
CNN, Pressure on US to Take More
Film on Xenophobia
Lazare, Common Dreams: US Helped Cause the Crisis
Arkansas

Emergency Management

Hinckly, CSM: Marshallese Climate Refugees to Northwest Arkansas

Move-On Campaign to Increase Refugees

OMNI Latin American Children’s Coalition Fundraiser

UA/OMNI Endowed Scholarship for Asylum-Seekers

Hoyt Purvis, US, S. Africa, Racism, Refugees, and Xenophobia

Refugee Jesus and Refugees 2015

Why Jesus Was, and Is, a Political Threat

It’s not just that God came, but how God came. It wasn’t accidental that the savior of the world was born to a poor peasant woman in an occupied country in an animal stall because they were literally homeless at the time of his birth. And soon Jesus and his family were made refugees and had to flee their country because the most powerful political ruler around the Christ child felt very threatened by his coming.

Jim Wallis, Huffington Post, Dec. 27, 2015

COUNTRIES RESCUING REFUGEES 2015

Canada: We'll resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees

By Paula Newton, CNN Updated 7:54 PM ET, Tue November 24, 2015 | Ottawa (CNN)Justin Trudeau’s newly elected government has confirmed it will resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees in Canada within three months, giving top priority to those who are a lower security risk.

The plan as outlined prioritizes families and vulnerable individuals, including those from the LGBT community.
Single unaccompanied men will be excluded from the government resettlement program for now. However, government officials say those individuals can still apply to come to Canada through private sponsorship programs or could possibly be resettled through a government-sponsored program later in 2016.

Justin Trudeau

"Through the rest of 2016, we will bring in more refugees," said Canada's Immigration and Refugee Minister John McCallum at a news briefing in Ottawa on Tuesday.

"I've been saying time and time again, that yes, we want to bring them fast, but we also want to do it right," he said adding, "I've heard Canadians across this country saying, 'yes you have to do it right, and if it takes a little bit longer to do it right, then take the extra time.' "

Syrian refugees not welcome in 31 U.S. states

Prime Minister Trudeau had promised during the election campaign to resettle 25,000 refugees by the end of year. Trudeau says he extended the deadline because of operational and security challenges.

White House asked to help Syrian refugees 05:59

In an interview with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Trudeau admitted that the Paris terror attacks had an influence on public perceptions and that his government decided it would be best to do all security checks on the ground in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey before allowing refugees to board planes to Canada.

"It would allow Canadians to be more reassured. Like I said, we want these families arriving to be welcomed, not feared," he said during an interview Tuesday with the CBC.

Read more: After the Paris attacks, what next?

The Canadian government has launched an information campaign nationwide using the hashtag, #WelcomeRefugees. It is encouraging Canadians to donate, volunteer or even sponsor refugees.

Two recent polls conducted in Canada after the Paris terror attacks indicate that a small majority of Canadians oppose the plan to resettle refugees mainly because of security concerns.

Opinion: Is shunning refugees the answer to terror?

Despite that, every province in Canada has agreed to take in refugees and charity organizations have been inundated with offers from private citizens eager to welcome and help resettle refugees.
Canadian government ministers tasked with screening the refugees called this "a big humanitarian project" that represents the "best values and character of the country."

"That's why safety and security have always been at the very top of our priority list. From day one, we have repeatedly said that we will not compromise the quality of the security work that must get done," said Ralph Goodale, Canada's public safety minister.

Goodale said the security evaluations to be conducted on the ground in the Middle East will be robust, integrated and multilayered.

When they arrive in Canada, refugees will temporarily be housed in former military barracks, vacant hospitals or hotels and also with families who have volunteered to sponsor refugees. The first plane load of refugees is expected to touch down in early December.

Canada says it is already working closely with the UNHCR to identify and screen the most vulnerable refugees, the bulk of whom will come from Jordan and Lebanon. Canada has also pledged to take refugees of all faiths.

[I forwarded this CNN report on Canada’s generosity to our congressional reps accompanied by a note urging each to revere the Statue of Liberty and to imitate Canada. –Dick]

COUNTRIES RESCUING SYRIAN REFUGEES, Google Search, December 21, 2015

1. UNHCR - Syria Crisis - unrefugees.org

When Syrians Have Flee Their Homes, You Can Be There. Donate Today.
Giving Refugees Hope · 501(c)(3) Non-profit · Rapid Crisis Response
  o How is my donation used?
  USA for UNHCR's mission, work, & info about tax-deductible donations
  o Emergency Relief
  UNHCR provides food, shelter, and medical care in crisis situations.
Nearly five years after the outbreak of war, the International Rescue Committee has helped more than 3 million Syrian refugees and internally displaced people to recover and rebuild their lives. ... The IRC is currently providing support to Syrian refugees in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon ...

**How to help Syrian refugees? These 6 groups you may not ...**

Sep 3, 2015 - A Syrian refugee from Aleppo holds his one month old daughter moments after ... a charity that runs a fleet of rescue boats to save refugees at sea, told the ... to “help people to stay in Syria instead of fleeing to another country.

**Images for countries rescuing Syrian refugees** Report images

**More images for countries rescuing Syrian refugees**

Dec 12, 2015 - Those helping with the migration and resettlement of the nation's 6.5 ... A Syrian refugee is pictured at the Al Zaatri refugee camp in the Jordanian city of ... MSF has two ships in the Mediterranean to rescue those fleeing by ...

**David Miliband: Syrian refugees are not a threat - NY Daily ...**

Nov 15, 2015 - Syrian refugees are not a threat: The vetting process is long and ... effort in Syria and the neighboring countries over the past four-and-a-half years, ... of them supported by my organization, the International Rescue Committee, ...

**UNITED STATES**

Recently several reports in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* confused the meanings of *migrant* and *refugee*—in regard to Europe’s reception of refugees (Germany welcomes migrants says a headline, but “thousands of refugees” were allowed to cross Austria says the text) and to the refugee child Aylan Kurdi’s body found on a Turkish beach after “12 migrants drowned.” Migrants move from place to place for work, refugees flee to any place where they might survive. One report highlights the confusion when it refers to “a wave of migration, driven by war and deprivation, that is unparalleled since World War II.” Farmworkers harvest melons and grapes in one area or nation and apples in another. Farmworkers, mechanics, teachers, small business owners, men and women, young and old, to escape the ferocities of war, desperately head toward rumored safety. The difference is crucial, because for migrants nations are not ordinarily expected to rescue them from massive, mortal danger, but only to help them, as through social services. In contrast, moral and legal imperatives demand *rescue* for fleeing refugees, as the name cries out—*refugees*, people *fleeing*—particularly when their desperation derives partly from US violence. But restrictive immigration laws drastically limit the number allowed in.

Laws governing refugees reflect the long history of US aggression and conquest. One way to understand the history of the establishment of the United States of America is to study the history of the over 400 native nations forced by the armies accompanying the European settlers either to fight, flee, or surrender. The result was the reduction of the Native Indian population from some dozen million to at one moment less than a million. We have a history of creating refugees, as in Latin America and the Middle East.

Just as there was no national outcry over the genocide on US soil, there has been little protest over its smaller continuation today. Listen to Juan Gonzalez’ description of the “astonishing jumps” in Central American inhabitants during the 1980s: “This sudden exodus did not originate with some newfound collective desire for the material benefits of U.S. society; rather, vicious civil wars and the social chaos those wars engendered forced the region’s people to flee, and in each case, the origins and spiraling intensity of those wars were a direct result of military and economic intervention by our own government.”

And the chaos in the Middle East arises from US preferential treatment for Israel, placing military bases near holy sites (Saudi Arabia), and invading country after country preemptively. Let us at least care for the victims of US violence.

References:


AND TAKE MORE FROM SYRIA


Millions of Syrians have been forced from their homeland due to a conflict that we inflamed http://inthesetimes.com/article/18402/syrian_refugees_cant_be_rejected_by_united_states

Though the U.S. officially opposed ISIS, some U.S.-supported rebels have in turn begun fighting for ISIS, and some U.S.-provided weapons have ended up in ISIS’s hands when it seized rebel outposts.

Before dawn on September 2, in Bodrum, Turkey, 16 people—mostly refugees from the civil war in Syria—boarded a tiny boat meant to only carry eight people. Just minutes after the craft set sail for the island of Kos, in Greece, they hit choppy waters. The captain fled, jumping overboard, and the refugees aboard the boat could not prevent it from capsizing. Hours later, bodies began to wash ashore, and Turkish photographer Nilufer Demir started to snap pictures—including the now-infamous image of 3-year-old Alan Kurdi, face down in the sand.

The civil war in Syria has lasted more than four years and displaced 11 million people. Four million have left the country. Some now reside in refugee camps in Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon, Iraq and Kurdistan; others have made it to Western countries, where they are not even guaranteed asylum. Others still have perished in dangerous sea voyages: The U.N. estimates that 2,636 Syrians have died crossing the Mediterranean this year alone.

In the days since the photograph of Alan Kurdi’s tiny drowned body went viral, countries across the world have opened their borders, increased their immigration quotas and begun serious efforts to address the refugee crisis. Germany, already a champion of the refugee cause, announced it can accept as many as 500,000 migrants a year for several years; Hungary is now bussing refugees from its borders through Central Europe; France will take in 24,000 Syrians over the next two years; and the UK will admit 20,000 over the next five.

While these latter numbers may sound paltry, they are still gigantic in comparison to the American commitment, when measured as a percentage of population. Since the start of the crisis, the United States has admitted 1,500 Syrian refugees and now plans to admit an
additional 10,000 next year. This represents 0.003 percent of the population, or one refugee per 31,890 U.S. citizens. Comparatively, Germany will accept some 800,000 refugees by the end of the year, new estimates predict—almost 1 percent of its total population, or one refugee per 100 Germans.

The United States has a moral obligation to admit vastly more Syrian refugees. This is, in part, because every country must step up during a humanitarian crisis of this scale. But more importantly, this is because the U.S. has fueled the refugee crisis in more ways than one.

Many Syrians are fleeing the violence caused by the war between the Assad regime and the Syrian rebels—rebels whom the United States has funded and armed.

Others are seeking to escape the brutality of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). America is widely cited as the unintentional creator of ISIS, which is now the first, second or third largest armed force operating in Syria, depending on whom you ask. The Islamic State first gained traction in the area shortly after the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. Though the U.S. officially opposed ISIS, some U.S.-supported rebels have in turn begun fighting for ISIS, and some U.S.-provided weapons have ended up in ISIS’s hands when it seized rebel outposts.

Even before ISIS erupted onto the world stage in December 2013 with its invasion of Iraq, it had perpetrated attacks against ethnic minorities and generally enforced a reign of terror in the regions under its control. Yet rather than seeing ISIS as a threat, the U.S. was so laser-focused on fighting Assad that 2012 Pentagon report spoke warmly of the “possibility of establishing a declared or undeclared Salafist principality”—precisely what ISIS did. “This is exactly what the supporting powers to the opposition [i.e., the United States and its allies] want in order to isolate the Syrian regime,” the report read.

By not only unintentionally providing the circumstances for ISIS’s founding, but also welcoming its development as a Sunni counterweight to Assad, the United States exacerbated the refugee problem.

According to Time, in a single 72-hour period, more than 130,000 Syrians fled across the border to Turkey as ISIS advanced on the town of Kobani. Yazidi minorities are fleeing ethnic cleansing—some 40,000 were chased from the town of Sinjar in Iraq in 2014.
Though the U.S. is pouring billions of dollars into humanitarian funds, this simply isn’t enough. No amount of money can completely address the stark human cost of the refugee crisis. What’s needed is a place for refugees to stay.

For the United States to admit only 10,000 out of four million is cruel. When you take in the fact that America caused this crisis, that many of those four million refugees were chased from their homes by an armed militia that the United States helped to create, that cruelty turns to utter inhumanity.

One reason the United States admits so few is because immigration policy demands background checks be performed before any asylum seekers enter the country. These checks can take up to two years, and is not uncommon in the West. Germany, however, has made an exception for Syrian refugees, saying it will perform background checks after admitting them. Realistically, these refugees do not represent any sort of terror threat.

Regardless, what right does the United States have to reject refugees on safety grounds? It was supposedly in the interest of America’s security that Iraq was invaded and that Syrian militias were supported. Pursuing these interests led to the displacement of millions, the impoverishment of tens of thousands and the deaths of thousands, many more children like Alan Kurdi among them. Now the United States would, while still trying to preserve its own safety, leave these refugees with no place to go.

The Statue of Liberty, that much vaunted symbol of freedom and welcome, bears the inscription:

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!

Today, the golden door is closed to all but a paltry few Syrians. The tired, poor and huddled
masses will just have to wait until their background check is processed.

MARC DAALDER

Marc Daalder is a writer and student living in Massachusetts. He attends Amherst College, writes for the student publication AC Voice, and spends his spare time tweeting, blogging and writing fiction.

Refugee crisis: Pressure builds for U.S. to take in more ...


CNN Sep 9, 2015 - Of the 4 million Syrian refugees who have fled attacks by their ... has brought in 1,500 Syrian refugees; European countries are bearing the brunt of ... The International Rescue Committee called for the United States to open its ...

Holiday Spirit Eludes Trump’s Hate Speech

Brave New Films Via uark.edu 5:13 PM (16 hours ago) 12-23-15

Dear Dick,

We can all agree the United States has a long history of responding to refugees in xenophobic ways - but we can change that.

As you celebrate this holiday season with your loved ones, Brave New Films is developing a video campaign to raise consciousness about the crisis of Syrian refugees to put pressure on our representatives and challenge anti-refugee sentiment. Contribute to this campaign today #refugeeswelcome.

Two years ago I came to Brave New Films as an editor to make a difference on important issues. Now, with the promotion to Supervising Producer, my passion for the issues we work on is stronger than ever. I felt embarrassed at the minimal amount of refugees we are allowing in, especially in comparison to other countries who are stepping up. That’s why in November my team put together...
a piece to urge Congress to let more refugees in to the United States, but here we are 2 months later and it feels like our failure is now compounded with the hateful rhetoric being spewed across the media.

Help us continue our Syrian refugee work by contributing to our campaign to raise consciousness and challenge xenophobia towards refugees.

We have an obligation to help the innocent families fleeing their country because of civil war. Not only is this the right thing to do but also, helping refugees is vital to our security and anti-terror strategy. For every Donald Trump spewing hate speech on mainstream media there are thousands of people like you, who believe we should help refugees whether they be Muslim, Christian, Jewish or any other religious faith.

In the wake of Paris, France decided to let in three times as many refugees into their small country than we have allowed into ours. In 1939, we sent the S.S. St Louis carrying over 900 Jews back to Nazi Germany. Most Americans are descendants of immigrants and it is easy to forget how our own ancestors were treated when they came to this country, to make a better life for themselves, for us. We all want to be able to look back at the biggest humanitarian crises our generation has faced and be able to tell the next generation what we did to help. History is being written now; this is our chance to make a difference.

Thanks for your support.

Tara Vajra, Supervising Producer
Brave New Films

Published on Friday, September 04, 2015 by Common Dreams

As Major Culprit in Creating Crisis, US Rebuked for Failing Refugees

Observers say the U.S. is not only lagging in its humanitarian response, but also driving the war and conflict behind ongoing displacement by Sarah Lazare, staff writer

60 Comments
As refugees are stranded at train stations, attacked by riot police, and killed during the perilous journey across the Mediterranean, Europe's failure to address the rising humanitarian crisis is being met with global outrage and sorrow.

Now, many are also looking across the Atlantic to the United States, where observers say key responsibility for the crisis lies—not only because the country is lagging in its humanitarian response, but also because its war policies lie at the root of the ongoing displacement.

"Iraqis, Syrians, Palestinians, and Libyans are not running away from their homes because of a natural disaster," Raed Jarrar, expert on Middle East politics and government relations manager for the American Friends Service Committee, told Common Dreams. "The U.S. should see this crisis as partially caused by its own actions in the region."

White House press secretary Josh Earnest said at a press briefing on Thursday that the United States sees no "impending policy changes" in light of the worsening crisis. He indicated the U.S. plan will remain focused on lending assistance from afar while letting EU nations take the lead on confronting the crisis. "There is certainly capacity in Europe to deal with this problem," Earnst said, "and the United States certainly stands with our European partners."

"Iraqis, Syrians, Palestinians, and Libyans are not running away from their homes because of a natural disaster. The U.S. should see this crisis as partially caused by its own actions in the region."
—Raed Jarrar, American Friends Service Committee

Since the beginning of the Syrian Civil War in March 2011, the U.S. estimates it has contributed over $4 billion in aid to those impacted by the conflict. That figure, Earnest declared, is "certainly more than any other country has done."

But Phyllis Bennis, senior fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, told Common Dreams that such claims are factually true, yet misleading. First of all, explained Bennis, the European Union donates money as a group. "But more significant," she continued, "is the fact that the U.S. is—by a high margin—the largest economy in the world, representing somewhere near 25 percent of the global economy. We should be paying 25 percent of whatever the United Nations says it needs, just as a starting point, without blinking. We don't do that."

What's more, many have pointed out that aid dollars pale in comparison to U.S. military spending. Yacoub El Hillo, the top United Nations humanitarian official in Syria, recently noted to the New York Times that while the U.S. government spends $68,000
an hour on warplanes targeting ISIS, the UN grapples with dramatic funding shortfalls in which it has less than 50 percent of what it needs to care for Syrians uprooted by war.

Oxfam America is calling on the United States to immediately boost the amount of money it sends to the World Food Program, which warned in mid-August that it is facing "critical funding shortages that forced it to reduce the level of the assistance it provides to some 1.5 million Syrian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt."

And then there is the matter of the refugees themselves. The U.S. has admitted roughly 1,500 Syrian refugees since 2011 and says that it will resettle no more than 8,000 by the end of 2016. In 2013, the last year for which Homeland Security statistics are available, the U.S. granted asylum to just 36 people from Syria.

"This is getting attention now because refugees are trying to flood into Europe. But this should not just be about how do we support the Europeans."
—Phyllis Bennis, Institute for Policy Studies

This puts the U.S. far behind Germany, which has committed to accepting up to 800,000 refugees by the end of this year.

However, even Germany's commitments pale in comparison to the roughly 4 million Syrian refugees who have fled to Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and Iraq—where a refugee crisis has long been brewing. In Lebanon, Syrian refugees now comprise one quarter of the population.

"This is getting attention now because refugees are trying to flood into Europe," said Bennis. "But this should not just be about how do we support the Europeans."

The aid group International Rescue Committee is circulating a petition for the the U.S. to resettle at least 65,000 Syrian refugees by 2016, and it has so far garnered nearly 12,000 signatures. And 14 Senate Democrats have joined in the call to "dramatically increase the number of Syrian refugees that we accept for resettlement."

But many insist the ultimate solution lies in creating the conditions that will allow refugees to return home—where U.S.-led policies laid the groundwork for the ongoing violence, including the rise of ISIS.

"The U.S. should consider some immediate humanitarian solutions to ease the suffering of millions of refugees fleeing the Middle East, but we should also keep in mind that humanitarian assistance is not the solution to this crisis," Jarrar emphasized.
"The ultimate solution to the ongoing refugee crisis is a political solution that will stabilize the region and give refugees the option to go back home."

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Related Articles

The Syrian Refugee Crisis and the ‘Do Something’ Lie
Thousands Reach Austria as Refugee Crisis Issues 'Wake-up Call'
Time to End the Refugee Shame

HOW'S ARKANSAS PREPARING FOR REFUGEES?

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

How is your Emergency Management Office Responding to Climate Change? Preparing? This is the agency responsible to “manage” such a crisis. Have you talked with them? In 2010 I sent the officers a list of books explaining warming and its sure consequences. For example, one of the books reported on the S. Pacific island nation Tuvalu arranging with New Zealand for dual passports. A few years later the officers were still in denial, despite I assume their awareness of the Katrina refugees who had remained in our town. (One dismissed warming offhand while another thought warming was from the “core”--from molten lava get it?). They had read no books, no articles, and apparently not even newspaper reports of melting glaciers, rising seas, and increasing weather extremes. What did they think the word “emergency” means? I hope you have had better luck than I.

This should be no light matter for those whose job is “Emergency Management,” public safety. Our county judges and mayors are finally responsible. Maybe I should have begun with them. It’s not too late. Dick

Marshallese in Arkansas

In Arkansas, a growing population of 'climate change refugees'
Rising sea levels have prompted thousands of natives from the Marshall Islands to flee their homes and relocate to Springdale, Arkansas.

By Story Hinckley, Christian Science, Monitor Staff, NOVEMBER 29, 2015


Valentino Keimbar, a native of the Marshall Islands, moved 6,000 miles away from his home in the Pacific Ocean last year to Springdale, Arkansas because of climate change.

Located between Hawaii and Australia, the Marshall Islands are made up of 29 atolls and five islands with a population of about 70,000, all of whom live about six feet above sea level.

And another 10,000 Marshallese live in northwest Arkansas. The government of the Marshall Islands even has an official consular office in Springdale.

Recommended: Climate change: Is your opinion informed by science? Take our quiz!

“Arkansas is the land of opportunity,” Josen Kaious, from the Marshall Islands town of Laura, told the Associated Press.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE Climate change: Is your opinion informed by science? Take our quiz!

PHOTOS OF THE DAY Our best photos of the year 2015

Because this Pacific island nation is so small, the Marshallese population in Arkansas attribute their Springdale settlement to one man, John Moody, who moved to the US in 1979 after the first wave of flooding. Moody’s family eventually moved to Springdale to
live with him and work for Tyson and other poultry companies based in Arkansas, eventually causing a steady flow of extended friends and family migrating to Springdale.

One migrant named Roselinta told CNN that she likes Arkansas because it is far away from the ocean, meaning it is safe.

“Probably in 10 to 20 years from now, we’re all going to move,” Keimbar told the Associated Press.

But the Marshall Islands is not the only country to witness thousands of climate migrants. The Maldives in the Indian Ocean, the Pacific island nation of Kiribati, and the island of Tuvalu south of the Marshall Islands are also at risk.

“If we get climate change wrong there is a very real danger we shall see levels of mass migration as yet unparalleled,” United Kingdom shadow minister of immigration Chris Bryant said in a speech to the Institute for Public Policy Research. “The United Nations (UN) estimates that in 2008 20 million people were displaced by climate change.” And in the long term, “you can imagine that the UN estimates of 200 million such refugees, more than the total number of worldwide migrants today, may be about right,” said Bryant.

Some experts even predict "internal migration" by American climate refugees moving throughout the United States because of extreme weather conditions.
“If you do not like it hot and do not want to be hit by a hurricane, the options of where to go are very limited,” Camilo Mora, a geography professor at the University of Hawaii and lead author of a 2014 paper published in Nature that predicts unprecedented temperatures worldwide by 2047.

“The best place really is Alaska,” Dr. Mora told The New York Times. “Alaska is going to be the next Florida by the end of the century.”

“We think of environmental refugeeism as something that afflicts the developing nations but not us,” climatologist Michael Mann told The Guardian. “But if the drought in California becomes the new normal, and there’s a very real possibility that it does, then we are going to see people driven from their communities, driven from that state.”

Although developed countries such as the US will have their share of climate refugees, Mora and his colleagues agree that other countries like the Marshall Islands will suffer first.

“The fact that the earliest climate departures occur in low-income countries further highlights an obvious disparity between those who benefit economically from the processes leading to climate change and those who will have to pay for most of the environmental and social costs,” they write.

“It’s not our fault that the tide is getting higher,” Carlon Zedkaia, a Marshall Island native
told the Associated Press. “Just somebody else in this world that wants to get rich.”

CAMPAIGN TO INCREASE NUMBER OF REFUGEES

MOVE-ON CALLS ON OUR TOWN

On Saturday, September 12, 2015 12:53 PM, “Jo Comerford, MoveOn.org Civic Action” <moveon-help@list.moveon.org> wrote:

Dear MoveOn member,

A week ago, our hearts were broken by the photo of a little boy, drowned, lying alone in the sand.

But new images of people with open arms welcoming exhausted Syrian refugees the world over have begun to put our hearts back together.¹ The profound decency of ordinary folks is driving governments to respond to this crisis.²

Now it's America's turn to act.

On Thursday, President Obama said he would allow 10,000 Syrian refugees to enter the United States.³ It's a step in the right direction, but it's a tiny fraction of what's needed. In fact, that number is 1/80th the number welcomed by Germany, a country far smaller than the U.S.⁴, ⁵

That's why MoveOn members and our friends are launching AmericaWelcomes, an urgent national campaign to raise the number of Syrian refugees admitted into the U.S. to at least 100,000 and to encourage people in local communities across the country to open their hearts and extend a welcome.

Will you take a quick photo to send a message that residents of Fayetteville would welcome Syrian refugees?

It's easy. Once you click, there's a big button at the top of the page that says, "Add your own photo here." It will have all the information and resources you need.

We'll make sure these pictures reach President Obama, the U.S. State Department, and the national press, making it unmistakably clear that Americans stand ready to embrace refugees and that we demand solutions to this crisis that are humane, dignified, and worthy of our shared human values.

We're partnering with tremendous allies, including Refugee Council USA and USA for UNHCR (the United Nation's refugee agency), to show that Americans in every city and town across the country are awake to the plight of Syrian and other refugees fleeing and that we are ready to do more to help.

Please take a quick photo now to ensure that Fayetteville is represented on our map.

On Wednesday, Secretary of State John Kerry indicated that President Obama wants to "do what we can" to increase the number of Syrians welcome in the United States.⁶

This is not a moment for our country to do only "what we can." This is a moment for everyone to do what we must—in Washington, D.C. and in our local communities.
Will you take five minutes today to take a photo that could help make a difference in the lives of tens of thousands of people?

Please click here to get started.

MoveOn members have already responded to the Syrian refugee crisis by donating $220,000 to UNHCR. But as this crisis intensifies, it's clear that we are called to do more. We must not turn our backs on families fleeing the horrors of war and devastation. In partnership with great groups like Welcoming America, we must demonstrate that we are committed to building a nation that truly welcomes and sustains migrants and refugees from around the world.

It begins now with your photo and with your heartfelt message of welcome.

Thanks for all you do.

–Jo, Mark, Stephen, Jadzia, and the rest of the team

Sources:

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   http://www.moveon.org/r?r=307091&id=132069-1722697-vsNboPx&t=11

Want to support our work? MoveOn member contributions have powered our work together for more than 17 years. Hundreds of thousands of people chip in each year—which is why we're able to be fiercely independent, answering to no individual, corporation, politician, or political party. You can become a monthly donor by clicking here, or chip in a one-time gift here.

See below for more on Syria

ARKANSAS’ CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Senator John Boozman: (202)224-4843

Website Email: http://www.boozman.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/e-mail-me
Senator Tom Cotton: (202)224-2353
Website Email: http://www.cotton.senate.gov/content/contact-tom

Rep. Rick Crawford, 1st District: (202)225-4076
Website Email: http://crawford.house.gov/contact/

Rep. French Hill, 2nd District: (202)225-2506
Website Email: https://hill.house.gov/contact/email

Rep. Steve Womack, 3rd District: (202)225-4301
Website Email: http://womack.house.gov/contact/

Rep. Bruce Westerman, 4th District: (202) 225-3772
Website Email: https://westerman.house.gov/contact

President Barack Obama: Comments: 202-456-1111, Switchboard: 202-456-1414
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CONTENTS: UNITED STATES, REFUGEES, ASYLUM SEEKERS
NEWSLETTER #2, Nov. 24, 2015

PETITIONS, APPEALS IN SUPPORT OF ASYLUM
Win Without War, Contact Your Senators
AFSC, Contact Your Senators
Bernie Sanders
Bill of Rights Defense Committee (BORDC)
US Writers

UNHCR UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UN WIRE Reports on Climate and Refugees

UNITED STATES, REFUGEES, ASYLUM SEEKERS FLEEING WAR
Choosing to Act from Love Instead of Fear
Political Struggle: Win Without War, S.2145, the Middle East Refugee Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act
Schooling of Somalia Muslim Women in the US

SYRIA CIVIL WAR
Intervention in Syria Should Be More or Less?

Friends Committee for National Legislation (FCNL): “Our love for refugees as fellow humans, whose lives matter, needs to trump our fear of the violence they're running from.”

ARKANSAS (Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/ADG)
(See below for contacting Arkansas’ Senators and Representatives)
WWII Concentration Camps for Japanese-AMERICANS No Parallel
Governor Hutchinson: No Room at the Arkansas Inn and No Stable Either—Only Greed, Jingoism, Xenophobia, National Security (i.e. Fear Down to His Socks), and Opportunism

Arkies Reply
The Christian Compassion Tradition
The US Political Tradition of a Nation of Immigrants
And More
FLEEING INDIVIDUAL ABUSE
Ann Medlock, Giraffe: Paula Lucas Fleeing UAE

CLIMATE CHANGE REFUGEES
Refugees International, Population Displacement and Climate Change
Climate Displacement 2015, Google Search, Nov. 21, 2015

HISTORICAL AND GLOBAL CONTEXTS
McFadden, Rescue of Jewish Children from Nazi Germany
The Demise of the Homogeneous State in ME and West as Cause.
Tomgram, “the Great Unraveling”; John Feffer, “Splinterlands,” Looking Back from 2050

BUILDING THE FUTURE OF IMMIGRANTS
Equitable Education for Displaced Populations by Elinor L. Brown, Anna Krasteva,

Contact your Senators, Representatives, and President Obama

Blog: http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/
For research purposes, specific subjects can be located in the following alphabetized index, and searched on the blog using the search box. The search box is located in the upper left corner of the webpage.
Refugees, Rising Seas, Syria, Tibet, Vietnam, Warming, Wars, more.

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END REFUGEES NEWSLETTER #3

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