OMNI
UNITED STATES, REFUGEES, ASYLUM
NEWSLETTER #4, April 7, 2016.

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COMPILED BY DICK BENNETT FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE, JUSTICE, AND ECOLOGY
(#1, August 2, 2014; #2 Nov. 24, 2015; #3 Dec. 17, 2016)

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Asians to Europe
The May 2016 no. of *In These Times* favorably reviews Jacques Audiard's new film *Dheepan* on life in Europe from pov of Sri Lankan refugees. --Dick
Poet Emma Lazarus wrote a poem titled "The New Colossus" in 1883 to help raise funds for the Statue of Liberty, which was completed three years later. The poem, often cited as representative of the U.S. approach to immigration, reads in part:

"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free ..."

But bigotry against even European-American immigrants was rife at the time Lazarus wrote the poem, and immigration quotas based on racial hierarchies formally passed in 1924 and would remain in effect until 1965. Her poem represented an unrealized ideal--and, sadly, still does.

American Indians

When European nations began to colonize the Americas, they ran into a problem: The Americas were already populated. They dealt with this problem by enslaving and ultimately eliminating most of the indigenous population--reducing it by approximately 95%--and deporting the survivors to undeveloped ghettos that the government unironically referred to as "reservations."

These harsh policies could not have been justified if American Indians were treated like human beings. Colonists wrote that American Indians had no religions and no governments, that they practiced savage and sometimes physically impossible acts--that they, in short, acceptable victims of genocide. In the United States, this legacy of violent conquest remains largely ignored.
African Americans

Before 1965, the United States' few non-white immigrants often had to overcome considerable hurdles to settle here. But until 1808 (legally) and for years thereafter (illegally), the United States forcibly recruited African-American immigrants--in chains--to serve as unpaid laborers.

You'd think that a country that had put so much brutal effort into bringing immigrant forced laborers here would at least welcome them when they'd arrived, but the popular view of Africans was that they were violent, amoral savages who could be made useful only if forced to conform to Christian and European traditions. Post-slavery African immigrants have been subjected to many of the same prejudices, and face many of the same stereotypes that existed two centuries ago.

English and Scottish Americans

Surely Anglos and Scots have never been subject to xenophobia? After all, the United States was originally an Anglo-American institution, wasn't it?

Well, yes and no. In the years leading up to the American Revolution, Britain began to be perceived as a villainous empire--and first-generation English immigrants were often viewed with hostility or suspicion. Anti-English sentiment was a significant factor in John Adams' defeat in the 1800 presidential election against the anti-English, pro-French candidate Thomas Jefferson. U.S. opposition to England and Scotland continued up to and including the American Civil War; it was only with the two world wars of the twentieth century that Anglo-U.S. relations finally warmed up.

Chinese Americans

Chinese-American workers began to arrive in large numbers in the late 1840s, and helped build many of the railroads that would form the backbone of the emerging U.S. economy. But by 1880 there were some 110,000 Chinese Americans in the country, and some white Americans didn't like the growing ethnic diversity.

Congress responded with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which stated that Chinese immigration "endangers the good order of certain localities" and would no longer be tolerated. Other responses ranged from bizarre local laws (such as California's tax on the hiring of Chinese-American laborers) to outright violence (such as Oregon's Chinese Massacre of 1887, in which 31 Chinese Americans were murdered by an angry white mob).

German Americans
German Americans make up the largest identified ethnic group in the United States today, but have historically been subjected to xenophobia as well--primarily during the two World Wars, as Germany and the United States were enemies in both.

During World War I, some states went so far as to make it illegal to speak German--a law that was actually enforced on a widespread basis in Montana, and that had a chilling effect on first-generation German-American immigrants living elsewhere.

This anti-German sentiment bubbled up again during World War II, when some 11,000 German Americans were detained indefinitely by executive order without trials or normal due process protections.

**Indian Americans**

Thousands of Indian Americans had become citizens when the U.S. Supreme Court handed down its ruling in *United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind* (1923), holding that Indians are not white and therefore may not become U.S. citizens by immigration. Thind, an officer for U.S. Army during World War I, initially had his citizenship revoked but was able to quietly immigrate later. Other Indian Americans were not so lucky, and lost both their citizenship and their land.

**Italian Americans**

In October 1890, New Orleans police chief David Hennessy lay dying from bullet wounds he received on his way home from work. Locals blamed Italian-American immigrants, arguing that the "mafia" was responsible for the murder. Police duly arrested 19 immigrants, but had no real evidence against them; charges were dropped against ten of them, and the other nine were acquitted in March of 1891. The day after the acquittal, 11 of the accused were attacked by a white mob and murdered in the streets. Mafia stereotypes affect Italian Americans to this day.

Italy’s status as an enemy in World War II was also problematic--leading to arrests, internments, and travel restrictions leveled against thousands of law-abiding Italian Americans.

**Japanese Americans**

No community was more significantly affected by the World War II "enemy alien" detentions than Japanese Americans. An estimated 110,000 were detained in internment camps during the war, detentions that the U.S. Supreme Court dubiously upheld in *Hirabayashi v. United States* (1943) and *Korematsu v. United States* (1944).
Prior to World War II, Japanese-American immigration was most common in Hawaii and California. In California, in particular, some whites resented the presence of Japanese-American farmers and other landowners—leading to the passage of the California Alien Land Law of 1913, which prohibited Japanese Americans from owning land.

Related Articles

- 10 Racist Supreme Court Rulings
- An Overview of Xenophobia
- The History of Racial Profiling in the United States
- Top 3 Supreme Court Cases Involving Japanese Internment
- Xenophobia - Definition in the Study of Sociology
- Why the Zadvydas case is important


Statue of Liberty National Monument

Emma Lazarus’ Famous Poem

A poem by Emma Lazarus is graven on a tablet within the pedestal on which the statue stands.

The New Colossus

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,

With conquering limbs astride from land to land;

Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand

A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame

Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
"Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
"Keep ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "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-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

FUTURE OF THE IRAQI, AFGHAN, SYRIAN, AND OTHER REFUGEES FROM WAR and VIOLENCE: WHAT WWII TAUGHT US

At this time of desperation for millions of refugees fleeing wars and seeking asylum, we can learn from our behavior following WWII. I am quoting from The Autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt (1961).

The United Nations was divided over the refugees. The US and its allies argued that the refugees “must be guaranteed the right to choose whether or not they would return to their homes.” On the other side, the USSR, Yugoslavia, and their allies argued “that the refugees in Germany should be forced to return home and to accept whatever punishment might be meted out to them.” Mrs. Roosevelt presented the Western position. Andrei Vishinsky the Soviet. The West won the vote. “This vote meant,” Mrs. Roosevelt wrote, “that the Western nations would have to worry about the ultimate fate of the refugees for a long, long time but the principle of the right of an individual to make his own decisions was a victory well worthwhile” (307-308). That the two historic crises may not be perfectly analogous should
not delay the United States from repeating its humanitarian WWII refugee solution over that of the Soviet Union’s. --Dick

UNITED STATES and MIDDLE EASTERN REFUGEES

Fund-raiser in Fayetteville, April 10, 2016

Sunday at 2 PM - 5 PM

Show Map

Teatro Scarpino
329 N West Ave, Fayetteville, Arkansas 72701

Bridge of Peace Syria Presents:
A SILENT AUCTION of WIND BELLS, MAGIC LANTERNS & A POTPOURRI of POTTERY by artist John Ward and the Ward family:
A PARTY to benefit building the BRIDGE OF PEACE SCHOOL for refugee children inside Syria.
SUNDAY, APRIL 10th, 2 - 5pm TEATRO SCARPINO, Fayetteville, Arkansas

First Syrian “Surge” Family to Kansas City

First Syrians arrive in US under surge resettlement program.

By KHETAM MALKAWI. Apr. 7, 2016

AMMAN, Jordan (AP) — The first Syrian family to be resettled in the U.S. under a speeded-up "surge operation" for refugees left Jordan on Wednesday and arrived in Kansas City, Missouri, to start a new life.

Ahmad al-Abboud, who is being resettled with his wife and five children, said he is thankful to
Jordan, where he has lived for three years after fleeing Syria's civil war. But the 45-year-old from Homs, Syria, said he was ready to build a better life in the U.S.

"I'm happy. America is the country of freedom and democracy, there are jobs opportunities, there is good education, and we are looking forward to having a good life over there," al-Abboud said.

They have been living in Mafrak, north of Amman. Al-Abboud was unable to find work, and the family was surviving on food coupons.

"I am ready to integrate in the U.S. and start a new life," he told The Associated Press in Amman's airport before the family boarded a flight to Kansas City.

Al-Abboud said he wanted to learn English and find a job to support his family.

A spokeswoman for the social services organization helping resettle the family said they arrived in Kansas City late Wednesday night.

Since October, 1,000 Syrian refugees have moved to the U.S. from Jordan. President Barack Obama has set a target of resettling 10,000 Syrian refugees by Sept. 30.

A resettlement center opened in Amman in February to help meet that goal, and about 600 people are interviewed every day at the center.

The temporary processing center will run until April 28, said U.S. Ambassador Alice Wells, who was at the airport to see the al-Abboud family depart.

Gina Kassem, the regional refugee coordinator at the U.S. Embassy in Amman, said that while the target of 10,000 applies to Syrian refugees living around the world, most will be resettled from Jordan.

"The 10,000 (figure) is a floor and not a ceiling, and it is possible to increase the number," Kassem told reporters.

While the resettlement process usually takes 18 to 24 months, the surge operation will reduce the time to three months, Kassem said.

The U.N. Refugee Agency prioritizes the most vulnerable cases for resettlement, and refers them to the U.S. to review, Kassem said. The priority is given to high-risk groups such as unaccompanied minors and victims of torture and gender-based violence, she said.

"We do not have exclusions or look for families with certain education background, language skills or other socio-economic factors, and we do not cut family sizes," she said.

Jordan hosts about 635,000 of the more than 4.7 million Syrians who have registered with the
A firsthand description of a Greek refugee receiving center: the Moria Refugee Registration Camp on the island of Lesvos:

The author's appreciation for the organizations doing useful work at the camp helps us know which organizations we might support.

It's reassuring to know the Greek Coast Guard and the Greek police are rescuing.

UNHCR the UN High Commissioner for Refugees
International Rescue Committee (IRC)
Starfish, Greek NGO (the author works for this org.)
Greenpeace
Drop in the Ocean
All work amidst hard pressures of a thousand people a day.
Read the author’s description of the camp. And I recommend the magazine for understanding the Middle East from Arab/Muslims perspectives.

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Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, March/April 2016, pp. 30-32

Special Report Eyewitness to the Refugee Crisis in Lesvos By Sara R. Powell


As winter draws nearer, refugees cook food in a camp by the Moria processing center on the Greek island of Lesvos, Nov. 15, 2015. (CARL COURT/GETTY IMAGES)

According to statistics listed on the website of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), more than 850,000 refugees arrived in Greece by sea in 2015. In January 2016, there were more than 60,000 arrivals by sea—a 3,571 percent increase. The European Commission, the executive body of the European Union (EU), predicts that another three million will arrive in 2016. There already have been almost 7,000 in the first three days of February alone.

Just looking at the numbers, and knowing they represent people fleeing for their lives, is breathtaking—but seeing in person the individuals who make up those numbers is staggering.
As the crisis continues, the organization and operating procedures for coping with the vast numbers of people arriving change frequently. Recently, the Greek island of Lesvos has been divided into several crisis administrative zones. Here in the north, where most of the boats arrive—a six-mile trip across the Aegean from Turkey—there are three administrative zones. In zones one and two, when a boat arrives on its own, the passengers are taken to the International Rescue Committee (IRC) camp—a transit camp that functions as a sort of triage, providing dry clothing, medical attention, food and occasionally overnight shelter, if refugees arrive too late for a bus to the Moria refugee registration camp in southeastern Lesvos.

Molyvos, where I am based, is in zone one. Here the situation is slightly different. Refugees on a boat coming into Molyvos receive food, dry clothing and medical attention at the harbor before transport to Moria. If, however, a boat has been rescued, the rules are different again—depending on what group rescued the refugees. If the Greek Coast Guard picks up a boat, everybody on board is considered under arrest, and Starfish, the Greek NGO I volunteered for, is given the task of preliminarily registering those aboard, in addition to providing the basic triage services all refugees receive. If Greenpeace or Drop in the Ocean, the other groups allowed to do rescue work, pick up the distressed boat, the procedure is the same as if the boat arrived on its own. In all cases, the refugees are sent on to Moria within a day of their arrival. Though I have done shifts at the IRC camp, the harbor and Donkey—a clothing storage and sorting center—most of my work has been at Moria.

There every refugee who lands on Lesvos—thousands of people daily—passes through on his or her road to safety. Most are from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, although there are refugees from other nations as well. Lately, the numbers of refugees from Afghanistan have been growing as the security situation there has deteriorated.

The camp is a dismal place. Administered by the Greek police, with the UNHCR in a support role, it is an old military prison camp. Though refugees are free to come and go—there are a number of kiosks just outside the gates selling food, sleeping bags, cigarettes and other sundries—Moria still looks and feels like a detention center. Built on a steep hillside, and surrounded with high, razor-wire topped fences, the camp is severely overstressed by the numbers of people passing through. Though construction to alleviate the overcrowding has begun since I arrived, drainage at the bottom of the hill, especially near the bathrooms, is still a major problem.

The entire area is covered with mud so deep and thick it sucks at your shoes as you walk. The refugee housing units (RHUs) are grouped about halfway up the hill, on either side of the road that runs up to the dorms. About half of the almost 60 RHUs are difficult to access,
involving hiking around the rocky, muddy hillside.

There are also some issues with how the space has been utilized. For instance, the “dorms” where “extremely vulnerable individuals” (EVIs) are housed are at the top of a steep and slippery hill, although the reasoning behind that is somewhat understandable: these dorms are enclosed in yet another layer of fencing and razor wire, allowing vulnerable refugees to be more protected from the general population. Another example of poor spatial planning is the bank of phone charging stations located just outside the women’s restroom, where large groups of young men congregate. This intimidates many women—and not just the refugee women, but some NGO and volunteer workers as well, especially at night.

In addition to the dorms and the RHUs, there is the “Rubhall,” one large heated tent reserved for single men.

The worst problem at Moria is the inadequate shelter. The dorms are heated and lit, but only about ten of the RHUs, where families are housed, are heated, and none have lighting. The few heaters are a new addition since I arrived, so some progress is being made in improving accommodations. The Starfish volunteers serve under the auspices of the Danish Refugee Council responsible for housing allocation at Moria, and every afternoon, when housing allocation starts, and on into the night, we struggle with trying to explain to exhausted refugees that these small IKEA huts, meant to hold 5 people, must be crammed with 20-25 people because there is simply not enough shelter to go around. Since translators are scarce, the process becomes even more problematic.

Refugees buy food at a snack van outside the Moria processing center. (CARL COURT/GETTY IMAGES)

Most refugees stay only one day at Moria before taking the ferry to Athens for the next stage of their trip—although recent ferry strikes have been a complicating factor. From Athens, they continue by bus to the Macedonian border, stopping—often for several days—at a gas station where women and children are housed in heated tents, but men sleep outside in the cold. There they wait their turn to cross the tightly controlled border, where they receive a stamp allowing them to proceed to Germany. Only Syrians and Iraqis are allowed through, however. All others are sent back to Athens at their own expense.

Refugees line up for food at a feeding station by the Moria processing center. (CARL COURT/GETTY IMAGES)

But while they may have reached Europe safely, the refugees too often discover that they have not reached the land of milk and honey.

Sara R. Powell is a former director of the AET Book Club. She is currently volunteering with refugee assistance in Lesvos.
FLEEING DANGER AT HOME, ENCOUNTERING DANGER IN FLIGHT

10,000 refugee children are missing, says Europol
http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/30/fears-for-missing-child-refugees
The EU’s criminal intelligence agency warns pan-European gangs are targeting minors for sex work and slavery

A migrant child walks from the Macedonian border into Serbia, near the village of Miratovac. Photograph: Darko Vojinovic/AP

Mark Townsend Home affairs editor
Saturday 30 January 2016 15.15 ESTLast modified on Saturday 30 January 201619.25 EST

At least 10,000 unaccompanied child refugees have disappeared after arriving in Europe, according to the EU’s criminal intelligence agency. Many are feared to have fallen into the hands of organised trafficking syndicates.

In the first attempt by law enforcement agencies to quantify one of the most worrying aspects of the migrant crisis, Europol’s chief of staff told the Observer that thousands of vulnerable minors had vanished after registering with state authorities.

Brian Donald said 5,000 children had disappeared in Italy alone, while another 1,000 were unaccounted for in Sweden. He warned that a sophisticated pan-European “criminal infrastructure” was now targeting refugees. “It’s not unreasonable to say that we’re looking at 10,000-plus children. Not all of them will be criminally exploited; some might have been passed on to family members. We just don’t know where they are, what they’re doing or whom they are with.”

The plight of unaccompanied child refugees has emerged as one of the most pressing issues in the migrant crisis. Last week it was announced that Britain would accept more unaccompanied minors from Syria and other conflict zones. According to Save the Children, an estimated 26,000 unaccompanied children entered Europe last year. Europol, which has a 900-strong force of intelligence analysts and police liaison officers, believes 27% of the million arrivals in Europe last year were minors.

“Whether they are registered or not, we’re talking about 270,000 children. Not all of those are unaccompanied, but we also have evidence that a large proportion might be,” said Donald, indicating that the 10,000 figure is likely to be a conservative estimate of the actual number of unaccompanied minors who have disappeared since entering Europe.

In October, officials in Trelleborg, southern Sweden, revealed that some 1,000 unaccompanied refugee children who had arrived in the port town over the previous month
had gone missing. On Tuesday a separate report, again from Sweden, warned that many unaccompanied refugees vanished and that there was “very little information about what happens after the disappearance”.

An entire criminal infrastructure has developed over the past 18 months around exploiting the migrant flow

**Brian Donald, Europol chief of staff**

In the UK the number of children who disappear soon after arriving as asylum seekers has doubled over the past year, raising fears that they are also being targeted by criminal gangs.

Mariyana Berket, of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), said: “Unaccompanied minors from regions of conflict are by far the most vulnerable population; those without parental care that have either been sent by their families to get into Europe first and then get the family over, or have fled with other family members.”

Donald confirmed Europol had received evidence some unaccompanied child refugees in Europe had been sexually exploited. In Germany and Hungary, the former a popular destination country for refugees and migrants, with the latter an important transit state, large numbers of criminals had been caught exploiting migrants, he said. “An entire [criminal] infrastructure has developed over the past 18 months around exploiting the migrant flow. There are prisons in Germany and Hungary where the vast majority of people arrested and placed there are in relation to criminal activity surrounding the migrant crisis,” said Donald.

The police agency has also documented a disturbing crossover between organised gangs helping to smuggle refugees into the EU and human-trafficking gangs exploiting them for sex work and slavery. He said that longstanding criminal gangs known to be involved in human trafficking, whose identity had been logged in the agency’s Phoenix database, were now being caught exploiting refugees.

“The ones who have been active in human smuggling are now appearing in our files in relation to migrant smuggling,” said Donald.

Europol will take evidence from organisations working on the Balkans route, which requested a meeting with the law enforcement agency specifically to discuss children vanishing. “Their concern is in relation to the number of unaccompanied minors. They’re asking for help in identifying how these children are identified and then brought into the criminal infrastructure. They’re dealing with this on a daily basis, they’ve come to us because they see it as a big problem.” He warned the public to be vigilant, stating that most child refugees who had gone missing would be hiding in plain sight. “These kids are in the community, if they’re being
abused it's in the community. They're not being spirited away and held in the middle of forests, though I suspect some might be, they're in the community – they're visible. As a population we need to be alert to this."

Europe’s chaotic approach to the migration crisis led last week to calls for Greece to be removed from the open-borders Schengen zone, a development that a senior UN official has described as a "new nadir" in the EU’s approach.

Writing in the Observer, the UN special representative on migration, Peter Sutherland, said such a move would “effectively transform it [Greece] into an open-air holding pen for countless thousands of asylum seekers. The idea is inhumane and a gross violation of basic European principles”.

UNITED STATES AND CENTRAL AMERICAN REFUGEES

WHY ARE CENTRAL AMERICANS FLEEING THEIR COUNTRIES?
Provides important context for evaluating refugees from CA. “‘I want you to understand what thousands of Central Americans are forced to live through.’”

Groups Sue U.S. Government over Life-Threatening Deportation Process against Mothers and Children Escaping Extreme Violence in Central America [1]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT: 212-549-2666, media@aclu.org [2]
WASHINGTON — The American Civil Liberties Union, American Immigration Council, National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild, and National Immigration Law Center today sued the federal government to challenge its policies denying a fair deportation process to mothers and children who have fled extreme violence, death threats, rape, and persecution in Central America and come to the United States seeking safety.
The groups filed the case on behalf of mothers and children locked up at an isolated detention center in Artesia, New Mexico — hours from the nearest major metropolitan area. The complaint charges the Obama administration with enacting a new strong-arm policy to ensure rapid deportations by holding these mothers and their children to a nearly insurmountable and erroneous standard to prove their asylum claims, and by placing countless hurdles in front of them.

"These mothers and their children have sought refuge in the United States after fleeing for their lives from threats of death and violence in their home countries," said Cecillia Wang, director of the ACLU's Immigrants' Rights Project. "U.S. law guarantees them a fair opportunity to seek asylum. Yet, the government's policy violates that basic law and core American values — we do not send people who are seeking asylum back into harm's way. We should not sacrifice fairness for speed in life-or-death situations."

According to the complaint, the Obama administration is violating long-established constitutional and statutory law by enacting policies that have:

- Categorically prejudged asylum cases with a "detain-and-deport" policy, regardless of individual circumstances.
- Drastically restricted communication with the outside world for the women and children held at the remote detention center, including communication with attorneys. If women got to make phone calls at all, they were cut off after three minutes when consulting with their attorneys. This makes it impossible to prepare for a hearing or get legal help.
- Given virtually no notice to detainees of critically important interviews used to determine the outcome of asylum requests. Mothers have no time to prepare, are rushed through their interviews, are cut off by officials throughout the process, and are forced to answer traumatic questions, including detailing instances of rape, while their children are listening.
- Led to the intimidation and coercion of the women and children by immigration officers, including being screamed at for wanting to see a lawyer.

"Fast-tracking the deportations of women and children from immigration detention is an assault on due process. There is no way that justice can be served when so many people are being rushed through the system without any real opportunity to assert claims for relief. What we are seeing in Artesia is nothing less than a sham process that values expediency over justice," said Melissa Crow, legal director of the American Immigration Council.

The plaintiffs include:

- A Honduran mother who fled repeated death threats in her home country to seek asylum in the United States with her two young children. The children's father was
killed by a violent gang that then sent the mother and her children continuous death threats. When she went to the police they told her that they could not do anything to help her. It is common knowledge where she lived that the police are afraid of the gang and will do nothing to stop it.

- A mother who fled El Salvador with her two children because of threats by the gang that controls the area where they lived. The gang stalked her 12-year-old child every time he left the house and threatened kidnapping. She fears that if the family returns to El Salvador, the gang will kill her son. Some police officers are known to be corrupt and influenced by gangs. The mother says she knows of people who have been killed by gang members after reporting them to police.

- A mother who fled El Salvador with her 10-month-old son after rival gangs threatened to kill her and her baby. One gang tried to force the mother to become an informant on the activities of another gang, and when she refused, told her she had 48 hours to leave or be killed.

"The women and children detained in Artesia have endured brutal murders of loved ones, rapes, death threats, and similar atrocities that no mother or child ever should have to endure, and our government is herding them through the asylum process like cattle," said Trina Realmuto, an attorney at the National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild. "The deportation-mill in Artesia lacks even the most basic protections, like notice and the opportunity to be heard, that form the cornerstone of due process in this country."

The lawsuit, *M.S.P.C. v. Johnson*, was filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Co-counsel in this case includes the law firms of Jenner & Block, and Van Der Hout, Brigagliano & Nightingale, LLP; and the ACLU of New Mexico, ACLU of San Diego & Imperial Counties, and ACLU of the Nation's Capital.

"Any mother will do whatever it takes to make sure her children are safe from harm's way," said Karen Tumlin, managing attorney for the National Immigration Law Center. "Our plaintiffs are no different: they have fled their homes to protect their children, only to find that the U.S. deportation system is intent upon placing them back in the dangerous situations they left. We are filing this lawsuit today to ensure that each mother is able to have her fair day in court, and that we are not sending children and their mothers back to violence or their deaths."

The complaint is available at: [aclu.org/immigrants-rights/mspc-v-johnson-complaint](http://aclu.org/immigrants-rights/mspc-v-johnson-complaint) [3]

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TELL PRESIDENT OBAMA TO CALL OFF RAIDS AGAINST IMMIGRANT FAMILIES

Campaign created by Emilio Vicente

FACEBOOK
EMAIL

TO: PRESIDENT OBAMA  [I SENT 1-10-16. –DICK]

Tell President Obama:

Immediately cease your administration’s raids against recent Central American immigrants fleeing violence in their home countries.

Why is this important?

President Obama’s administration has launched a series of raids against undocumented families who came to the US seeking refuge from violence in their home countries. [1]

According to Wall Street Journal, “The last time targeted roundups occurred on a large scale was about a decade ago, when the George W. Bush administration conducted high-profile raids at meatpacking plants and other work sites to detain undocumented workers.”

For President Obama to allow this to happen is inhumane and unacceptable. He must immediately cease his administration’s plans.

President Obama has the worst deportation record in history, with over 2.4 million people deported during the seven years of his presidency. [2]

Continuing with these massive raids across the country in the last year of his presidency will cement President Obama’s legacy as the Deporter-In-Chief. There will be no going back, and no way to undo the pain and separation of countless families.

As an undocumented person, I’m scared to think of the consequences that President Obama’s program will have on thousands of families. I understand the psychological toll of being under constant threat of deportation
because it’s something that I think about constantly. From personal experience, I know well the trauma that the separation of families creates — no one deserves such life-devastating experiences.

These raids are inhumane and violate the dignity and human rights of countless people. They are in line with and will worsen the racism and xenophobia that Republican presidential candidates like Donald Trump are promoting. In fact, Donald Trump has already taken credit for the administration’s plans. [3]

President Obama can’t blast Trump for extremist comments against immigrants when he himself is implementing inhumane policies that help legitimize Trump’s position.

That is why I’ve started this petition. Join me in calling on President Obama to immediately cease his administration’s raids against Central American families and continue to feed the deportation machine that has already deported over 2.4 million people.

Will you stand with me and do the right thing? Sign this petition now.

REFERENCES:


AFRICA

CITY OF THORNS

Nine Lives in the World’s Largest Refugee Camp
http://us.macmillan.com/cityofthorns/benrawlence

To the charity workers, Dadaab refugee camp is a humanitarian crisis; to the Kenyan government, it is a 'nursery for terrorists'; to the western media, it is a dangerous no-go area; but to its half a million residents, it is their last resort.
Situated hundreds of miles from any other settlement, deep within the inhospitable desert of northern Kenya where only thorn bushes grow, Dadaab is a city like no other. Its buildings are made from mud, sticks or plastic, its entire economy is grey, and its citizens survive on rations and luck. Over the course of four years, Ben Rawlence became a first-hand witness to a strange and desperate limbo-land, getting to know many of those who have come there seeking sanctuary. Among them are Guled, a former child soldier who lives for football; Nisho, who scrapes an existence by pushing a wheelbarrow and dreaming of riches; Tawane, the indomitable youth leader; and schoolgirl Kheyro, whose future hangs upon her education.

In City of Thorns, Rawlence interweaves the stories of nine individuals to show what life is like in the camp and to sketch the wider political forces that keep the refugees trapped there. Rawlence combines intimate storytelling with broad socio-political investigative journalism, doing for Dadaab what Katherine Boo’s Behind the Beautiful Forevers did for the Mumbai slums. Lucid, vivid and illuminating, City of Thorns is an urgent human story with deep international repercussions, brought to life through the people who call ... more

Praise for City of Thorns

"[Rawlence] has done a remarkable job, bringing home the reality behind those statistics by telling us what life is really like inside one of those camps... Rawlence’s description of the camp economy is fascinating and shocking... A masterful account. Next time someone refers derisively to a 'bunch of migrants,' get them to read this book."—The Sunday Times (London)

"[A]remarkable book.... Like Dadaab itself, the story has no conclusion. It is a portrait, beautifully and moving painted. And it is more than that. At a time when newspapers are filled with daily images of refugees arriving in boats on Europe’s shores, when politicians and governments grapple with solutions to migration and erect ever larger walls and fences, it is an important reminder that a vast majority of the world’s refugees never get as far as a boat or a border of the developed world. They remain, like the inhabitants of Dadaab, in an indefinite limbo of penury and fear, unwanted and largely forgotten."—The New York Times Book Review


“Magisterial….We see Dadaab through an accumulation of vivid impressions…. [The book] moves like a thriller."—Los Angeles Times

“The most absorbing book in recent memory about life in refugee camps... Mr. Rawlence’s major feat is stripping away the anonymity that so often is attached to the word “refugee” by delving deeply into the lives of nine people in the camp. By doing so, he transforms its denizens from faceless

... more  http://us.macmillan.com/cityofthorns/benrawlence
Asians to Europe

The May 2016 no. of *In These Times* favorably reviews Jacques Audiard's new film *Dheepan* on life in Europe from pov of Sri Lankan refugees. --Dick

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Dick Bennett

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.

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