OMNI
United Nations WORLD REFUGEE DAY
NEWSLETTER #8, June 20, 2019.
Compiled by Dick Bennett for a CULTURE OF PEACE, JUSTICE, and ECOLOGY
(Newsletter #1 June 20, 2008; #2 Dec. 4, 2011; #3 June 20, 2012; #4, June 20, 2014; #5, June 20, 2015; #6 June 20, 2017; #7, June 20, 2018 ).
http://omnicenter.org/donate/

UN World Refugee Day is held every year on June 20, a special day when the world takes time to recognize the desperate needs and the resilience of forcibly displaced people, and to plan ways to help them.

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How the Red Scare Shaped the Artificial Distinction Between Migrants and Refugees BY SARAH LAZARE. In These Times (10 February 2018).

Our modern-day definitions of displaced people emerged during the Cold War as a product of anti-communism.
TOP STORY

UN REPORT: DISPLACED FROM POOR NATIONS
UN NEWS, June 19, 2019

Report: Poor nations bear the brunt of the world's 70.8M displaced
Conservative estimates suggest violent conflicts, persecution and war forced approximately 70.8 million people from their homes last year -- an average of 37,000 displacements each day, according to the Global Trends report from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Fewer than 7% of refugees were resettled last year, the report says.

BBC (6/19), The Associated Press (6/19), Reuters (6/19)

REPRESSION: US VS. AID PROVIDERS

U.S. activist faces federal charges for providing aid to migrants.

Source

Scott Warren was arrested in 2018 for allegedly having “harbored” two fatally weakened undocumented migrants in a facility run by No More Deaths

JOIN PUBLIC PROTESTS

Liberty

©2012 Alison Moore

She could topple at any moment, a plane straying off course, a bomb in someone’s shoes. The golden door is bolted shut and we didn’t even hear it close. They opened part of her again, you can look, but you can’t come in.

Once upon a time there was a country, there was a we there was a people made of us. Now the woman holding the light sighs deeply. She’s had enough. She’s yearning, yearning to be free somewhere else. She lowers the light and turns, dragging those broken shackles
into New Jersey.

Cars whiz by, honking. She's barefoot through the Midwest, Missouri, Oklahoma City looks oh, so pretty on what's left of Route 66. A trucker from Arkansas stops. She climbs in, clanking.

“Holy shit,” he says.

She takes off her crown, sets it on the Naugahide seat. Props her enormous green feet on the dash, the broken chain dangling.

“Where you headed?” he asks.

“I'll know when I get there.”

“How about a little country music?” he asks.

“Which country?” she says.

“Oh, come on, you know,” he says.

“Perhaps some klezmer from Poland?”

“I'm talking 'bout Johnny Cash. Where you been?”

“I've been standing in one spot for well over a hundred years.”

So it's “Cry, Cry, Cry,” all the way through Tucumcari, “I Walk the Line” way past Flagstaff, she tells him about the millions who cried when they saw her light. How terribly lonely she's been lately. He tells her how he traded the farm for the truck, went in hock for the insurance. She nods. She knows. It's expensive to be free.


“Didn't get your name,” he says.

“You know,” she says. “Or used to.”

She strides through the desert, tramples the prickly pear without a scratch.
Stops when she gets to the border fence. She fires up the lamp, hoists the light, puts the crown back, a little crookedly on her head. She waits. Before long, a family of four crawls through the fence. She starts to speak to them. “Give me…” It’s been so long. One of the children prompts her, the boy, who’s been in school. “You’re tired,” he says. “You’re poor.” “Yes,” she says, “I am.” The girl climbs on to the ledge of her big toe. That’s what gets to her—the wonderful weight of this child, not huddled at all. Liberty weeps, from all that time alone welcoming everyone. And this one here, standing on her foot, what does she want? Health insurance? An E-ticket ride in Disneyland? The child turns, shines a flashlight upward onto Liberty’s face.

“Libertdad,” the child says, to remind her why she came. “Libertdad.”

Alison Moore, short story writer, poet, song-writer, guitarist-singer. Don’t miss her.

IN DEFENSE OF OPEN BORDERS (speaking of UK)
Bob Billig 8-13-18 5:13 PM (2 hours ago)

Excerpt from a speech by Gary Younge, editor-at-large for The Guardian, a columnist for the Nation and the author of Another Day in the Death of America.
https://www.redpepper.org.uk/dare-to-dream-of-a-world-without-borders/

...It would be useful to deal pre-emptively with some of the more obvious retorts regarding open borders. The first relates to security. If we open the borders we will compromise our security, goes the claim. Well, the overwhelming majority of people who have committed terrorist attacks here were either born here or are here legally. That shouldn’t surprise us. So long as Britain has had colonial or imperial interests elsewhere, it has had a terrorist problem. We have been growing our own terrorists for years.

For the better part of a century, we mostly were engaging with Ireland. The security that came after that conflict emerged not as a result of tighter borders or more stringent policy, but from a political settlement. Similarly, the source of our terror problem is not the result of stringent or
lax borders, but a thoroughly misguided foreign policy in which we either commit acts of state
terror ourselves, as in Iraq, or profit from the weaponising of others to do it, as in Yemen.

It would also help if we addressed the problem with the issue of refugees. First of all, we
don’t take anything like our fair share of refugees even compared with other European
countries, let alone the rest of the world. But it is particularly galling because a significant
number of refugees are fleeing wars that we have created and states that we have failed,
regimes we have subsidised and regions we have disabled. If we don’t want people to come
here, then maybe we could start by not going there and messing it up.

Similarly with our trade policies, which punish poorer countries by preventing them from
developing as we did with nationalised industries protected by subsidies and thereby confine
them to the volatile markets of raw materials and the whims of multinationals.
These are often countries that Britain and other western nations actively and intentionally
underdeveloped during colonialism. There we have a historical responsibility. Much of the
migration in the world at present, it should be pointed out, is not voluntary but forced, by
extreme poverty, natural disasters and wars. It would be a better world if people only moved if
they wanted to and if they did not have to move to eat. Environmental policies, particularly on
climate change, arms controls and responsible foreign and trade policies, would assist in
allowing many people to stay where they would rather be – at home.

Put another way, those who insist that we cannot afford to take in the world’s misery
should make more of a concerted effort to ensure that we are not helping to create the
world’s misery....

We need you for this Week of Action
Joshua Leach, 6-9-19
UUSC development@uusc.org via uark.onmicrosoft.com

Dear James,

This past month, we’ve been getting the word out to our members and supporters about the
U.S. government’s mistreatment of thousands of migrant children in federal detention—most
notably those warehoused in a facility in Homestead, Florida. And just this week, the Trump
administration has cruelly decided to stop educational, legal, and other services for the
children held at Homestead.

Now it’s time to ramp up our coordinated resistance to pressure the government to do what’s
right and end this child detention travesty! UUSC—in coalition with the Unitarian Universalist
Association, Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice, the American Friends Service
Committee, and others—are participating in a **Week of Action to close Homestead** and end child detention. We are providing many ways to amplify our collective voice on the issue, including:

- An online petition to sign demanding the closure of the Homestead detention center;
- A sample script for calling your members of Congress, asking them to show leadership in the face of this humanitarian crisis;
- On-the-ground opportunities to show up—in Florida, for a protest and vigil outside the Homestead facility, or in Washington, D.C., to deliver signed petitions to close down child detention facilities; and
- A Facebook show-of-solidarity campaign, where you can participate by changing your profile picture or story with a special "end child detention frame" and raise awareness for the Week of Action.

**See the full suite of options for how to get involved here, with all the details for participation.**

Please, I urge you to join with thousands of likeminded people of conscience who feel morally compelled to act in the face of such injustice. During this Week of Action, we all have the ability to make a difference for migrant children who deserve dignity and freedom.

*Will you take a moment of your time today—and throughout the coming week—to put your values into action?*

Joshua Leach  
*Policy Analyst*  

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**EDITOR'S PICKS**

**Solitary Voices**

[A lone whistleblower exposing the solitary confinement of mentally ill people by ICE is backed up by an investigative reporting team. –D]

**Ellen Gallagher** was working in the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties when she discovered that **ICE was routinely putting immigrant detainees in solitary confinement**, including many who were suffering from serious mental illness. She spent years trying to blow the whistle on these abuses. Finally, after being contacted by reporters Maryam Saleh and Spencer Woodman, she decided to go public.

An investigation of more than [8,400 solitary confinement records](#) obtained by The Intercept and the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists shows that Gallagher was right to be disturbed. Nearly a third of the incidents involve people who were mentally ill. Some of the detainees became suicidal while in isolation; others mutilated themselves. “People were being brutalized,” Gallagher said. They still are.

**Refugees in the U.S.**

The IRC Supports Newly Arrived Refugees from Syria & Elsewhere.

**Rescue: David Miliband book on the global refugee crisis ...**


Book by David Miliband. Rescue: Refugees and the political crisis of our time. We are in the midst of a global refugee crisis. Sixty-five million people are fleeing ... **David Miliband | International Rescue Committee (IRC)**

[https://www.rescue.org/david-miliband](https://www.rescue.org/david-miliband)

David Miliband is President and CEO of the International Rescue Committee (IRC), where he oversees the agency’s humanitarian relief operations in more than ...

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**END UN REFUGEES DAY NEWSLETTER #8**

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