

Refugee Problems in Arizona

By **ROB SANCHEZ**

Most immigration news coming from Arizona concerns the flood of illegal aliens that cross the border — but illegals are not the only problem the state faces. Arizona receives significant numbers of legal immigrants that are given refugee and asylum status — and these people cause significant social and financial problems that are out of proportion to their numbers.

In statistical terms the refugees that arrive in Arizona are dwarfed in size by the influx of illegals that sneak across the border. FAIRUS and the Pew Hispanic Center estimate that Arizona has about 400,000 illegal aliens residing in the state. About 2.5 million illegal aliens cross the Arizona border per year en route to other states.

Comparing the large number of illegals with the relatively small number of refugees that resettle into Arizona could lead to the false conclusion that refugees are not a problem worthy of much attention. This paper takes a closer look at the state's refugee situation.

The ceiling on total refugee visas that can be issued per year in the U.S. doesn't have a hard limit because it varies depending on the whims of the President and Congress. On average about 80,000 a year are given refugee or asylum visas. Arizona receives about 2,000 refugees per year, but that number fluctuates and is just the tip of the iceberg. Refugees can request asylum visas for family members and close relatives — and many of them have very large extended families. There is no limit to the number of asylum visas that can be granted per year. For the purpose of this article refugees and asylees will be lumped into one category of immigrants called "refugees."

The refugee program causes many problems — among them is the distortion of the labor market caused by influxes of new workers that displace citizens. Refugees get immediate authorization to work upon arrival and they receive unrestricted Social Security cards. Ref-

ugees directly compete with U.S. citizens for all manner of jobs, both skilled and unskilled, high and low wage.

Organizations operate in the U.S. to place refugees in job positions that could be a conflict of interest at best, and a national security problem at worst — especially if they end up in policy-making positions.

As an example, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Tucson finds jobs and internships for refugees. It wouldn't be a stretch of the imagination to conclude that refugees are being put in positions that have potential conflicts of interest, and some of these placements could lead to jobs that have influence over public policy. Needless to say these are positions that U.S. parents would covet for their college-bound children because internships are vital to build careers after graduation. Unfortunately most young citizens don't have powerful advocacy groups that lobby on their behalf.

The list below is a sampling of some of the intern placements the IRC is proud to announce on their website.

- University of Arizona, Political Science/Religious Studies
- University of Arizona, Political Science
- University of Arizona, Immigration Services
- University of Arizona, New Roots Coordinator
- University of Arizona, Health Advocacy
- American Military University, International Relations
- Arizona State University, Medical Services
- University of Miami Law School, Immigration Fellow

After a few years refugees are typically granted an adjustment of status to legal permanent residency. They then become a permanent part of the U.S. workforce. Refugees are not subject to numerical limits on adjustments of status.

Refugee resettlement programs, however well intended, are costly. State and federal agencies pay benefits to each and every refugee that sets foot on U.S. soil. Unlike other immigrants, refugees are automatically eligible for free housing, welfare, and any other type of government aid that U.S. citizens are entitled to. Officially, the refugee resettlement program costs about \$1 billion a year, and of that, \$165 million is paid by

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the states and \$332 million is federal. Don Barnett, a researcher at the Center for Immigration Studies, wrote that the real cost is about 10 times higher than the official estimate!

State spending on refugee resettlement is an unfunded mandate because states have no say over accepting refugees but they are required to provide services for them. The federal government customarily rubber stamps thousands of refugee applications that are submitted by private organizations.

Decisions over which refugees to accept, and where they will be resettled, are often administered by nongovernmental agencies (NGOs). Many of the NGOs work closely with the United Nations (UN) and are not accountable to the American people or to federal agencies. The UN refers about one-third of the refugee admissions and the United States usually accepts about half of those. California has historically taken the largest share of refugees, but Illinois, Florida, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia are also popular dumping grounds. Arizona takes more refugees per capita than any other state.

Sometimes the President of the U.S. decrees that groups of refugees will be accepted by the states. A case in point: by January 2008 President Bush signed the *Refugee Crisis in Iraq Act* into law. Subsequently, in June 2008, President Bush signed into law a special immigrant visa program that allowed an increase of 5,000 Iraqis into the U.S. each year for the next five years. By September 2009 the United States had resettled 18,838 Iraqis during the 2009 fiscal year, an increase of almost 5,000 since the previous year. In April 2012 the State Department noted that during the first half of this fiscal year, 579 Special Immigrant Visas were issued for Iraqis. This compares to the 719 that were issued in all of 2011.

Somebody (it's anyone's guess who) made an arbitrary decision that thousands of these Iraqi refugees were to be resettled in Arizona. Residents in Arizona were never asked if they wanted to welcome so many refugees into their state.

It's difficult to guess how President Obama will follow Bush's legacy on middle-eastern refugees, but it seems logical to expect increasing numbers of them from Iraq and Afghanistan as U.S. troops are withdrawn, and it's a sure bet that Syrians will be given refugee status. We won't know how many of them are radical Muslims or which ones have sectarian ideologies until the damage has been done, and people have lost their lives.

Besides the economic problems that refugees cause, there are more insidious societal problems caused by these foreign immigrants. All too often they are dumped into communities with only feeble assimilation programs to help them adapt to their new homeland.

Proficiency in the English language is not a requirement for refugees, so attempts at socialization are very problematic. Of course many of them don't want to assimilate, so language isn't the only barrier involved.

Few refugees and asylees are properly vetted to verify who they really are and confirm that they accept our cultural traditions and value systems. They come from cultures so diverse and alien from ours that all attempts at assimilating them are likely to prove futile.

The following four case histories are anecdotal illustrations of the problems that refugee programs have caused in the state of Arizona. Similar stories have been repeated time and time again throughout the U.S.

Economic Drain on States

Tilihun Liben, an Ethiopian refugee, was a political prisoner and his family suffered persecution. The International Rescue Committee arranged for him to get a refugee visa to live in Arizona. The IRC also helped Tilihun to file the paperwork to enable his family to obtain asylum visas so that they could join him in Tucson. The Liben case is a compelling humanitarian story, but the bottom line is that the State of Arizona and the Federal Government footed the bill to allow the Liben family to live and work in the United States. The Liben story seems to have had a happy ending, but it would be even better if the taxpayers who footed the bill had a say in whether to pay for the entire family to live off the public dole. It is not known if the Liben family is self-sufficient or is still receiving some type of welfare aid.

Crime

Abdullatif Aldosary, an Iraqi refugee to the U.S., bombed a Social Security office in Casa Grande early in December of 2012. The 47-year-old Iraqi refugee was arrested and put in federal custody. Abdullatif Aldosary is being held without bond in the Casa Grande bombing case and faces prison time and deportation. The news media insisted that his crime case had nothing to do with terrorism, but no rational explanation has been publicized as to why Abdullatif committed the crime.

Several years before the bombing incident, Aldosary served eight months in prison for aggravated harassment of his employer. In addition, he was charged with aggravated assault in Casa Grande. After either one of these felonious crimes he should have been deported, but instead he was allowed to stay in the U.S. Aldosary seems to have no trouble obtaining dangerous chemicals and material for bomb making, or to move around Arizona wherever he pleased.

Terrorism

In August of 2011 three African refugees tried to sneak a fake bomb taped to a cellphone onto a plane

at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. Not much has been said since they were arrested. Most likely this was a test run for a real bomb, but the Obama administration has never recognized their actions as terrorism. The three terrorists, who are in prison, are:

Luwiza Daman, a 51-year-old woman from Ethiopia
 Shullu Gorado of Eritrea
 Shani Asa of Eritrea

Honor Killings

Faleh Almaleki moved his family from Iraq to a suburb of Phoenix, Arizona, in the mid-1990s. They were part of the large contingent of Iraqis who were granted asylum visas by President Bush, purportedly so that they could escape persecution from Saddam Hussein. Many of the refugees were assigned to Arizona for their new home.

Almaleki had a beautiful 17-year-old daughter named Noor. She had dreams of becoming a fashion model and probably could have succeeded, considering her exotic appearance. <http://media.riverfronttimes.com/honor-thy-father-muslim-honor-killing-in-phoenix-arizona.4617600.40.jpg>

Almaleki was a Muslim traditionalist who demanded that Noor adhere to Sharia law. He became frustrated and bitter because he felt that Noor had been corrupted by a desire to live as a modern American woman. In other words, she dared to assimilate!

Faleh demanded that Noor accept an arranged marriage in Iraq. According to court records, Noor refused to be married, and instead, she moved in with her 19-year-old boyfriend. She hoped to avoid her father's abusive behavior, but he became further enraged when he found out that his daughter was living in an out-of-wedlock situation.

In a premeditated act of violence, Faleh murdered his daughter to evoke what he considered to be an "honor killing" under Shariah law. Honor killings are an accepted practice in the Middle East against a female member of a family due to the belief that she has brought dishonor upon the family. Justification for these murders is usually caused by a suspicion that she dressed in a manner unacceptable to the family or community, or that she wanted to terminate or prevent an arranged marriage, or that she desired to marry someone of her own choice. Noor was considered guilty by her family on all three counts.

Muslims commit over 90 percent of the honor killings worldwide.

Faleh waited for the right moment to kill Noor. She was walking in a parking lot when her father slammed the gas pedal down on his weapon of choice — a pickup truck. He mowed down Noor and the mother of her boy-

friend. Noor died two weeks after the savage attack, while Amal Khalaf survived after going through months of intensive care in the hospital.

Faleh's family and friends supported the honor killing. They became accomplices to the crime when they hid Faleh from the police. These familial co-conspirators helped Faleh escape to Mexico. In Mexico he boarded an airplane going to London in order to evade U.S. law enforcement. British authorities caught up with Faleh in London and arrested him before his planned exit to Iraq.

No charges were ever filed against family and friend, who conspired to hide Faleh and to help him escape to Iraq.

Faleh's exit to Mexico says a lot about the quality of our border security. If it wasn't for British police he would have made it to a safe haven in Iraq. It's somewhat ironic that Faleh wanted to escape to a country where he claimed he was in danger of persecution. Apparently whatever fate he would face in the hands of his countrymen wasn't as bad as imprisonment in the United States!

Faleh showed no remorse for the cold-blooded killing and neither did his family. They believed that misogynous Shariah laws took precedence over the laws of the U.S., despite their vows to honor and obey our laws and Constitution when they took the oath of citizenship.

Faleh faced the first degree murder charges and the death penalty for his crime, but got off relatively easy with second degree murder, aggravated assault, and two counts of leaving the scene of an accident. Somehow he and his lawyers convinced the jury that the killing was an act of passion, not premeditated murder.

On April 15, 2011, Faleh was sentenced to serve 34 and a half years in prison. He got only 16 years for the actual murder. Judge Steinle refused to admit that religion had anything to do with these crimes, even though there is no doubt Shariah law condones and allows honor killings, and Faleh himself left no doubt that he was a Muslim fundamentalist who committed an honor killing. Maricopa County Superior Court Judge Steinle made this very naive statement at the sentencing:

For someone to say this crime was committed to restore someone's honor, they really do not understand what religion is all about.

So, a politically correct judge completely dismissed the obvious religious motivations for the murder. This, despite a telephone conversation Faleh had with his wife Seham from jail:

Listen, have [friends] sit across from the [U.S.] consulate [in Iraq] and hold signs saying, "The Iraqi honor is precious." Signs saying that I'm not a criminal, [that] I didn't break into someone's house, [that] I didn't steal. You know what I mean? And for an

Iraqi, honor is the most valuable thing. No one hates his daughter, but honor is precious, and nothing is better than honor, and we are a tribal society that can't change. I didn't kill someone off the street. I tried to give her a chance, but no result. ["People you will see in Hell: Faleh Hassan Almaleki"]

Noor Almaleki was the first case in the U.S. where an "honor killing" was successfully used to obtain a conviction of a father who murdered his daughter. The light second degree murder conviction revealed a disturbing tolerance by the judge and jury considering the brutality of the attack. It's a scary example of Sharia law in action and how it is being incorporated into the U.S.—and how readily it is being accepted by a clueless American public.

Faleh's statement that tribal societies won't change is quite profound and should be used as a stern warning

for immigration-friendly Americans who naively believe that aliens will necessarily adopt American values.

The four cases discussed above are not isolated stories. There are hundreds of similar examples from other locales. Although this paper deals specifically with refugees, it must be understood that there is nothing special about this class of immigrants except that there is supposed to be proper vetting to test their loyalty to the U.S. We would also hope that our benevolence would be matched with good behavior on their part.

We should expect many more of these types of cases to arise as the immigration invasion continues, and as more aliens are allowed into the U.S. who have cultural values antithetical to ours. Most of them will refuse to accept our traditional Western ethics, so the only other alternative is a cultural collision that will result in our acceptance and toleration of their behavioral norms. Folks, it ain't gonna be pretty! ■