

The Social Contract

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The Social Contract

is published quarterly

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A Note from the Editor

It Is Past Time to Revise Our Nation's Refugee/Asylum Policies

While the United States has long expressed support for individuals genuinely subject to persecution and oppression in their native lands, Refugee and Asylum policy has devolved into another way to game the immigration system. Since President Jimmy Carter signed the Refugee Act of 1980 into law, a collaborative effort of people in government and cooperating non-government organizations has hi-jacked refugee policy, at growing cost to taxpayers and the communities forced to play host to newcomers from around the world.

According to Freedom House, 25 percent of the world's population lives under conditions they describe as "not free" and another 30 percent live under "partly free" circumstances (*Freedom in the World 2017*, www.FreedomHouse.org). Thus, 55 percent of the world's population of 7.5 billion and growing could conceivably qualify for admission to the U.S. as refugees.

The hard reality of surging Third World populations, political instability, and economic hardship, along with the inability of other countries to permanently resettle all but a relative few of those seeking refuge, dictates the need for a whole new approach to refugee problems.

As we were going to press, a coalition of Open Borders activists, including highly paid refugee resettlement agency executives and lobbyists, along with hold-over officials from the Bush and Obama administrations entrenched at the State Department, Defense Department, and U.S. Mission to the UN, was conducting a public relations campaign to abort efforts to revise our refugee and asylum policies. They expressed outrage that the Trump administration reduced refugee admissions from over 110,000 to a still-high ceiling of 45,000 in the fiscal year that began October 1 (Julie Hirschfeld Davis and Miriam Jordan, "U.S. May Drop Refugee Limit Below 50,000: Proposed Numbers Are Lowest in Decades," *New York Times*, National Edition, September 13, 2017, pp. A1, A15; Felicia Schwartz and Laura Meckler, "Cabinet Splits on Refugee Numbers," *Wall Street Journal*, September 19, 2017, p. A6; Meckler and Schwartz, "Refugee Cap Is Set to Drop," *Wall Street Journal*, September 27, 2017, p. A3). Note: this is a ceiling. The Trump administration can actually admit substantially fewer and remain within the law.

As President Trump noted in his speech to the UN General Assembly on September 19, 2017, it is far more efficient to help refugees where they live. "For the cost of resettling one refugee in the U.S., we can assist more than 10 in their home region," he said. The most humane policy is to help create safe zones in the Middle East and other regions of unrest. Our goal should be to encourage and enable people to repatriate to their homelands, not move permanently to the U.S. or other foreign countries. ■

Wayne Lutton, Ph.D.