

The Terrorist Threat amid the Refugee ‘Crisis’

By JULIAN BRADFORD

What to do about the refugees? That question has suddenly come out of relative obscurity and become one of the most pressing topics in America today.

Following the illegal entry of thousands of Middle Eastern migrants into Europe over the summer, the calls for accepting refugees from war-torn nations like Syria and Iraq have risen to a crescendo.

Arguably the biggest supporters for taking in a large number of Syrian refugees are in the Obama administration. In September, Secretary of State John Kerry announced that the United States would be steadily increasing the number of refugees it takes in from 2015’s total of 70,000. In 2016, America would take in 85,000 and in 2017 we would be taking in 100,000—a number that would likely hold for the foreseeable future. These increases would be implemented in order to take in more Syrian nationals.

Many Democrats, including presidential front-runner Hillary Clinton, would like America to take in as many as 65,000 Syrians.

However, the White House’s plan has hit a massive hurdle in the wake of the Paris attacks. A strong majority of Americans oppose taking in any more refugees from the Levant after it was revealed that at least two of the terrorists involved in the attack were recent migrants who had come to Europe with phony Syrian passports. In response, 31 state governors have pledged to not take in any refugees from the war-torn areas of the Middle East.

President Barack Obama was angered by this move and denounced it on the world stage. Obama said it was against America’s values to refuse to accept Syrian refugees and that he would go forward with his administration’s resettlement plan.

In spite of the rhetoric from the White House and other powerful figures, taking more refugees into America is in no way a good idea when you look at the facts.

SECURITY ISSUES

The primary reason for American worries about accepting more refugees from the Middle East is concerns over security. And those worried Americans are right to raise questions when it comes to this issue. Proponents of refugee resettlement argue that the U.S. has a very thorough vetting process that roots out potential extremists.

However, a few facts undermine that claim.

The director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, James Comey, admitted before Congress that officials are incapable of adequately vetting refugees from Syria. The reasons for this inability are due to the fact that Syria’s long civil war and our government’s cold relations with the Assad regime have left us with no access to a database that can assess an applicant’s history in his or her home country.

“So if someone has never made a ripple in the pond in Syria in a way that would get their identity or their interest reflected in our database, we can query our database until the cows come home, but there will be nothing show up because we have no record of them,” Comey testified.

The director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, said it was highly likely that groups like ISIS would try to infiltrate operatives among the refugees.

There’s also the chance that some applicants may use falsified documents to gain entry to the United States. At least one of the 11/13 Paris attackers were able to pass security screening into Europe with a fake Syrian passport.

And there are questions about the effectiveness of our screening. Even though she was not a refugee, San Bernardino jihadi Tashfeen Malik went through a very thorough vetting process before being admitted into the country in 2013. But none of the screening could apparently pick up on her extremist views or affiliations.

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Additionally, Malik came from a country—Pakistan—that American officials were able to get data from. We cannot even get that information in the case of Syrian refugees.

As for refugees that have turned to terrorism, Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-AL) has unveiled at least 12 vetted refugees who have ventured overseas to join jihadi groups. The Alabama senator has also found 26 immigrants who have been charged with or convicted of plotting terrorism in the year 2015 alone.

Additionally, two of the most notorious homegrown terrorists were the Boston marathon bombers, who were asylum seekers from Chechnya.

That should be no surprise considering how some refugee communities have become breeding grounds for radical Islam. Minneapolis, Minnesota’s Little Mogadishu, a major destination for Somali refugees, has seen at least 40 of its former residents depart for the Islamic State, and several other residents have been arrested prior to making their voyage to the jihadi center. ISIS

propaganda is making way throughout the community, and officials are concerned with the most effective measures to counter the extremist message.

Out of the more than 250 American residents suspected of joining ISIS, one-fourth are from Minnesota—and many of them are refugees.

What might be the biggest, long-term problem with refugees is not the adults turning to terror, but—as in the case of the Boston bombers and others—their children adopting jihad when they reach maturation.

UNASSIMILATED GROUPS

America prides itself on its ability to assimilate people from all across the world—meaning that these new arrivals learn to speak English, work hard, and adopt our values. However, there are massive hurdles when it comes to assimilating many of the newer refugees.

For example, 65 percent of Syrian refugees can neither read nor write. Besides precluding them from finding any type of employment, this also presents a



Riverside Plaza, the multi-building highrise housing complex in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood of Minneapolis, now known as “Little Mogadishu,” is home to the nation’s largest Somali population. Built in 1973, the exterior was “featured on television as the residence of Mary Richards in the sixth and seventh seasons of *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*,” according to Wikipedia. “Maintenance issues and security concerns are ongoing” despite the completion of a two-year, \$132-million restoration project. One resident, Tsehainesh Woldemicheal, said, “It is like living in Africa. Some think they are home and this place belongs to them.” Critics call it the “Sky Ghetto.” Many Somalis who were resettled in “Little Mogadishu” were Muslim refugees fleeing the Somalia civil war. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Riverside_Plaza <http://theafricapaper.com/2011/06/19/renovating-americas-little-mogadishu/>

major challenge when it comes to the task of teaching them English.

And it's not just Syrian migrants. Cities and towns that take in Kurds, Somalis, and other groups have the same challenges when it comes to teaching their new arrivals the ways of America. Many of them struggle to learn English, and even all of those who take the classes will ever be able to speak the language fluently.

This lack of progress in learning English on the part of the refugees leads to the creation of separate communities within American locales that maintain the ways of the homeland and refuse to assimilate into America's cultural fabric.

MASSIVE COST TO NATION'S COMMUNITIES

Due to the fact that many of the refugees are low-skilled and don't speak English well enough to find work, an overwhelming majority of them subsist off of government assistance. According to figures released by Sen. Sessions, 91 percent of Middle Eastern refugees are on some form of government assistance. Sixty-eight percent of them are on welfare.

The community of Lewiston, Maine, serves as a sobering example of how refugees and asylum seekers are able to game the system. Lewiston, along with Minneapolis and other cities, is a major settlement destination for Somali refugees. The reason for this attraction is not a result of numerous economic opportunities, but the promise of generous government subsidies for migrants.

Local residents and leaders are not pleased by this development, and have long fought to change state welfare laws in light of migrants taking advantage of the system—so far to no avail.

Those welfare costs are put on top of the institutional costs to local communities who are forced to spend additional money on education and other sectors to meet the needs of the recent arrivals.

CHARITY SCAM

Among the primary drivers of refugee resettlement in this country are Christian charities. These organizations claim that they do the work out of the goodness of their hearts, but they actually make big bucks off refugee resettlement. It's estimated that these non-profits

receive a billion dollars annually from the federal government to help in the endeavor.

Even though the government cuts checks to these groups with the assumption that they would take some of the costs for taking care of the migrants, taxpayers are too often left with the bill for further costs for housing and providing assistance.

Not surprisingly, many of these Christian charities are heavily involved in counteracting criticism of refugee resettlement.

VIRTUALLY NO INPUT FROM CITIZENS

With the huge cost that comes with a locale taking in refugees, you would think that citizens would have a say in who comes into their communities. But that's not the case. The federal government, along with private contractors, make the selection for where the refugees will settle with virtually no input from the communities that are picked.

Naturally, several citizens have been enraged by these involuntary settlements. But those complaints and concerns are typically ignored by the federal government in favor of the refugees.

When it comes to who gets to come to the U.S. in the first place, the initial selection is not made by our federal government, but by the United Nations. The UN sends over the list of refugees and the U.S. does the vetting. The federal government doesn't select which refugees meet our criteria; the feds just have the final say on whether they get to come or not.

MAJORITY OF AMERICANS OPPOSE SETTLING SYRIAN REFUGEES

What should be the strongest argument against taking in Syrian or any other group of refugees is the strong majority of Americans who oppose such a move. That should be enough of a reason for our political leaders to reconsider our troubled refugee program.

However, as demonstrated by President Obama's derisive comments on the matter, many of our leaders seem to not care what the American people think on the matter.

That's why it's up to concerned citizens to do all they can to make sure that their representatives begin to listen and change course on refugee resettlement. ■