

# Refugee and Asylum

By RICK OLTMAN

The massive influx of people into the country is unabated, in fact encouraged. In 37 years, or less, the population will be 500,000,000. The following vignettes are examples of what is happening to our country as refugees and asylum seekers are added to millions of legal and illegal immigrants in a never-ending assault on our culture and our country.

A *refugee* is a person who is outside his or her country of origin or habitual residence because they have suffered (or fear) persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or because they are a member of a persecuted “social group” or because they are fleeing a war or natural disaster. Such a person may be called an “asylum seeker” until recognized by the state where they make a claim.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Refugee>

One count of refugees in the world is 13 million, with the largest amount found in the Middle East and North Africa.

According to the Immigration Policy Center <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/refugees-fact-sheet> the United States leads the world in accepting refugees. In 2009 we accepted 60,000 refugees, 600 percent more than the number two country, Canada.

In 2000 the United States took in 72,143 refugees but saw a decline in the years following the 9/11 attacks in 2001. By 2009, however, the number was back up to

74,602. In fiscal year 2011, President Obama announced that upwards of 80,000 refugees would be admitted from the following regions.

| Country       | Refugees resettled in 2009 | Host country population | Ratio to population |
|---------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| United States | 60,191                     | 304,500,000             | 1:5,100             |
| Canada        | 10,804                     | 33,300,000              | 1:3,100             |
| Australia     | 8,742                      | 21,300,000              | 1:2,400             |
| Norway        | 910                        | 4,800,000               | 1:5,300             |
| New Zealand   | 750                        | 4,300,000               | 1:5,700             |
| Finland       | 749                        | 5,300,000               | 1:7,100             |
| Netherlands   | 544                        | 16,400,000              | 1:39,500            |
| Denmark       | 373                        | 5,500,000               | 1:14,700            |
| Ireland       | 101                        | 4,500,000               | 1:44,600            |
| Iceland       | 29                         | 300,000                 | 1:10,300            |

Certainly, humanitarian consideration of those fleeing for their lives is an honorable and generous sentiment, and, Americans have traditionally taken in more refugees per year than all the nations of the world added up. But, as we have learned in the world, no good deed goes unpunished, and America has become a destination for many who are not fleeing for their lives. Our refugee/asylum programs have become what is known as “backdoor” immigration. It has been abused and defrauded for years.

|                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Near East/South Asia    | 35,500        |
| East Asia               | 19,000        |
| Africa                  | 15,000        |
| Latin America/Caribbean | 5,500         |
| Unallocated Reserve     | 3,000         |
| Europe and Central Asia | 2,000         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>            | <b>80,000</b> |

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**Rick Oltman**, a frequent contributor to The Social Contract, has worked for immigration reform for almost twenty years. He has lobbied in Washington, D.C. and in dozens of state capitals for secure borders and immigration enforcement. He has been featured on the PBS News Hour with Jim Lehrer, MSNBC Reports, CNN, including Talk Back Live, Lou Dobbs, and Anderson Cooper 360, and the FOX Business Channel and FOX News Channel. In 1994 Rick was Chairman of the YES ON 187-SAVE OUR STATE campaign supporting Proposition 187. In 2004 Rick worked with Arizona activists to qualify Proposition 200, Arizona's state initiative that required proof of citizenship when voting or applying for public benefits. Prop 200 won with 57 percent of the vote.

## When Temporary Means Permanent

Temporary Protected Status (TPS) is a kind of refugee status. It is a temporary immigration status to the United States, granted to eligible nationals of designated

countries. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temporary\\_protected\\_status](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temporary_protected_status)

In 1990, Congress authorized the U.S. Attorney General to provide TPS to immigrants in the United States who are temporarily unable to safely return to their home country because of war, or an environmental disaster, or some other extraordinary and temporary conditions. The Homeland Security Act of 2002 transferred the authority to the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security as of March 1, 2003.

### Of the Countries Currently under TPS

- El Salvador — initiated in response to the 2001 El Salvador earthquakes
- Haiti — initiated in response to the 2010 Haiti earthquake
- Honduras — initiated in response to Hurricane Mitch in 1998
- Nicaragua
- Somalia
- Sudan
- Syria

However, there is nothing so permanent in the world as the word “temporary” when used with regard to immigrants or refugees or asylum seekers to the U.S.

### El Salvador

El Salvador is a good example. Thirty years ago there was a civil war in El Salvador and hundreds of thousands fled to the U.S. to seek “temporary” protected status. On January 16, 1992, The Chapultepec Peace Agreement ended the war. Those who fled are mostly still here. The earthquakes in El Salvador were over twelve years ago and boosted the number of refugees to over 1 million, about 20 percent of the population of the country. Each time the TPS is about to expire the Presidente of El Salvador appeals to have it extend, and why not? With approximately 20 percent of his nation’s population living in the United States and according to [www.remittancesgateway.org](http://www.remittancesgateway.org) the Salvadoran “refugees” send home \$3.5–\$4 billion each year. These “remittances” represent about 18% of the annual GDP for El Salvador.

### Haiti

There were an estimated 100,000 to 200,000 Haitians in the U.S. at the time of the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti. DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano gave them 18 months of TPS and cancelled the deportation of 30,000 others. The current estimates of remittances from the U.S. is \$1.5 billion, about 20% of the annual GDP of Haiti. And, according to the Center for Immigration Studies, <http://www.cis.org/HaitianImmigrant->

FactSheet “Of households headed by Haitian immigrants 46 percent use at least one major welfare program.”

### Honduras

Honduran refugees from Hurricane Mitch are still under Temporary Protected Status fifteen years after the hurricane hit Honduras!

### Somalia

After the civil war in Somalia that was so very well depicted in the fact-based movie, *Black Hawk Down*, over 43,000 refugees settled in the United States. I have visited the two main communities in the U.S. with Somalis: Owatonna, Minnesota, and Lewiston, Maine. How did the alien culture of Somalia fit in with Heartland America? There was the initial culture shock that accompanied the Muslim practice of female genital mutilation. But, once the the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) in Minnesota got involved and filed a lawsuit against the Owatonna Public School District after a federal civil rights investigation of alleged harassment against Somali students, the townspeople of Owatonna, about 60 miles south of Minneapolis, were made fully aware of the “cultural changes” that can accompany a refugee resettlement. <http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2011/04/13/owatonna-somali-harassment-settlement>

Lewiston, Maine, was the second destination for another group of Somalis who originally were settled in areas near Atlanta, Georgia. But, when it was discovered that Maine paid more welfare, the group emigrated to Lewiston and settled in.

From a University of Maine study titled *Why Maine? Secondary Migration Decisions of Somali Refugees* by Kimberly A. Huisman. [http://www.africamigration.com/Issue%205/Articles/PDF/Kimberly-Huisman\\_Why-Maine.pdf](http://www.africamigration.com/Issue%205/Articles/PDF/Kimberly-Huisman_Why-Maine.pdf)

Several of the participants in this study did specifically mention welfare benefits as a reason for moving to Maine. Sufia, who arrived in Lewiston with her family in 2001, said: I moved to Lewiston because in Atlanta, where I lived for about nine years, I had two jobs. I used to work at a factory and I owned a little store. One day my son was somewhere and I was looking for him when I fell and broke my leg. In Atlanta they don’t give adults Medicare or any type of medical plan. So I moved to Maine because I was told that the adults get Medicare and medical expenses would be paid for.

Similarly, Cawo, a woman in her early twenties, reported that her large family moved from Decatur, Georgia, because her father

heard that “there would be better assistance here.”

The majority of Lewiston’s early wave of secondary migrants left Georgia, which has one of the lowest levels of welfare benefits in the United States (ranked fortieth) to move to Maine, which is among the highest (ranked thirteenth).

## Pakistan

A career INS Adjudications Officer once described the kind of fraud that he saw daily when dealing with asylum applicants. <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.5af9bb95919f35e66f614176543f6d1a/?vgnnextchannel=4db791de70c98110VgnVCM1000004718190aRCRD&vgnextoid=3c092f81eb478110VgnVCM1000004718190aRCRD>

“The Pakistanis were the worst, but not the only ones,” he told me. “They would apply with some preposterous story about how their lives were in danger in Pakistan and they needed to be allowed to stay in the United States or they would be killed.” He said that he never approved one application and would then refer the applicant to another officer who would routinely grant them asylum.

Over the years he learned that once they got their legal status many would immediately get on a plane and fly back to the Pakistan they were fleeing from and set up some kind of Ponzi scheme or shady business deal. He would be taking money from his “partners” and about the time they realized that they were being defrauded and were coming after him, he would simply jump on a plane back to the U.S., where they couldn’t follow, and he’d be safe. “Over the years I saw this repeated dozens of times.”

## Tsarnaev

And, last but not least, the Tsarnaev brothers.

Dzhokhar and Tamerlan Tsarnaev, the Muslim, Chechen brothers who are alleged to have staged the

terror attack that killed three and wounded 264 others, some horribly maimed, at the Boston Marathon on April 15 this year, were also beneficiaries of the generous U.S. refugee policy. Tamerlan, the older brother, is also linked to an unsolved triple homicide in 2011. The family was granted asylum status in 2002 when the father claimed “fears of persecution” because of his ties to Chechnya.

The Tsarnaevs appeared to have lived all over central Asia, from the Caucasus to Kyrgyzstan, but could only find safety from persecution in the United States. How fortunate they were to get that tourist visa to America so they could then apply.

What’s in store for the future?

## Syria

On June 9, 2013, the *Los Angeles Times* reported,

A resettlement plan under discussion in Washington and other capitals is aimed at relieving pressure on Middle Eastern countries straining to support 1.6 million refugees, as well as assisting hard-hit Syrian families. The State Department is “ready to consider the idea,” an official from the department said, if the administration receives a formal request from the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, which is the usual procedure.

The United States usually accepts about half the refugees that the U.N. agency proposes for resettlement. California has historically taken the largest share, but Illinois, Florida, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia are also popular destinations.

With a track record of making Temporary status permanent, assisting criminals in their endeavors, providing endless welfare to refugees, and importing terrorists from known terrorist countries, it would be hard to underestimate the social chaos that awaits if the U.S. accepts half of the estimated 1.6 million refugees from Syria. ■