

REFUGEES: MADE IN USA

America's regime-change operations have actually created around half of the world's refugees. It proves that America's penchant for invading and trying to overthrow the governments that its billionaires want to replace ("regime-change") has been by far the **biggest of all single causes** of refugees worldwide, vastly higher than any other government. Regardless of how bad those other governments might possibly be, **the U.S. regime is vastly worse** — at least as being the cause, the creator, of the world's refugee problems.

Consider that the U.S. invaded Afghanistan in **2001**, Iraq in **2003**, Syria in **2012-2019**, and has been applying, in order to overthrow the Governments of Venezuela and Iran with strangulating economic sanctions. Four of the ongoing target-countries (Syria, Venezuela, Iraq, and Afghanistan) lead the list of nations that are bleeding the most refugees. The U.S. regime's "regime-change" operations abroad are therefore certainly the leading cause of the world's refugee-crisis.

The biggest of these refugee crises in 2018 were Syria and Venezuela, which were the U.S. regime's most recent regime-change operations. But Afghanistan and Iraq are also among the top bleeders of refugees — even now, over 15 years after the U.S. regime had invaded them. modern-day economic sanctions and blockades are comparable with medieval sieges of towns" and reported that in **2018**, there were "13.6 million newly displaced" persons. "Altogether, more than two thirds (67 per cent) of all refugees worldwide came from just five countries:" Syria **6,700,000** - Afghanistan **2, 700,00** - S. Sudan **2,300,00** - Myanmar **1,100,000** - Somalia **900.000**.

Excluding Myanmar. America's strangulating economic sanctions, and invasions, by America's own troops and by its proxy-forces such as Al Qaeda and other 'rebels', drove millions of people out. Though the confusing report doesn't note it, with most of that "highest in U.S." asylum-applications come from the U.S. regime's banana republics — Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador — where the U.S. trained death squads etc. created (or at least encouraged) the problems, at least a decade or more ago. Consequently, even in nations where the U.S. regime didn't create refugees by means of invasions, it created refugees by coups and other means.

The broader movement of Venezuelans through the region and beyond, increasingly took on the characteristics of a refugee situation, with some **3,400,000 million** living outside Venezuela by the end of 2018, as more than 3 million Venezuelans left their homes, travelling mainly elsewhere in Latin America and the Caribbean. "This is the biggest exodus in the region's recent history, and one of the biggest displacement crises in the world." It could turn out to be even worse than Colombia's **8,000,000** was.

A former UN official who reports on human rights violations was quoted recently saying that US sanctions are killing citizens and compared modern-day economic sanctions with medieval sieges of towns. The official, De Zayas, reported to the *The Independent of Britain* that the presentation of his Venezuelan report in September of last year has been ignored by the UN nor has it sparked public outcry. "Sanctions kill," he said, adding that they fall most heavily on the poorest people in society, demonstrably cause death through food and medicine shortages, lead to violations of human rights and are aimed at coercing economic change.

The U.N. report also distinguished different categories of "displacement". For instance, it reports that *at the end of 2018, Syrians continued to be the largest*

forcibly displaced population, with 13.0 million people living in displacement. ... Colombians were the second largest group, with 8.0 million forcibly displaced, 98 per cent being displaced inside their country at the end of 2018. Presumably, the reason why Colombia doesn't show on the list of "newly displaced" is that most of its "8.0 million forcibly displaced" occurred during the civil war there, which peaked in 2009. President Duque of Colombia is at work on displacing the peace agreement.

U.S. leads the list of countries with the highest number of *pending asylum-applications*. **Second**-highest is in Peru (mainly from Venezuela resulting from America's economic sanctions against Venezuela). **Third**-highest is Germany (mainly from Arabic lands that America invaded), **fourth**-highest is in France (mainly from Arabic lands that America invaded), and **fifth**-highest is in Turkey (mainly from Arabic lands that America invaded). "The main countries of **asylum for refugees** were:" Turkey **3,000,000** - Pakistan **1,400,000** - Uganda **1,200,000** Sudan **1,000,000** - Germany **1,100,000**

In 2018, the highest number of new asylum-applicants were from Venezuela. Venezuelan refugees and asylum-seekers grew in number during 2018. **Second**-highest were from Afghanistan, **third**-highest were from Syria, and **fourth**-highest were from Iraq. All of those are lands that suffer from the U.S. regime's past and current aggressions. (Of course, everybody expects Iran to be the next.)

Lebanon continued to host the largest number of refugees relative to its national population. 1 in 6 people there was a refugee. Jordan (1 in 14) and Turkey (1 in 22) ranked second and third, respectively. Of course, those lands receive mainly Syrian refugees. At the end of 2018, Syrians continued to be the largest forcibly displaced population, with 13.0 million people living in displacement, including 6,654,000 refugees, 6,184,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) and 140,000 asylum-seekers. Colombians were the second largest group, with 8,000,000 million forcibly displaced, most of them (98 per cent) still living inside their country at the end of 2018. The top two foreign recipients of refugees from Colombia were Spain and Ecuador.

De Zayas' report notes this **personal experience** from Eulirio Baes, a 33-year-old indigenous Warao from Delta Amacuro in Venezuela. "When my nine-month-old daughter died because of the lack of medicines, doctors or treatment, I decided to take my family out of Venezuela before another one of my children died. Diseases were getting stronger than us. I told myself, either we leave or we die." He abandoned the Warao's ancestral lands and took his entire family to Brazil after three relatives died.

The only U.S. Presidential candidate who even so much as just mentions America's "regime-change wars" (and she is strongly against them) is Tulsi Gabbard, and she currently scores the support of fewer than 1% of America's Democrats in that Party's Presidential primary polls. So, at least America's Democrats are **overwhelmingly unconcerned** about their country's causing around half of the entire world's refugee crisis. And there is no indication that America's Republican voters are more concerned about it than the Democratic voters are. Americans, evidently, don't care about this matter. At least, not yet.

Investigative historian **Eric Zuesse**, originally posted at **strategic-culture.org**. Highlights from the September 2018 report from the the UN: <https://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2018>

AMERICAN NIGHTMARE

My good friend and her husband were arrested by ICE early this morning as they left their house for work... my friends are asylum seekers who have been here for about 20 years as their case has wound its way through the system. They have two children who are citizens. They are integral members of the community, people who volunteer for everything and who are loved by everyone. As with many asylum cases, their case has sometimes left them "out of status." This is how their arrest was justified...

I went to the Philadelphia ICE office today. It is a nondescript three-floor operation at 114 North 8th Street. It looks like it was thrown up yesterday, with portable metal detectors and a few chairs, line separators that lead nowhere, cheaply framed photos of Trump and Pence hanging askew on the wall — the only decoration. It looked like a front for drug runners.

The air of the whole place had the feeling of illegitimacy, bordering on criminality. No one seems to be in charge. The security personnel on the first floor don't make eye contact. When they do, they look ashamed — not openly, but deep in their eyes. If you happen to insist on catching their eyes, they then don't maintain eye contact. Quick, furtive glances covered up by brusque commands.

They ask me why I am here. I say because friends have been picked up. Are you sure, they try to ask, perhaps to create confusion and persuade me to leave, but their hearts are not in it. I wonder, why this pantomime? Security is then asking me for my friend's name ... all this before I walk through a mental detector in a public building ... so I give it. They seem to recognize the name, and I get nervous, because the detention takes on now the intimate, familiar quality I have observed in genocidal violence. What orders have the security personnel been given regarding my friends?...

You can go to the third floor, they say, miming helpfulness. You can ask about your friends there. Every word unintentionally couched in irony. I feel anxiety rising.

I press the elevator button, thinking about how tired I am of institutions and their elevators, which are always somehow connected to incomprehensible rules and meaningless, endless paperwork. Doors open, I step in, doors shut. Up two floors. Ding.

I get out. The floor plan is the same — tiny hallway in front of windows overlooking 8th street. Waiting area on right. Cramped. Chairs along walls. A standing table for filling out paperwork. Lots of people from many places. Children with toys.

I am momentarily confused by the joy. Banter. Chatter. The sounds of family and friends. A father laughs as his toddler

plays with a plastic tic-tac-toe board. For a moment I relax, my body thinking I am in a pediatrician's office. I look for my friend's brother. He is not there.

I sit down and notice the Trump and Pence photos in cheap frames on the wall in front of me... There is a small plexiglass window with one of those metal speakers. Behind it are three people ... doing something that I can only describe as milling about. There is nothing in their "office." Not even a chair. No calendar. A stackable filing system barely used. One tray with many photocopies — the forms people are filling out — but that's it. No banter. No chatter. No laughter. None of the busyness you see in real offices. They seem disoriented. Robotic. Stacking and re-stacking boxes ... endless boxes...

I go to the plexiglass. I try to align my mouth with the metal speaker, which is perhaps 5 feet off the ground. Hello? I say. Three people ignore me, though they are not doing anything but milling. I stand and wait. Can they not hear me? I bend down to speak again and a bent down woman on the other side looks at me and says "press the button," motioning to something in my left. She watches me as I find the button and press it. There is no sound.

She straightens up and squares her shoulders, taking me in. Can I help you?

(Are you kidding me!?)

I'm here about a friend of mine who was picked up this morning.

Yes? She replies.

I would like to register community support. She and her husband are very important members of our community.

We don't do that here.

Her name is --

We don't do that here. We have nothing to write it down on.

Well, can I write it down and maybe you can put it in her file or tell someone?

We don't do that.

She forgets me and bends back down.

I stand back, thinking about next steps... I notice a photocopy taped to the plexiglass: "Please, please, please ring the bell." Three "pleases." I turn around, baffled.

In walks Scott, my husband...

We approach the plexiglass together.

He speaks through the metal microphone and, before I can tell him, he is told by a man on the inside to ring the bell. I register his immediate contempt and feel happy about that.

With "the bell" pressed, the same man then asks Scott if he can help him. Scott tells him that he is here to support two

important community members who were picked up this morning on their way to work.

Ok, the man says, and what do you want?

I feel Scott entrench himself.

I'd like to see them.

You can't do that.

Why not?

Because you can't.

I'd like to talk to the agent who arrested them.

If you are not a lawyer —

I am a lawyer — he presents his business card.

Sit down over there.

We sit.

As we wait for the ICE agent (will he come?), I realize that somewhere behind the walls in front of me, behind the two tacky photos of Trump and Pence, behind the hastily installed plexiglass and the soundless bell, are my friends. Their phones have been taken. Are they together? Have they eaten? What must they be feeling? I begin to cry in panic, but have to pull myself together for the morale of the public on our side.

As Scott and I discuss what might be next, in whispers, a blond, blue-eyed man in a baseball cap, an untucked shirt, and jeans appears behind the plexiglass and peers out with small, blank eyes. He looks like he could be at a ballpark. He looks like he could be carrying a tiki torch. He looks like he could be firing up the grill for a weekend barbecue. He looks like he sauntered in on his day off. He looks exceptionally, habitually, ginormously bored.

As if compelled, Scott jumps up and stands tall in front of him. The man looks right through him, as if he is guarding Buckingham Palace.

I'm here to see my friends who are being detained in this building.

You can't do that.

Why not?

If you are not a lawyer—

I am a lawyer — he shows his card again.

If you are not their lawyer.

Ok, I'm their lawyer. Who are you?

I don't have to tell you that.

The man looks at Scott as if he never existed.

He reminds me of a killer...

July 2, 2019 **Elisa von Joeden-Forgey**