

BORDERS: REFUGEES AND RESPONDERS

9:00 am Wednesday, April 20, 2016

Washington State Council of Fire Fighters
Educational Conference
Spokane, Washington
April 19-20, 2016

Dear Delegates and Guests,

My wife, Bethany Weidner, and I spent the month of February, 2016, on the Greek island of Lesbos volunteering to help the refugees coming by boat from the coast of Turkey.

The current flow of refugees from Syria and Iraq to Greece and Italy threatens to be larger than the 4.6 million refugees that resulted from the war in Afghanistan.

On Wednesday morning, I'd like to talk to you about our experience in Lesbos, about the refugees, the first responder volunteers, their organizations, what we tried to do and what I think the role of first responders should be.

The situation on Lesbos, as well on other Greek islands, had changed dramatically since March 20th as a result of an agreement between the European Union and Turkey. I'd like to talk a bit about this agreement and what it might mean for refugees and responders.

Finally, I'd like to give a brief historical overview in an effort to explain the cause of this particular wave of refugees trying to reach Europe.

In the process of preparing for this talk, I've read numerous reports and taken notes on them.

I've attached my notes and hope you might review them before Wednesday morning:

- Chart comparing ISIS and Al-Qaeda
- Chronological list of current events
- Description of the economic state of Syria
- Defense Department report on the US bombing campaign in Iraq and Syria
- Summary of the US Refugee Resettlement program.

Thanks very much. Look forward to our discussion, to your questions and comments.

Solidarity,


Dan Leahy

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SOME DATES (Dan Leahy notes, 4/20/16)

- 1991 US bombs infrastructure, sanctions, no fly zone, troops in Saudi Arabia
- 2001 September. Twin towers, Pentagon. 15/19 Saudi's. (Troops, Israel, etc)
- 2003 US invasion of Iraq. Bremer dismantled Iraqi Army (65-95,000) and Baathist Party members
- 2004 Bashar to Ankara Turkey. (Lowered claim to Hatay) (1998 Syria gave up Ocalan, PKK leader)
- 2006 June. Zarqawi, leaders of Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), killed by US air strike.
- 2006 October. Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) declared by Iraq Shura Council. Two leaders appointed.
- 2009 June. US troops out of Iraq cities.
- 2010 March. Iraq elections. Premier al-Maliki loses. Stays in power. Turns on Sunni aligned w. US.
- 2010 Baghdadi becomes leader of ISI, as two leaders killed.
- 2011 January. Arab Spring. Civilian led protests throughout Middle East. Saudis spent \$100b to stop.
- 2011 March. Non violent protests in Syria begin in Daraa. Met with state violence, torture.
- 2011 May. Bin Laden killed
- 2011 May. Bashar al-Assad, President of Syria, gives amnesty to Salafi-jihadists in his prisons.
- 2011 Late. Baghdadi sends Joulani to Syria to organize opposition to Bashar. (AQC affiliate)
- 2012 January. Joulani announces al Nusra Front aligned with AQC. (Joulani and al-Baghdadi split)
- 2013 March. ISIS moves into al Raqqa, Syria after other groups had taken it. One million population
- 2014 February 2, 2014. Al Qaeda Central (AQC) announces ISIS is not a branch of Qaidat al Jihad
- 2014 June. ISIS and Sunni Naqshbandi order take Mosul. 5 million pop. Captures US armaments.
- 2014 August. US War on ISIS in Iraq and Syria. US has coalition partners also bombing targets.
- 2015 January. Paris attacks. Charlie Hebdo office
- 2015 July. Mullah Omar, Leader of the Taliban in Afghanistan since inception, dies.
- 2015 September. Russia begins bombing Syrian targets.
- 2015 October. Russian airliner blown up. ISIS takes credit.
- 2015 November. Paris attacks. Bataclan Concert hall. December, San Bernardino shooting

COMPARISON OF AL QAEDA CENTRAL AND ISLAMIC STATE OF IRAQ AND SYRIA(ISIS)

(Dan Leahy chart. 4/20/16)

	AL QAEDA CENTRAL	ISIS
ORIGINS	US use of Mujahedin fighters to defeat Russia in Afghanistan. Placement of US Troops in Saudi Arabia (Holy Lands), August, 1990.	US invasion of Iraq in 2003 & dismantling of nation state & replacement with Shi'a dominated, Iran supported sectarian government.
LEADERSHIP	Bin Laden, Saudi, and Ayman al-Zawahiri, Egyptian. Bin Laden killed in May 2011.	Al-Zarqawi, Jordanian, killed in 2006 and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, Iraqi.
IDEOLOGY	Rooted in Islamic jurisprudence and unified social order. Said Qutb, Egyptian Scholar.	Rooted in Sunni identity politics and opposition to Shia's rule.
GOALS	Establishment of Sharia law and an Islamic Caliphate to replace capitalism and socialism and Western imperialism.	Establishment of an Islamic Caliphate to replace capitalism and socialism and Western imperialism.
STRATEGY	Force global enemies (the far enemy) US/Britain to withdraw from Middle East so Caliphate could be formed without opposition.	Eliminate apostates like Shi'a, Yazidis and Muslim rulers (the near enemy) first.
TACTICS	Attacks on symbols of US power, Twin Towers, Pentagon, White House, Embassies, Ships, etc. to encourage US withdrawal.	Control of territory, eradication of borders & proclamation of the Caliphate in present time. (2014) \$2t Assets.\$2.9b income. 6M people. 80% of oil.1/3 wheat.
TACTICS	Need to develop social base for political support. No killing of other Muslims, Shia, etc. Establish Sharia law first. Maintain underground network.	Extreme and public violence to control and assert authority. Management of Savagery. Prepare for chaos. Shock and awe. With us or against us. War against all.

SYRIA: CONFRONTING FRAGMENTATION – FEBRUARY 2016

Syrian Center for Policy Research, Supported by UNDP.

(Dan Leahy's Notes, 4/20/16)

An economic analysis and creation of the “conflict economy.”

Around 17% of active population in conflict economy

Unemployment rate from 14.9 in 2011 to 52.9 end of 2015. Higher in poorer regions.

That's an estimated 2.9 million unemployed. (2.7 million have lost jobs).

45% of population had lost their homes, “dislodged”

6.36 million lived as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). 63% want to return home.

85% poverty rate in 2015 (83.5% in 2014)

45.2% of school age children no longer attending school.

Death rate 10/1000.

Wounded will reach 1.88 million.

11.5% killed or wounded in Syria

Sectors of economy

Agriculture. Favorable rains in 2015. Citrus, olive, wheat, sheep and cattle.

ISIS controls majority of wells in eastern regions and 75% of national oil production.

Mining, manufacturing, Tourism all in decline.

Govt dollars to military and military wages; cut public subsidies and support.

Dependent of Imports (Smuggling, etc)

Refugees

Estimated by end of 2015, 3.1 million

Turkey hosts 37.5%. Lebanon 35.6% Jordan 14.1%

Lebanon banned Syrian refugees. First half of 2015, 73,000 asylum seekers.

ALEPPO. 2.2 Million population. 30,000 dead. Eastern part of city was 1 million, now 40,000. (March 2015).

INHERENT RESOLVE (AUGUST 2014)

WWW.DEFENSE.GOV

SPECIAL REPORT ON INHERENT RESOLVE: AUGUST 8, 2014 TO FEB. 29, 2016

WAR ON ISLAMIC STATE OF IRAQ AND SYRIA (ISIS)

AS OF FEBRUARY 29, 2016:

8,584 STRIKES IN IRAQ AND SYRIA

5,137 IN IRAQ. 3,447 IN SYRIA

87,940 SORTIES FLOWN.

COST: \$6.5 BILLION DOLLARS ---- \$11.4 MILLION/DAY

COUNTRIES BOMBING IRAQ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE US:

AUSTRALIA, BELGIUM, (CANADA), DENMARK, FRANCE,
JORDAN, NETHERLANDS, AND UK

COUNTRIES BOMBING SYRIA IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE US

AUSTRALIA, BAHRAIN, (CANADA), FRANCE, JORDAN, NETHERLANDS,
SAUDI ARABIA, UAE, UK AND TURKEY

(OF COURSE, RUSSIA AND THE ASHAD REGIME).

US RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM

(NOV. 2015 STATE DEPARTMENT BRIEFING) + GUARDIAN ARTICLE, 11/19/15).

(Dan Leahy's notes, 4/20/16)

SINCE 1970, 3 MILLION REFUGEES RESETTLED (AFTER TO VIETNAM)
OVER FORTY-FIVE YEARS (2015) – 67,000/YEAR.

A NETWORK OF NINE NON-PROFITS, SIX FAITH BASED, MEET WEEKLY
TO SETTLE REFUGEES. HAS 180 LOCATIONS COAST TO COAST.

PRIORITY ON MOST VULNERABLE: KIDS, WOMEN WITH CHILDREN.

VETTED BY DHS, FBI, INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY, SCREENED, INTERVIEWED
OVERSEAS, REFERRED BY UNHCR.

IT TAKES 18 MONTHS TO TWO YEARS TO BE VETTED BY STATE, DHS, ETC.

SYRIANS INTERVIEWED IN AMMAN, ISTANBUL AND CAIRO

SINCE 2012 (FOUR YEARS) – US HAS ACCEPTED 2,174 SYRIAN REFUGEES.

HALF OF THIS NUMBER ARE CHILDREN. 0.0007% OF US POPULATION. 543/YEAR.

NATION	POPULATION	NUMBER OF REFUGEES
SYRIA	22 MILLION	6.5 MILLION INTERNALLY DISPLACED.
TURKEY	75 MILLION	2.0 MILLION SYRIAN 2.67% OF ITS POPULATION
LEBANON	4.5 MILLION	1.2 MILLION SYRIAN. ONE IN FIVE PERSONS IN L.
JORDAN	6.4 MILLION	937,830 SYRIANS (DECEMBER 2015)
GERMANY	80 MILLION	1. MILLION (est) in 2015, including 500,000 Syrians
CANADA	36 MILLION	3,089 SYRIAN IN 2015 (JAN TO NOV 2015)
US	320 MILLION	(Obama goal of 10,000)