

Is Europe Beginning to Talk Sense on Refugees?

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Angela Merkel is tipped to easily win reelection for a fourth term — in power only five years fewer than Vladimir Putin, she is congratulated, while he is accused of running a rigged system — yet many German voters are angry at her for opening Germany's doors to Muslim refugees and economic migrants.

North African and Turkish workers are not new to Europe: in the sixties, France and Germany brought over thousands to replenish the ranks of its work force decimated by war, who were encouraged to send for their wives and children. The latter, far from clamoring to return to their parents' former homes, are Islamizing the Christian continent, just as the anti-immigrant right claims.

Although he stands no chance of becoming Chancellor, the center-right Free Democratic Party candidate, Christian Lindner has come up with an idea that seems admirable: Germany should work to restore peace to the Middle East and Africa, and then ask refugees to go home.

Realistically, it will take decades for this to happen, by which time the children of today's arrivals will have children of their own, for whom their parents' lands will be foreign. For comparison, although second and third generation Palestinians still dream of an independent Palestinian state, theirs is a contiguous land which occupation has frozen in time, while Africa and the Middle East will be very different places were the damage of colonialism and war to be repaired.

So why even mention Lindner's proposal? Precisely because it lays responsibility for the outsized wave of Muslim immigration squarely on the Christian world that is rejecting it. Following the destruction of World War II, Western Europe gratefully accepted American assistance. Although presented as altruistic, it came with obligations that prevented the old world from having an independent foreign policy. Although France and England succeeded in building nuclear deterrents, as part of NATO, they were expected to sign on to US-led wars, never imagining that these would boomerang. While America remained safely isolated from the Eurasian and African continents by two oceans, the victims of its wars and economic rape headed for Europe as the nearest haven.

Contrary to their expectations, Europe let them down. The so-called 'union' left Greece to shoulder most of the burden from the Middle East for a year, until it managed to persuade Turkey to take back some refugees in return for hefty financing for holding camps and promises that its application to join would be given new life.

(For thirty years, as hundreds of thousands of Turkish and North African workers kept

German and French industry humming, Muslim Turkey had been trying to become part of Europe. Now it was being asked to take in thousands of foreigners so that Europe could remain “a Christian continent”, while not even granting Turks visa free travel! In 2016, an aborted coup resulted in Turkish President Erdogan cracking down on dissidents, the press and the judiciary, even getting a majority to approve changes to the constitution that increased his powers, putting EU ascension even farther off, and thus making Turkey’s cooperation on refugees more problematic.)

As for Italy, as the closest European country to Libyan ports of departure, it was easily overwhelmed, while France and Spain kept their ports closed to traffickers. (Germany, though having no Mediterranean port, pushed for concerted sea patrols.) Some refugees headed for Rome, where they set up pup tents on a major square near the Central Station, while others were seen climbing over the boulders protecting summer homes from the sea between Ventimiglia and Menton. They got to Calais, six hundred miles away, where they set up a camp that soon came to be known as ‘the jungle’.

From there they tried nightly to cross to England, either on lorries or trains under the Channel Tunnel, more inclined to learn English than French and believing a conservative monarchy would better protect them than France’s socialist government. Soon they were joined by adolescents, and even unaccompanied children. After several years of trash accumulating and locals protesting, the government forced them out, most scattering before they could be relocated.

Meanwhile, and unexpectedly, the quotas mandated for each country by Brussels were indignantly rejected by the recently joined nations of Eastern Europe, mainly Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia. Having lived for two generations behind the Wall separating them from Western Europe, they saw no contradiction in putting up walls of their own, using police dogs to convince the refugees that they would never be tolerated.

German voters angry over Angela Merkel’s open door policy, are unlikely to vote for either the socialists or the Greens. However the proposal by the Free Democrats — normally a possible coalition partner — to allow refugees to remain in Germany until the Middle East and Africa are ‘repaired’, will likely help the far-right anti-immigrant party, *Alternative for Germany*, to pull ahead.

Most Germans recognize that Merkel is the strongest candidate when it comes to relations with both the US and Russia. But while Lindner’s proposal *sounds* reasonable, they know deep down that the problem of Muslim immigrants can only grow. (See [this](#) and [this](#).)

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