



Written by [John F. McManus](#) on December 14, 2015

## Refugees: America Not Being Given the Whole Story

Not everyone is burying details surrounding the refugee crisis and the potential for terrorism. But there surely are some potentially dangerous ideas afloat.

First, President Obama wants to welcome thousands of [Syrian refugees](#) to America. Who decides whether someone is a legitimate refugee merely seeking safety and is not a potential mass murderer? The answer is the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Anyone from anywhere who seeks refugee status goes to a UN official who relies for his determination on a set of qualifications contained in the 1951 Refugee Convention. How many Americans know of this arrangement?



Not only does UNHCR decide whether this or that individual meets the UN's criteria, the world body then decides which country should accept them. Are some being directed by the UN to go to America? Will any be terrorists? No U.S. authority knows. As in so many other matters, the UN is the behind-the-scenes controller of the situation. Mr. Obama certainly is aware of this arrangement but he's not telling us the whole story. Will thorough background checks be made on UN-designated refugees? No problem, says the president. But not everyone believes that either.

Among the needed perspective that some are trying to convey is Congressman Peter King (R-N.Y.), the chairman of the House Committee on Homeland Security. A few days prior to the San Bernardino rampage where 14 were killed and 21 injured in what was clearly a terrorist attack, he stated on the MSNBC morning news show, "I am extremely concerned. What the president is telling us is not true." King insisted that those who would check incoming refugees simply don't have the capability of determining whether a refugee might be a terrorist. He wrote to both the president and House Speaker Ryan with a plea for terminating acceptance of Syrian refugees until there is "an effective vetting and monitoring process that insures our national security." He based his concerns on classified briefings he and others in the Congress attended.

King is not alone. As recently as October 22, FBI Director James Comey told Congress that the Bureau is unable to vet the Syrians the president wants to welcome. He told lawmakers, "If someone has never made a ripple in the pond in Syria in a way that would get their identity — or their interests — 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."

What concerns Director Comey is the inability of his people to know of any terrorist inclinations in such persons as Syed Farook and Tashfeen Malik who killed 14 and wounded 21 in San Bernardino. Neither of these two was on anyone's watch list, including the FBI's. Could a similarly inclined person escape detection by posing as a Syrian refugee? Of course!



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Finally, another dangerous idea floating around is one of gun control. Immediately after the carnage in San Bernardino, the *New York Times* placed its editorial comment not on the Editorial Page but on Page One. This admittedly remarkable departure from normal hasn't been done at the *Times* since 1920. Labeled "The Gun Epidemic," the December 5 editorial called for more gun controls, meaning more cancellation of the God-given right to be armed.

Washington, D.C., police chief Cathy Lanier had already registered a "politically incorrect" recommendation during her pre-San Bernardino appearance on the CBS *60 Minutes* program. If faced with a gunman, she said it would be a good idea to have a gun to use against a terrorist or a crazed individual. She gave her advice as follows: "If you're in a position to try and take the gunman down — to take the gunman out — it's the best option for saving lives before the police get there." While her rhetoric is to be commended, her record of approving concealed carry permits in D.C. [appears to be lacking](#).

Mr. Obama's position is totally wrong, and the American people had better realize how wrong he is. Congressman King, FBI Director Comey, and D.C. Chief of Police Lanier should be applauded for making extremely good sense.

*John F. McManus is president of [The John Birch Society](#) and publisher of The New American. This column appeared originally at the [insideJBS](#) blog and is reprinted here with permission.*



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