



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on March 31, 2011

Refugees Besiege Italian Island of Lampedusa

It appears as if the scenario envisioned in *Camp of the Saints*, an apocalyptic novel in which Third World migrants swamp and destroy Western civilization, really has come to Lampedusa, the small Italian isle about 127 miles southwest of Sicily in the Mediterranean Sea.

For going on two months, Tunisian refugees have flooded the island, having fled their own country when a military coup overthrew its president. The fighting in Libya is worsening the situation, as Libyan refugees join Tunisians.



Now, [Africans outnumber](#) the island's natives by nearly four to one, London's *Daily Mail* reports. Life on Lampedusa will likely never be the same, even if some of the invading Tunisians depart for mainland Europe.

Lampedusa is the southernmost part of Italy, but at 113 miles from Tunisia it is closer to that strife-torn country than it is to its motherland.

The Latest Figures

The [Daily Mail reported](#) the latest figures earlier this week. Some 19,000 Tunisians and Libyans have landed on the island since January. Many thousands more have arrived this week, the newspaper reported, noting:

The number of immigrants has been reported as being just over 5,500 today, with more than 3,000 coming in the last three days alone. The normal population of the quiet island, which relies on fishing and tourism, is around 5,300. ...

'Enough, we're full,' read a slogan scrawled on a white sheet and carried by two protesters. ...

There are now thousands of North African men living in improvised tent encampments on the hillsides and waiting to be taken to the mainland.

As well, Lampedusa's former mayor warned of a food shortage because so many migrants had landed. "If the ships promised by the government don't come tomorrow, there will be a total shut down and no one will be able to eat on the island, including the immigrants who arrived last night," [Salvatore Martello said](#).

Another possibility is a water shortage. The island's only source of fresh water [is rainfall](#).

There is no shortage of Tunisians and Libyans, who are trashing the island. [Terrifying photographs in the Daily Mail](#) depicts a pile of small boats in port and immigrants swamping the shores. Others show the trash they have dumped on what was once a small, beautiful fishing village.

Italy Doesn't Know What To Do

Facing this tsunami of Africans, the Italians seem paralyzed and apparently want to worsen the



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problem, [the paper reported](#). On Monday, it announced plans to send six Navy ships to move the migrants to mainland Italy.

Why Italy won't send the refugees back to Tunisia or Libya the article does not say. But the situation in which the Italians find themselves was expected. Italy's foreign minister warned weeks ago that Europe may suffer as many as 800,000 refugees if the government of Moammar Gadhafi falls and Libya collapses.

As [noted by The New American](#) early in March, "'Gadhafi,' Spiegel Online reported in late February, 'has enjoyed a cynical role as Europe's border guard against African immigrants.' In December, he warned that 'Europe will become black' if he decides to pull back his patrol boats that stop refugees from reaching Italy and Greece. ..."

The article continued:

Gadhafi in recent years has played up his role as a bulwark against African immigrants to Europe. Italy and Libya began joint naval patrols in 2008 to stop boatloads of illegal or trafficked immigrants from crossing the Mediterranean, and last year Libya signed a €50 billion deal with the European Union to manage its borders as a "transit country" for sub-Saharan Africans.

Tunisian Collapse

The deluge of Tunisians that has swamped Lampedusa [began in](#) January when rebels toppled the government of Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali. Refugees boarded boats and sailed for the small island. One official called it an "unprecedented Biblical exodus."

He might have added unstoppable.

The events at Lampedusa, which may well spread across Europe, are fiction coming to life. French novelist [Jean Raspail](#) described this scenario in his frightening novel, [Camp of the Saints](#). Raspail [imagined the departure](#) of 1 million Indians on the "last chance armada," a fleet of 100 ships headed for France around the Cape of Good Hope.

Paralyzed by fear of defending themselves, the French permit the "last chance armada" to land. Western man is thus doomed.

With 19,000 refugees [teeming on](#) Lampedusa, the question is whether an invasion of Sicily and beyond that, mainland Italy, is far behind.

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[Camp of the Saints Comes to Italy?](#)

[Italy's Frattini: If Ghadafi Falls, Refugees Will Overwhelm Europe](#)

Photos: Scenes of Lampedusa



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