

ORIGIN: Refugee

When I write this text, the Prime Minister of Slovakia, Peter Pellegrini, says in an interview with "DW" that his country will not resign from opposing the refugee quotas prepared by the EU. After the lawsuit that the European Commission has issued for opposing the relocation procedure, Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary are currently preparing for the battle before the EU Court of Justice. All in the name of taking care of the hostile electorate, to which the "protection of external borders against foreigners" is more appealing than the value of human life. Do we have the right not to help them?

Let's forget for a moment the situation of economic migrants, with whom the affluent – in comparison to the places of origin of these migrants – Central European countries do not want to share their wealth. Obviously as far as the concept of a refugee can be distinguished from an economic immigrant: because often one person falls into both categories. Let's assume, however that for some reason we are not able to accept this crowd of foreigners who would settle down in Poland, so we limit ourselves to refugees. We are the ninth largest country on the Old Continent. These 7 thousand people we agreed as a state to accept as a part of the relocation programme will easily dissolve in a nearly 38-million country. And by the way, they will not lose their lives war, unless they participate in the ethnic conflict between PO

and PiS – Poland's two biggest political parties.

Stories close and distant

We, Poles sing praises to the conceived but yet unborn life, therefore we should promote an already born, but endangered human life. Exactly those feelings guided people of New Zealand, which in 1944 received 733 Polish children and 105 members of care personnel fleeing the war with the USSR. A campus at Pahiatua was created for them. Earlier, under the Stalinist amnesty, they were led by the Anders Army to Iran. New Zealand gave Polish children unconditional rights, thanks to which they could get an education, for example.

Poles were helped in Africa in a similar way. Yes, on the same continent from which today boats full of immigrants are coming to us. As we read on kresy-siberia.org, nearly 18,000 of the total number of 33,000 Polish refugees who escaped from the USSR, arrived in Africa in 1942–43. Refugees were directed to British colonies in Uganda, Kenya and Tanganyika, as well as to South Africa and North and South Rhodesia. They were mainly women, children and young girls. In total 19 settlements were created. (...) Polish schools, churches, hospitals, community centers and cooperatives were established in each of the estates. For example, a camp in Tengeru, located in present-day Tanzania (at that time Tanganyika), that was probably the largest, became home to "Siberians" – former prisoners of Soviet labour camps and other places of exile in Russia.

Interestingly, after the closure of these settlements, the authorities of communist Poland wanted to repatriate these Poles back to their country.

However, they were suspicious of the new political system. On the journal's website.com, we read: the displacement of Polish refugees from African settlements lasted a long time until the beginning of the 1950s. Only about 20% of refugees re-

turned to Poland. Most went to Great Britain as part of a campaign to reconnect with relatives, soldiers of the 2nd Polish Corps. Significant numbers went to the USA, Australia and Canada. About 1000 people remained on the site in Africa, which – under special settlement quotas – obtained permission to reside there permanently. Among the refugees from Africa, the youngest were transported by ship to Italy. From there, about 150 children eventually came to Canada. However, I am interested in the story of this ship and Italy. Is it really possible to recognize the country of the Apennine peninsula as the place where they are relocated... that is, were relocated as refugees?

Fear of death and fear of help

As Monika Prończuk writes on the OKO.press website, the conflict with Brussels regarding the relocation is all the more incomprehensible, that despite PiS's narrative, there are some refugees already present in Poland. This is confirmed by data issued by the Office for Foreigners: In 2017 in Poland, 742 people received various forms of protection, including 29 from Syria (out of 44 applications) and 21 from Iraq (out of 41). In 2016, there were 567 such decisions. Among the people whom Poland keeps under agreements of international protection, there are also Ukrainians. Meanwhile, the right wing argues irrationally that in Poland we live safely, because there are no refugees.

Less than 3 thousand kilometers to the south-east of us, dramatic things are happening. Attacks with the use of chemical weapons, concentration camps, ruined cities, hunger, terrible sanitary conditions, poverty – those are the realities of Syria today. Polish authorities say that they are ready to help the people of Syria, but only on the spot, in the warzones. And what does the current government say about countries that during the Second World War were limited to modest help within our country's borders? What do we say?

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Polish refugees in Tengeru