

We should welcome refugees

To the Editor,

Around 100 years ago a potato famine in Ireland caused hundreds of refugees to immigrate to Canada to try to make a living for their families. They were resented by many. Does this sound familiar?

At the beginning of the Second World War hundreds of Jews fled Europe to avoid being exterminated.

Shortly after that, an influx of displaced persons (called DPs) came here after losing their homes, families and country, from around Latvia and Estonia. Resented by many again.

Then there was a mass immigration from Italy. How did we feel about that?

This was followed by a few hundred Jamaicans and others from the Caribbean who were imported by farmers who couldn't manage to find Canadian workers willing to do the back-breaking grunt work that needed to be done. Resented?

Oh, yes, often by folks who were on welfare because of lack of work in their area, who were either unable or unwilling to locate to where the above mentioned jobs were.

When Pakistan was split by politics, many families were forced to flee, unable to stay together there because the man and wife were from different areas incompatible with the country's split, and one of them might have been killed if they had stayed. They came.

Also the Vietnamese boat people.

These are just a few examples of those who came from various countries due to hardship.

All of these people have rich cultural differences that, if you check it out, will see, have helped to make up our great Canadian Mosaic.

We are a country that has been known to be a warm friendly place with loving, open arms and a generous spirit.

But some of us are still resentful to any or all newcomers, aren't we?

Think of those who have trashed mosques because of this resentment and hatred. Yes, hatred. Are these people any different than the KKK or white supremacist groups who spread seeds of hate and dissention?

Are they any different from those militant ISIS groups who don't seem to care who they hurt, be it man, woman or child? Are you one of them?

If, deep in your heart, you feel the same as they do, think of your ancestors. If they were not Native Americans, you are also a newcomer, whose ancestors may have been resented when they came.

Now you are a Canadian, and, hopefully, a warm, loving and welcoming one who will open up those same arms to those in desperate need who have been displaced, forced to flee from their homes and possessions and often from death, due to starvation or war. Syrians need us to help them and we need to do it for their sake and ours.

Muslims also need us to understand that we do realize many, even most of them, are peaceful normal citizens who have also come here to build a better life in a peaceful country away from strife.

Just because there are a few bad apples in the barrel, we know that not all are.

If we need to open our minds a lot and our wallets a bit, isn't it worth it to keep this country free?

If you are Christian, or if not, at least humanitarian, give those in need a break. I do understand that many who already live here are in dire straits, starving and homeless, and in need, and more effort is needed to assist them, more services put into place, but we still have to be generous to our fellow man. Pray for them and for us!

For those who are already welcoming, I thank you!

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