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**Haley Says No to Refugees
from Syria**

Gov. Nikki Haley sent a letter to Secretary of State John Kerry asking that the federal government not resettle any Syrian refugees in South Carolina. Haley was one of a dozen governors who made such requests Monday. According to *The Greenville News*, a Haley spokesman said the governor can't prevent refugees from being resettled through federally approved agencies. Previously, Haley had supported refugee resettlement in the state. This week's anti-refugee push from various governors came after the deadly terrorist attacks in Paris last weekend, particularly as there are questions as to whether one of the attackers entered France as a Syrian refugee.

— Chris Trainor



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S.C. Farmers Battle a Bad Year for Crop Damage

FEATURE by April Blake

Iwouldn't be a farmer if I wasn't optimistic," says Eric McClam, farm manager and co-owner at City Roots in Columbia, where recent damage to one of their fields is estimated to be over \$40,000.

This attitude of resilience and idealism is what those who work the earth have to employ daily to combat the often-unpredictable forces of Mother Nature.

The initial damage assessment for South Carolina crops was initially estimated to be near \$300 million, according to the office of the state Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers. However, the damage assessments have shifted even higher due to the continued rains, and are still being calculated.

"We are still in the assessment phase," says Larry McKenzie, assistant to the president of the South Carolina Farm Bureau Federation. "Adjusters have been out in the fields looking and making decisions about whether or not there is anything left to harvest and what the value will be."

The damage estimates are calculated by what farmers expected to produce that year, not the amount of money or work put into it, McKenzie explains. Most of the state's big agriculture crops like corn, wheat and some soybeans had already been harvested prior to the early October flooding. But others, like peanuts, cotton and soybeans that were still in the ground, have been rendered useless



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Eric McClam says damage to one of City Roots fields is more than \$40,000. *File*

after the seeds within sprouted. Or, in the case of turned-up peanut fields, where the legumes were left to dry at the end of the growing season, the nuts have completely floated away.

"I've had farmers who have told me that they have no idea where their peanuts went," says McKenzie.

Some of the more cold-tolerant fruit and vegetable crops may be able to be replanted, though farmers will still incur losses from being off schedule in markets. At City Roots, McClam has already started replanting some crops, but notes that it's not going to be easy to get the new plants established with the shorter days and cooling temperatures. The lower supply of South Carolina-grown produce may also temporarily drive up prices more than usual, which could help farmers to recoup some lost income for those who are able to successfully replant.

Farmers who have crop insurance — which is purchased through private firms but is federally regulated — will be able to rely on those funds a little bit, though it usually only covers half of the estimated production for the year. Gov. Haley requested disaster designation for South Carolina on Oct. 19, which would make farm operators eligible for some assistance from the USDA's Farm Service Agency, including emergency loans. Operators will have eight months from the date of the secretarial disaster designation to apply for the FSA loans.

"It's a stressful time for farmers as they are waiting to see how crop insurance will

help them," Weathers says. "We just don't know the extent of the damage until we get the information from the farmers and crop insurance officials."

Another source of funding that farmers can look into is Farm Aid, the national nonprofit whose mission is to keep family farmers on the land, which has activated its family farm disaster fund in response to the state's flooding. Farm Aid has partnered with local and regional organizations to distribute emergency grants to family farms that were affected, and to offer resources ranging from mental health to federal funding opportunities.

One thing that anyone involved in the agriculture industry knows is that nature's whims rule their world, and food production is fraught with uncertainties.

"This is a reminder that producing food is not like producing cars, airplanes or tires — it's something we do using the resources we have: soil, water, and a nice long, warm growing season," says Weathers.

McClam echoes the sentiment, saying that the reality of farming is that farmers deal with the weather for better or worse.

The flood-inducing weather may knock some of the smaller farms out of business completely for a while, McKenzie speculates.

"They'll be in a tight place for the next season, but they'll come back," McKenzie says. "Farmers are resilient." **ft**

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Seems to Me . . .

A hard lesson

By Stan Welch

As world events continue in a dizzying whirl, American leadership, if it can be called that, strives to ignore reality and follow an agenda designed to satisfy the plans and ego of our president, regardless of the impact on our nation.

After the brutal and bloody terrorist attacks in Paris this weekend, our president declined to "speculate" on who committed such acts. Speculate? Who do you think it is, Prez? The Little Sisters of the Poor? This, of course, is the same president who, the very day before the attacks, boasted in a television interview that ISIS is contained, that it is not getting stronger. Twenty four hours later, the contained terrorists slaughtered one hundred forty people, and injured more than a hundred more.

The rest of the world joined France in condemning the attacks and France, in an unusual show of anger and aggression, began bombing ISIS strongholds in Syria. Elsewhere in the territories of the European Union, countries like Austria and Poland began staging massive anti-Muslim demonstrations, as well as the construction of border fences to stop the river of refugees that threatens to reshape Europe forever. Europe gave every sign of a mass awakening, following a Rip Van Winkle type sleep.

However, in a bizarre 'Alice in Wonderland' moment, at the second Democratic presidential debate the next night, all three candidates again endorsed Obama's illegal plan to accept at least one hundred thousand Syrian refugees in the next two years, and thousands more after that. This will apparently be done by executive order; once more sidestepping the Constitutional process, and even though law enforcement admits that they will be unable to determine whether these refugees include terrorists in their midst or not.

Bernie Sanders, undoubtedly the scariest candidate America has produced since the days of Ross Perot, actually stated that global warming, and not radical jihadists, is the greatest threat to America's national security. The last Democrat to make a statement that stupid currently serves as the Vice President. The political upside of that for Sanders is that, at least briefly, it took people's minds off the lunacy of his proposed economic policies.

On the South Carolina front, Governor Haley, while thumping her chest and stomping her feet, and rightly so, about the president's also illegal plan to bring prisoners to South Carolina from Guantanamo, has been confusingly supportive of the Syrian refugee importation. It seems to me that our political leaders are determined to ignore the wishes of the people, as well as their own sworn duties to protect and defend our nation.

Their actions are even more impossible to understand to someone like me, who quite frankly sees no reason at all to accept a single refugee from any Muslim nation. There is a war going on folks, and our loyalties should lie with ourselves and with our allies. When someone constantly threatens to kill you, only a fool keeps looking for reasons to ignore them. We have no obligation to feed and clothe our enemies.

To do so, in fact, is treason. To blindly, blithely accept two hundred thousand Syrian Muslims, especially while being much less open to Christian refugees from the same war, borders on insanity. Incredibly those who support this proposal cite Christian obligation to show compassion, while denying oppressed Christians the same succor that is offered to their enemies.

Christian compassion is clearly a central part of that religion. It is not, nor should it be, a central part of public policy. The oil soaked countries of the Middle East are some of the wealthiest in the world. They are also overwhelmingly Muslim in nature. Let them care for their brothers, as the Q'uran commands them to do.

On its very face, this proposal to welcome our enemies into our midst is totally flawed, and dangerously absurd. The river of





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people supposedly fleeing oppression and war in their homelands is predominantly made up of healthy young men. Where are the women, with their starving children?

If this invasion, and make no mistake, it is an invasion, is allowed to occur, the future of this nation will be altered forever. Anyone who believes for one moment that there will be no terrorists smuggled into America during this influx of supposed refugees is stupid enough to be president.

France, and more broadly, traditional Europe has learned some hard lessons this week. France was struck by terrorism twice in one year. They appear to be fully awake at last. Other nations have awakened and suddenly realized that Islam and its followers are bent on conquest, not immigration to a better life. These same countries, many of whom bought into the fool's belief that beating swords into plowshares would appease the ravenous Islamists, are ruining the day that they disarmed their populaces.

America has not disarmed, despite relentless efforts by those sworn to protect us to render us helpless. In light of recent world events, the motives of those gun control/disarmament groups are even more suspect. The crucial difference in the issue of gun control is who you trust to protect you: your government or yourself.

Americans have also historically enjoyed the protection of two oceans, and once upon a time, two strong land borders as well. This 'refugee acceptance program' effectively removes those oceans as any sort of meaningful barrier. An active, responsible, free press would be asking who is footing the bill for this relocation? It is you and I. We are essentially being asked to put the gun to our own temple.

Simply put, this program will weaken and endanger our country; and it will do so in the name of a cause that is none of our concern. But I am not a heartless man, so I suggest a middle way. This is my proposal. Any refugee who swims ashore, without benefit of a boat or a plane, should be allowed to stay. Otherwise, adios, Abdul.

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GUEST VIEW

The state should welcome refugees

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By The Herald Editorial Board

York County Councilman Bruce Henderson introduced a resolution calling on South Carolina to bar refugees from North Africa and the Middle East from resettling in South Carolina until they could be vetted by several state agencies.

We salute the rest of the council for refusing to second this.

Henderson has spoken at previous council meetings about the threat posed to the United States by Islamic State and other terrorist groups. His resolution calls for Gov. Nikki Haley to halt resettlement of refugees from the Middle East and North Africa to South Carolina until the State Law Enforcement Division and several other state agencies have had a chance to study the potential impact of admitting them.

The resolution also called on every South Carolina state senator to hold town hall meetings in their districts to gauge public

opposition.

Henderson assumes there will be public opposition.

Several other supporters of the resolution expressed concerns a wave of immigrants would overwhelm local schools and public aid agencies.

The resolution expressed concern if refugees receive federal assistance to move to the

U.S., they might not work or learn English, and could become a burden on taxpayers. They might also "build enclaves, preserving the language and culture of their countries of origin rather than fully integrate into the surrounding community."

Those are common themes among people who oppose immigration. It suggests supporters of the resolution might see fit to expand its requirements to others entering the country.

President Barack Obama's commitment to welcome immigrants from Syria, the center of the current wave of displacement in the Middle East, has been modest. The president has said the U.S. would admit only 10,000 refugees from Syria's

four-year-old civil war, and only after they had been screened by the Department of Homeland Security, FBI and other agencies, a process that can take two years.

Fewer than 250 refugees, none of them Syrians, were resettled in South Carolina over the past year.

By contrast, more than 740,000 people, the majority of them from Syria, have migrated to Europe this year. Nearly 3,500 have died attempting to reach Europe.

Those numbers are dwarfed by the millions of refugees who have been displaced in their own countries or have fled war-torn Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and other Middle Eastern countries for Syria's neighbors, Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.

In short, this is not just a U.S. problem and certainly not a South Carolina problem, but a global humanitarian crisis, the worst since World War II.

A crisis of those proportions needs to be resolved through international cooperation, not in the confines of the York County Council chambers.

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Gov. Nikki Haley, right, and Maj. Gen. Bob Livingston view flood damage from a helicopter on Oct. 6 in Columbia.

Haley announces flood relief fund

COLUMBIA (AP) — Gov. Nikki Haley called on people across the nation Monday to contribute to the One SC relief fund to rebuild homes after last month's historic flooding, saying it can do what the government can't.

"While the debris has gone off the roads, if you took a right-hand turn into any of the neighborhoods ... all over the state, you will see devastation," Haley said in announcing the fund's creation. "If you are blessed and did not have damage to your home. If you are blessed and you had insurance. ... Pay it forward."

The early October storm that dumped 2 feet of rain in some parts of the state destroyed or damaged more than 38,000 homes. By definition, homes don't have even "minor damage" unless at least a foot of water was inside, according to the South Carolina Emergency Management Division.

Haley said all donations to One SC will go toward supplies for rebuilding efforts, because her nonprofit — the Original Six Foundation — is covering administrative costs. Priority for distributions will start with the elderly and those living in poverty, she said.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has identified 5,000 needy families who are over age 65 and live on less than \$20,000 annually — with about 1,200 of those having immediate need, said retired Army Col. Kevin Shwedo, whom Haley appointed last month to coordinate relief efforts between government agencies and nonprofits.

"There's a small pool right now who are the most vulnerable that the volunteer organizations are focusing on," Shwedo said. But "they can't do anything without contributions coming from this organization."





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¹⁴⁸ Governor says she supports giving refuge to persecuted

COLUMBIA (AP) — Gov. Nikki Haley says she's re-evaluating international refugee programs in light of the terrorist attacks in Paris but continues to support allowing the persecuted to come to South Carolina.

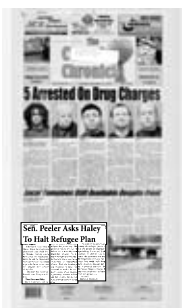
State Senate Majority Leader Harvey Peeler is among Republican legislators calling on Haley to end her support. Peeler said South Carolina can't take any chances on an "oops

moment" in vetting asylum seekers.

But Haley says as long as nothing's changed in who's being resettled in the state, neither will her stance. She says no Syrians have been brought to South Carolina. She says refugees being brought from other nations have been persecuted for being Christians, for their political views or because they were interpreters for American military personnel.



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Sen. Peeler Asks Haley To Halt Refugee Plan

Staff Report

Cherokee County Senator Harvey Peeler hand delivered a letter to Governor Nikki Haley Monday morning asking her to cancel any and all agreements she and the Department of Social Services have made to provide shelter in this state for "refugees from jihadist strongholds."

The letter Sen. Peeler delivered to Gov. Haley is as follows:

"Dear Governor Haley:
South Carolina's willing-

ness to accept international refugees has got to stop. The people in Senate District 14 did not like it when they first heard that "refugees" from Jihadist strongholds in the Middle East and Africa were being "welcomed" to Spartanburg County. With the bombings and shootings in Paris this weekend, we need to be even more vigilant about protecting the State of South Carolina and her citizens. We do not want potential terrorists in our State.

"You are on record of supporting this refugee program. For the people in Cherokee, Spartanburg, Union and York counties, I implore you to cancel the agreement you and the Department of Social Services have made with third party groups to provide shelter to potential terrorists. As the Senate Majority Leader, I implore you to protect our State from terrorist activity.

Sincerely,
Harvey S. Peeler, Jr."



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LETTERS

Reader asks 'What kind of society do we really have?'

I am a retired public school employee and I am very sentimental about the *Abbeville v. South Carolina* decision. I pray regularly for our governor, Nikki Haley, and our state legislature's leaders to have some divine guidance for all public school districts here in South Carolina.

I also pray regularly for and I hope our governor and State House leaders will come to, and without any hesitation move forward with, a godly decision for all public school districts across our great state.

State Senate President Pro-Tem Hugh Leatherman and House Speaker Jay Lucas have declared our State Supreme Court decision unconstitutional, and they have vowed to ignore our high court's decision.

The time is at hand; we need people in our State House to know dignity and control. Do not come for the illusion of power and control, but from mutual dependence and conforming with human justice and morality.

It is, unfortunate our state legislature's leaders are just having the same views as our former state legislature leaders. Like they did with South Carolina civil rights laws, they put up roadblocks to delay the inevitable, wasting time and tons of taxpayer money fighting another lost cause which deserves to be lost because the arch of history truly bends toward human justice for all South Carolina school children.

Our governor and our state legislature's leaders must have a legal, social or moral requirement, or duty, to have great concern for what is best for all of its public schools in South Carolina. South Carolina's public school system must get out of the quality of life cellar, as measured in terms of public school education and the abilities of all our children, or we are not going to be able to attract the types of businesses which dominate other states in the 21st century.

Our governor and our legislative leaders cannot continue to compromise our public school system forever, and should find effective solutions which can comfort all South Carolinians. Otherwise, what kind of society do we really have?

In a few years, our public high school children will be seeking employment in an unfriendly world, and they will surely have to compete with their foreign-born counterparts from around the world. Their foreign counterparts know their culture, and they are hungry and they go to bed late at night.

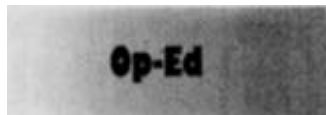
In a free society, our leaders in our State House cannot continue to give the demon a human face by not sharing a common interest or activities. In due time, there is a guarantee that its will erodes our cultural fabric and truly threatens our ability to live in a free society in peace here in South Carolina.

Edward R. Allen
Camden

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32 + 1 + 148 Shorten the legislative session



Editorialists and commentators have chastised the South Carolina legislature relentlessly for failing to get anything done during the 2015 session. In fact, though, they did plenty of work.

This year, our legislature met from January to July, during which 1,336 bills were filed between the House and Senate. Of those, 131 were passed by lawmakers. In addition, 950 resolutions were filed, and all but 64 of those passed.

The question, of course, is this: How many of these were actually worth legislators spending more than half a year in Columbia?

The length of South Carolina's legislative session has consequences. Studies have found professional, full-time legislatures are more prone to pressure from lobbyists -- and this translates into higher spending and more favors for special interests.

Consider this year's attempt to deal with roads. There are two ways to devote new revenue to roads: raise taxes or cut spending. But lobbyists -- in this case, lobbyists working for companies and industries which would benefit from additional spending on roads -- aren't going to urge lawmakers to pay for new road projects by cutting other parts of government. They're going to urge tax hikes. And thanks to South Carolina's long legislative session, they had plenty of time to do it. In the end, thanks to citizen groups raising the alarm, they weren't successful. That's a rarity, unfortunately, and tax hike supporters are sure to be back in January.

| According to one media

account, toward the end of the session, legislative leaders even tried to prevent the Board of Economic Advisers from publicizing a revenue surplus, presumably on the grounds a surplus would undermine the argument for a tax hike. That simply couldn't have happened without a lengthy session.

Or take ethics reform. The year began with a few good proposals, but the longer they sat in committees, the longer lawmakers had to water them down or amend them with insidious provisions. A bill to reform the state's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) gained a provision allowing government agencies to take citizens to court for filing "frivolous" FOIA requests. A bill to require elected officials to disclose their sources of income eventually included a provision *loosening* requirements on disclosing government income. And so on. The longer the session went on, in other words, the more pointless these bills became.

Or consider the debate over the bond bill. House lawmakers introduced a bill to issue bond debt and use the money for a variety of largely unnecessary projects connected to state colleges and universities. It would have been difficult for lawmakers to pass such a controversial bill within the confines of a short session. As it was, though, they were able to introduce the bill; then take it off the floor when the Policy Council and (separately) Gov. Haley raised objections; then

find ways to pay for the new projects through the General Fund; and *then* spend much of the rest of the session trying to figure out how to pass the bond bill anyway, which they were almost able to do.

In short: our excessively long session gave the State House complex -- lawmakers, lobbyists, consultants, various special interests -- plenty of time to weaken reform, make tax hikes more likely and spend every last available dime of revenue.

What should a session-shortening bill look like? A sensible reform would be to mandate an end to sessions by the second Friday in April, making each one last roughly 90 calendar days, and holding session every two years. This would encourage lawmakers to use their time -- and our money -- more wisely.

Members of the House argue they pass a bill every session to shorten sessions but Senate ignores it. That may be technically true, but this year, anyway, the bill they passed was anemically weak. The House of Representatives passed a bill which cut a mere 10 days off sessions. The Senate's bill would have shortened session by three months. It wasn't passed, but at least it was worthy of passing.

Our legislature's job is to ensure citizens' rights are protected. After they do that, they should go home. More time leads to more mischief.

(Cecilia Brown works as a research assistant at TheNerve.org and its parent organization, the S.C. Policy Council. Her op-ed was made available by the S.C. News Exchange to the Chronicle-Independent, Camden, S.C.)

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148 South Carolina may be awash with budget surplus

BY TIM SMITH

tsmith@greenvillenews.com

COLUMBIA — State government coffers suddenly are awash in money.

The state's economists have projected lawmakers will have almost \$1.3 billion to spend next year in unexpected additional money, the result of a thriving state economy and leftover funds from the previous year.

Lawmakers are listing flood relief, road and bridge repairs and addressing a decades-old education funding equity lawsuit as some of the state's immediate needs that could be addressed, but some of them also want to look at some form of tax relief.

"The disturbing pattern in Columbia is that the so-called needs in government seem to correspond with how much money is being taken in from taxpayers," Sen. Tom Davis, a Beaufort Republican, told *The Greenville News*. "As we go about deciding how to best spend that money, if we go ahead and

identify the core infrastructure needs we have, and we have sufficient funds to take care of those items, the balance of the money ought to be sent back to the taxpayer."

Senate Majority Leader Harvey Peeler of Gaffney, a senior member of the Senate Finance Committee, listed tax relief as among the items he said the new money should enable.

"Income tax reduction would help our economy as much as anything," he said.

Rep. Chip Limehouse, a Charleston Republican and first vice chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, said he thinks tax relief should be the priority of spending what is available in the new money.

If the money could be used to remove the income tax and corporate tax, even for a year, it would produce an economic "boon," he said.

Sen. Mike Fair, a Greenville Republican and a member of the Senate Finance Committee, said the money

should help negotiations concerning a compromise on road funding. The money could shore up the position of those who want to support a reduction in income tax as part of a package to spend more money on roads, as was proposed earlier this year by Gov. Nikki Haley, he said.

The Senate failed to pass any roads plan this year, including a GOP plan that would have included tax relief.

Opponents of pairing an income tax reduction with roads funding had argued the state could not afford such a cut in income tax revenue. Fair said the new money could be used to "leverage" a compromise on roads, providing tax relief as well as road and bridge improvements.

"I like the idea of using excessive revenues to enhance our (income tax) reduction in getting our roads bill passed," he said. "We can get a permanent tax rebate by not collecting the tax in the first place on their income."

