

Media Lies and Fabrications: “Russia Bombs Syria to Force Refugees into Europe”

Statements by NPR and OSCE

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In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

The “Morning Edition” program of the U.S. National Public Radio network — which is America’s most-trusted American source of news as measured by [“the ratio of people who trust a news outlet to those who distrust it”](#) included on May 20th a segment, [“Russia’s Involvement In Syria Worsens Migration Crisis, Zannier Says”](#), in which the interviewer, Renee Montagne, opened her interview of Lamberto Zannier, the Secretary General of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), by saying:

“There is actually a theory out there to do with the migration crisis in Europe, that Russia may have purposely been bombing Syria with an air campaign in order to send more Syrian migrants into Europe, to destabilize Europe. Now, I’m wondering whether you think that’s far-fetched, but, at the same time, it sort of fits the picture of a Cold War?”

He answered:

“Yeah, certainly Russia dealing in Syria had a number of goals, ... but then of course, the impact of the bombings on civilian infrastructure, hospitals etcetera, has created an additional wave of refugees. ... It is very difficult to tell whether this was intended or not, but certainly it would fit the picture in a way.”

The wikipedia article “Refugees of the Syrian Civil War” said, right after the Russian bombing had started on 30 September 2015, that as of 15 October 2015 there were shown to be [“4,052,011 registered by UNHCR \(29 August 2015\)\[1\].”](#) As of today, 20 May 2016, that same site says [“4,812,993 refugees \(registered, March 2016\)\[1\].”](#) The idea that this 19% increase was one of the reasons or goals which had motivated Russia to start its bombing-campaign in Syria is ludicrous. That’s during around a six-month-long period. But at about six months prior to August of 2015, on 25 March 2015, there were shown to be [“3,922,860 registered by UNHCR \(18 March 2015\)\[1\].”](#) Not many new refugees were generated during the six-month period prior to Russia’s entry (and that wasn’t a Russian *invasion*, because the government of Syria had *requested* this assistance from Russia). But then, many refugees were generated during the first six months *after* Russia’s entry. This could have reflected Russia’s having enabled many Syrians to escape from ISIS, Al Qaeda, etc., but it also could have reflected damages caused by Russia’s bombing, but even if it had been the latter, this wouldn’t likely have been part of Russia’s *motivation* for its bombing, such as

NPR and OSCE were insinuating. However, on 11 March 2014, a year *prior* to that 25 March 2015 wiki article, there had been shown to be [“2,429,146 registered by UNHCR\(February 2014\).”](#) That’s around *1.5 million new refugees during about a year’s period*. None of that was during Russia’s bombing campaign.

America’s bombing campaign in both Syria and Iraq, called “Operation Inherent Resolve,” celebrated its first anniversary on [27 August 2015](#), and so, based on the above figures, the question arises as to whether America’s invasion of Syria (it wasn’t friendly; it was hostile toward the Syrian government, not requested by Syria; unlike Russia’s bombing, it was an invasion) might have contributed as much or more to the refugee-numbers than did Russia’s assistance to the Syrian government.

That NATO statement was unusually honest, however, in noting that, “The Defense Intelligence Agency, [said](#) that documents conclude that the yearlong campaign has done little to diminish the ranks of IS committed fighters, which has now expanded its reach to North Africa and Central Asia in the past year.” DIA had said this to The New York Times. The statement seemed to be a clear indication that if the American campaign had been about reducing the numbers of ISIS fighters, then it had drastically failed. But maybe that wasn’t necessarily its purpose in Syria, because all of the jihadist groups there were fighting to overthrow Assad, and because that was always the Obama Administration’s stated main goal, in addition to its rhetoric against “terrorists.”

And yet both the U.S. NPR, and the OSCE, are accusing Russia of having intentionally flooded Europe with Syrian refugees, and neither of those is alleging that the U.S. had contributed to that problem, and essentially created the bulk of it, by its invasion of Syria and by its insistence upon overthrowing Assad. Could the reason for the quiescence on that be that both are mouthpieces for the U.S. White House, and for its NATO alliance?

In any case, what NPR and OSCE said there was deception instead of information. This is one of the reasons they didn’t state explicitly “Russia is to blame for Europe’s refugee crisis.” It would have been too easy to nail them on that type of lie; it’s too blatant for professional liars, and therefore innuendo is used by them instead.

Relevant further context here is that [“NATO and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe \(OSCE\) work together to build security and promote stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. They cooperate at both the political and the operational level”](#), whereas [“In Istanbul on 19 November 1999, the OSCE ended a two-day summit by calling for a political settlement in Chechnya and adopting a Charter for European Security. According to then Minister of Foreign Affairs Igor Ivanov, this summit marked a turning point in Russian perception of the OSCE, from an organization that expressed Europe’s collective will, to an organization that serves as a Western tool.”](#) For some reason, the U.S. is not charging that the OSCE is a “Russian tool.” Perhaps OSCE officials such as Lamberto Zannier are among the reasons why. After all, [NATO is coming out more and more explicitly in favor of war against Russia](#). Lots of propaganda will need to be part of the buildup toward that. These people (Renee Montagne and Lamberto Zannier) are doing what they are paid to do.

It’s all in service to [a broader objective](#).

Investigative historian **Eric Zuesse** is the author, most recently, of [They’re Not Even Close](#):

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