

CALL OF THE WATCHMEN

October 2015

Walking on a cliff edge

As a nation of people do we feel as if we are walking along a cliff edge? To the left a sheer drop, to the right a sloping green pasture. In the light of the morning sun, shining from the right, the land looks lovely and bright. On the other side, there is a wide empty space – dark and threatening.

I am talking about the refugee situation. Some of us are welcoming the refugees with acts of kindness and mercy. Others only see dangers and are drawing back and issuing warnings. And the one criticises the other, even though both are acting in the right way. Both are acting biblically: “Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.” (Matthew 5:7). “Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and establish the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?” (Luke 14:28).

So let us raise the issue to a higher level: “Lord, what would YOU do here?” We are in a situation of conflict which may develop for our good or turn badly against us.

But I know this: by praying and calling on our Saviour Jesus, the situation can surely be turned around for the good of our land! -OS-

Answer to prayer

“Awakening Europe” was more than just an event. With more than 25,000 participants who also spread the gospel on the streets of Nuremberg, churches were strengthened and many young people were completely changed. -RS-

Government policy on refugees

The German government is facing the “greatest challenge since the reunification of Germany”. The coalition partners are standing together to manage this refugee crisis. Thank God! Despite their readiness to help in any way they can, people have many questions, concerns and fears. The rapidly growing numbers of refugees are causing so many different problems for which there are no immediate political solutions. We now need more government staff, teachers and social workers for the large number of children, school places, initial accommodation and longer-term housing, etc. Many of our institutions are just not prepared to deal with nearly a million more people in one year. Mistakes are being made – it is becoming more difficult and it is leading to social unrest. The government plans to take the following actions:

- (1) The asylum decision process will be accelerated.
- (2) Kosovo, Albania and Montenegro will be declared safe countries of origin.
- (3) The national government will financially support the leasing, renovating and building of accommodation.
- (4) Refugees will get more material benefits (provision of food, clothing, household items, etc.) instead of cash.
- (5) Additional people will be employed.

These and other actions have to be enacted in a package of bills which must pass through parliament by 15th October.

Many are talking about the benefits of the influx of young refugees for an ageing Germany.

A plan for managing refugees is however totally different

from an immigration policy. We need a comprehensive law to cover all aspects of immigration – something which the CDU/CSU is still refusing to enact.

Prayer:

- **That the planned actions can quickly be implemented. (Psalm 3:8)**
- **For a clear understanding of the refugee problems by the government and for further actions to be speedily set in motion. (Proverbs 18:15)**
- **For the government to also have wisdom in how to take stronger measures for the protection of their own people. (2 Chronicles 1:11-12a)** -RS-

Muslim refugees: threats and opportunities

Two thirds of all asylum seekers are Muslims. They are increasingly bringing an Arabic, radicalised Islam into our land from the Middle East and North Africa. The danger of the infiltration of radical Muslims with plans for terrorist activities is real. Christian refugees have been thrown overboard by Muslims in the boats carrying asylum seekers in the Mediterranean. In homes for asylum seekers, Christians, who are often in the minority, are victimised and attacked.

Amongst the refugees there are certainly also many Muslims who are fleeing from areas under radical Islamic control. Their faith in Islam has been severely shaken and they now have doubts. Many refugees already have a Christian background or are interested in Christianity. Now it is necessary to put the “Great Commission” into effect *here* in Germany: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations ...” (Matthew 28:19a). A few Christians and churches have already managed to find ways to go beyond providing material support and bring the gospel to these displaced people. Muslim converts to Christianity can now become powerful witnesses in the refugee homes. A pastor in Berlin who is involved with asylum seekers reported something very encouraging from his work: “What I find much more interesting is what the Lord is doing with Muslims who hear about Jesus in the homes and then have a PERSONAL EXPERIENCE of Him. I sense that the Lord will make a “special force” out of them, with the power and authority to reach those Muslims who are still carrying the spirit of death and destruction within them.”

Prayer:

- **Protection and spiritual encouragement through community life and fellowship for Christian refugees and Muslim converts. (Psalm 25:16-21)**
- **For workers in the harvest field who announce the Kingdom of God in power. (Matthew 9:38)**
- **Protection over our land from the plans of terrorists and that the strongholds of Islam will increasingly crumble and fall. (2 Corinthians 10:4)** -Johannes Blum, Call of the Watchmen Coordinator in Goeppingen-

Revision of the law on euthanasia (assisted suicide)

In November there will be a vote in parliament on the four proposals for the revision of the law on euthanasia. In three

of the proposals, assistance for suicide for commercial gain will be either regulated or penalised. Only a fourth proposal from Patrick Sensburg and Thomas Doerflinger (both CDU) stipulates a complete ban on any form of assisted suicide. However, almost no-one in the parliament wants to see a total ban as the solution to this issue. A preliminary examination by the governmental institution which provides independent advisory services to parliament has however classified the three other proposals as unconstitutional, as they do not clearly define the difference between euthanasia conducted in a truly professional manner and euthanasia from “altruistic motives”, which is necessary to ensure proper legal protection. If only commercially or otherwise arranged euthanasia is forbidden, it may still be legally possible for another person to administer a lethal dose, in some cases the doctors and relatives. For the doctors it is then a slippery slope to the practice of active euthanasia.

Prayer:

- **That the proposal from Sensburg/Doerflinger will get the vote of the majority.** -RS-

Realignment within the EU or a break-up of the Union

The Ukraine crisis brought the EU states closer together. As did the crisis in Greece. In these crises we saw *solidarity*, the cornerstone of the Union, in action and it strengthened Europe.

This seems to have somehow disappeared in the refugee crisis. In the first quarter of 2015, out of 28 member states, 16 have each taken less than 1% of the 185,000 refugees; Germany has taken 39.6%. The trend has continued in the second quarter. The request for solidarity and support in this crisis has fallen on deaf ears. In fact, there is no enforceable law for the treatment of refugees in Europe.

The agreement in Dublin in 2013 should have led to a procedure for the control of the influx of refugees. It said that refugees must be accepted by the first country within the EU that they enter. In reality this meant Italy and Greece and later Hungary, all of which however were completely unable to cope with the influx. They should have registered them, but in fact just waved them through. Dublin was a failure. The consequences: countries like Hungary and Great Britain are closing their national borders again. Or they simply say: NO. A Europe with open borders (Schengen Agreement) is in jeopardy.

At the beginning of October the President of the EU Commission Juncker will make a second attempt at a European law for refugee control. This law must make clear: who is to be recognised as a legitimate refugee, what is the minimum support that a country must provide before and after recognition (so that they will not all want to come to Germany), and according to what set of rules will recognised refugees be apportioned to the EU states. This law has to be binding for all member states as the EU is a community based on solidarity – especially in times of need.

Prayer:

- **Renewed commitment of the EU member states to want to solve this problem together and to accept the new law. (Psalm 77:11-14)**

- **Thanks that Germany has been recognised as a model for the reception and help for refugees. (2 Cor. 9:6-12)**
- **How can the countries in Africa (Matthew 15:33-34) and in the Middle East (Isaiah 19:23-25) be helped locally in a sustainable way?** -OS-

Disintegration of Syria – consequences for Israel

Israel's Prime Minister Netanyahu will be in Berlin from 7th to 10th November. The situation in Syria will certainly be a subject of discussion with the German government. The state of Syria continues to disintegrate. This poses a threat to Israel which was directly attacked in August from Syria for the first time since 1973 with four rockets. America, Russia and Iran have different strategic interests in the area, and until now there has been no unified strategy at the political level. The USA is participating in allied aerial attacks on the Islamic State (IS). Russia is supporting Syrian President Assad and has its only military base in Latakia on the Mediterranean Sea, in an area that is still controlled by Assad. Further support for Assad comes from Hezbollah and Shiite militia which are led by Iranian commanders. However Assad has lost control over more than 85% of the area of his state. One part is ruled by Al-Qaeda with its “Al-Nusra-Front” which is a declared enemy of the Islamic State (IS) which now controls a large area of Syria. They are also actively fighting against one another. Then there are a few influential rebel groups. In the middle of all this the civil population is facing annihilation and is fleeing the country. There are still 525,000 Palestinian refugees in Syrian camps, whose status as refugees is being artificially perpetuated. Palestinian President Abbas has now appealed to the UN that Israel should allow these refugees to flee into the West Bank and Gaza. This is linked to an old Palestinian legal claim. Israel sees this as a “back-door” ploy to implement the “right of return” of all Palestinians dating from 1948.

Prayer:

- **Protection for Israel from the dangers of a disintegrating Syrian state. (Psalm 48)**
- **For the purposes of God to bring grace and peace to Syria and the entire region. (Isaiah 19:23-25)**
- **For the meetings of Netanyahu in Berlin: that they will strengthen the relations between our two lands.** -RS-

Keep praying ...

Please pray especially for the “Global Gathering” from 25th to 28th October in Munich. (See September prayer letter.)
Pray for a strong presence of God with prophetic direction, unity within the international leadership team, protection and blessing on all preparations and participants. -RS-

Dates for your diary:

- 02.-04.10** National celebration for 25 years of German re-unification, in Frankfurt.
- 03.10** Day of German Unity
- 03.10-** PROCHRIST LIVE with 150 speakers in up to
14.11 400 locations in Germany and Europe.
- 11.10** Demo-fuer-Alle (Demo. for everyone), Stuttgart.
- 18-22.10** European Union of Prayer in Luxembourg.

*God's blessings from
Rosemarie Stresemann and Ortwin Schweitzer*