

Ottawa Journal by David Tilson MP ? Asylum claims costing the taxpayer millions

To say that the numbers are staggering is an understatement.

In July, the RCMP intercepted 2,996 people crossing illegally into Canada in order to claim asylum. The vast majority of those were at one crossing in Quebec. In August, that number rose to 5,330. The total to date this year is 13,211.

These numbers are in addition to the normal flow of asylum claims from overseas or those at legal points of entry. As of August, 27,440 claims for asylum had been made in Canada. This is at the highest levels since the record highs of 36,000 in 2008. And we have three and a half months still to go in 2017.

The cost of each asylum claim ranges between \$12,900 to more than \$20,000 according to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. That puts the bill for this year between \$359.9 million to \$548.8 million ? and we're only two thirds of the way through the year.

You may recall that earlier this summer, the Canadian Forces were called in to erect tent cities at the border with the U.S. in southern Quebec in order to be able to handle the flow of illegal migrants. They are then being transferred to a facility in Ontario simply because there aren't enough resources to handle this level of influx.

It is illegal to enter Canada between official points of entry. People who are intercepted by the RCMP or local law enforcement after crossing the border illegally are brought to the nearest CBSA port of entry or inland CBSA or IRCC office (whichever is closest), where an immigration officer will conduct an immigration examination, including whether detention is warranted. At this point, individuals undergo health check to address any immediate health needs, as well a security screenings to ensure that they do not pose a security threat to Canada and to determine whether they are eligible to make a refugee claim. These screenings include biometric checks (for example, fingerprinting). If required, a refugee claim will be started. If the claim is determined to be eligible, it will be referred to the Refugee Protection Division of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) for a hearing.

In most cases, the foreign national will be released on terms and conditions while they await their hearing. Individuals whose claim is found not to be eligible will be issued a removal order and released on conditions to report for a future removal hearing. The vast majority of these illegal border crossers will be deported, but only after draining resources intended for legitimate refugees and asylum seekers.

You may recall that the Prime Minister tweeted the following Jan. 28: ?To those fleeing persecution, terror & war, Canadians will welcome you, regardless of your faith. Diversity is our strength #WelcomeToCanada.?

This was in response to the messages coming out of the White House following President Trump's initial attempt at a travel ban on those from certain Muslim-majority countries. Conservatives would never have made such irresponsible proclamations as the Prime Minister did, nor given these people false hope. The Liberals have broken the system and stuck the taxpayer with a staggering bill. It's up to them to fix it.

