Europe states reap

what it has sown

whatever one sows, that will he also reap."

colonialism in the Middle East and north Africa.

There is something almost Biblical about the mass exodus of desperate

people fleeing Syria and other war-torn and impoverished countries. For European governments, struggling to manage the crisis engulfing their

borders, the Bible has a succinct lesson they might do well to ponder: "For

Mediterranean, has not suddenly materialized out of nowhere. The crisis

has been building for years, reaching back to the US-led invasions of

Afghanistan and Iraq, and much further still, to the era of European

This fatal flood-tide of human jetsam, surging haphazardly across the

The shocking photos of the limp, lifeless body of Aylan Kurdi, the two-

What is heartening is the overdue outpouring of public concern triggered

year-old Syrian toddler who drowned off Turkey last week, does not come

as a total surprise. At least 2,000 migrants have perished in similar circum-

stances this year. More than 350,000 have braved the journey across the

by Aylan's needless, shaming death. Perhaps volunteer food bank collectors

Normandy are ready to admit what their governments will not: that the West

bears primary responsibility for this recurring tragedy -- and that, whatever

the causes, common human decency demands Europe do all it can to halt it.

coincidence. Nearly 15 years after the events of 9/11 prompted the US-led

invasion, much of the country remains a fearful, dangerous place plagued

political reform, painfully opened by US and British troops after 2003, was

slammed shut by a sectarian-minded, Iranian-dominated Shia majority

new, less divisive regime is now in power, the damage was done.

and rape without conscience or constraint.

the Titanic with a sieve.

to cling to power?

Not really.

government in Baghdad. Western politicians let this happen. Although a

Islamist extremists and foreign jihadis who have wrenched control from

the alienated and demoralized Sunni minority. The jihadis murder, torture

Would you and your family stick around? Waiting for Washington or

London to remedy the mess they made in Iraq is akin to bailing water on

And then there is Syria. Millions displaced, hundreds of thousands

dead, the neighborhood destabilized, the war continuing with no end in

sight. Is it fair to blame Barack Obama, David Cameron or Angela Merkel

for President Bashar al-Assad's genocidal, Russian and Iranian-backed bid

But they can all be faulted, along with Arab and Turkish leaders and

Nor is it any use saying the Arab regimes of the Gulf, key actors in Syria's

Instead of building walls, shutting doors and arguing about numbers,

Europe is reaping a whirlwind of its own making. It needs to stand up,

CNN ONLINE

tragedy, should do more to help. Of course they should. But as so often when

cold-blooded Vladimir Putin, for doing so very little, in practical terms, to

halt the slaughter either through military or diplomatic interventions.

a humanitarian crisis blows up, they sit on their hands and their wallets.

European leaders -- encouraged by Washington -- must recognize their

responsibilities, historical and current, moral and practical.

A third or more of Iraq is now in the hands of the very worst kind of

That a large proportion of the refugees comes from Afghanistan is no

The picture in Iraq is even more alarming. The window on post-Saddam

in Hamburg, emergency convoy drivers in Belfast and local councillors in

Mediterranean to Europe in 2015, according to the International

Organisation for Migration -- and they are still coming.

by warlords and fanatics.

to admit 10,000

Syrian refugees AFP, Washington

President Barack Obama has ordered his team to admit at least 10,000 Syrian refugees next year, the White House said yesterday, amid criticism that the United States has not done enough. Spokesman Josh Earnest said Obama had asked staff to "scale up" the number of refugee admissions from around 1,500 in this fiscal year, to 10,000 in the next, beginning October 1. "He has informed his team that he would like them to ... accept at least 10,000 refugees in the next fiscal year," said Earnest. With global public opinion shocked by images of drowning refugees, the United States is under political pressure to act quickly. The United States currently accepts around 70,000 refugees from conflicts and persecution each year, but has been slow to accept Syrians. Refugees from Syria and its region must undergo strict security checks to weed out extremists, even after being registered by the United Nations. An estimated four million

Syrians have fled during four years of war. Fleeing war a 'major sin'!

AFP, Beirut The jihadist Islamic State group has used the shocking image of drowned Syrian toddler Aylan Kurdi to warn refugees against trying to flee to the West, calling it a "major sin". Threeyear-old Aylan's body was photographed lying in the sand in Bodrum, Turkey after he drowned in a boat accident while his family tried to reach Greece -- an image that helped to focus international attention on the plight of refugees. In the latest issue of its English-language magazine Dabiq, ISIS published the boy's image under said Muslims were committing a "dangerous major sin" by bringing children to the West, where "they are under the constant threat of fornica-

INTERNATIONAL

Migrants and refugees wait under the rain to cross the Greek-Macedonian border near the village of Idomeni, in northern Greece, yesterday.

EU divided over refugee quotas

Record migrants arrive at Serbia-Hungary border deepening crisis

the frontier.

Europe was increasingly divided over its refugee crisis yesterday as record numbers of migrants streamed through the Balkans into Hungary, forcing Austria to suspend cross-border train services. Germany warned that an EU plan to distribute

160,000 new arrivals among member states was a mere "drop in the ocean", but it faces stiff opposition from eastern members who say they will not accept binding quotas from Brussels. Hungarian police said 3,321 people had entered in just 24 hours, hurrying to cross before harsh new

anti-migrant laws take effect, an imposing new fence is completed, and the weather worsens. Across the border in Serbia, state television reported that a record 5,000 people had arrived at

The UN's refugee agency on Tuesday warned that at least 42,000 migrants were expected to enter Hungary by next week.

Many have endured treacherous sea journeys across the Mediterranean -- most fleeing war and poverty in Syria, Afghanistan or Pakistan and hoping to reach Germany.

Once inside Hungary, overstretched police have struggled to control and register new arrivals as they break through fences and try to board

trains and buses heading for Austria. Earlier, Denmark's train operator said it

resume later in the day, after police ordered services to be suspended due to an influx of migrants.

Police meanwhile announced they were letting refugees travel freely through Denmark without registering if they didn't want to seek asylum there, allowing them to head to Sweden which is the preferred destination of many because of its more welcoming and generous asylum policy.

EU interior ministers will meet Monday to discuss

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

EU parliament backs refugee plan Germany says 450,000 arrived since January

Austria cuts rail link to Hungary

Danish-German rail services partly resumes

a plan unveiled by European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker to share out 160,000 refugees across the bloc and ease the burden on frontline states.

Germany, which has already welcomed 450,000 migrants this year, wants the 28-nation group to go further, calling for no limits to the quotas. "The distribution of 160,000 refugees across

Europe is a first step, if one wants to be polite," said Deputy Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel. "It's a drop in the ocean."

Gabriel said 450,000 people had arrived in

expected rail traffic across the German border to Germany so far this year, with 37,000 in the first eight days of September.

The European parliament backed Juncker's plans yesterday and they will now have to get the go-ahead from member states.

may have to call a special summit to get them approved. "It is inappropriate to talk about mandatory quotas, calculated on an extremely bureaucratic basis, almost like an accountancy exercise I might

But binding quotas are already facing fierce

resistance from eastern EU members and Brussels

say, without consulting member states," said Romania President Klaus Iohannis. His views echoed those of Slovakian Prime Minister Robert Fico, who said Wednesday he did not "want to wake up one day and have 50,000

people here about whom we know nothing." German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier will try to win over eastern European counterparts at a meeting in Prague today.

Juncker's proposals also include a possible revision of the EU's much-criticised Dublin Treaty, under which asylum claims must be processed by the first country that refugees arrive

Some help may be on the way from outside, with US Secretary of State John Kerry on Wednesday

MILITARY SUPPORT TO SYRIA REGIME

Russia defiant

Vows to supply Assad with everything

A defiant Russia yesterday said it was ready to increase

military support to Syria's Bashar al-Assad if needed,

dismissing suggestions it could hamper Western efforts to

Washington has accused Moscow of solidifying its

foothold in Syria, raising concerns it could throw a wrench

in plans by the US-led coalition to step up operations

The fresh tension erupted just weeks before the UN

Speaking to reporters, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said

General Assembly in New York at which Russian President

Moscow wanted to avoid a repeat of the "Libyan scenario"

in Syria and would therefore provide greater military

ian aid and military equipment in accordance with existing

equipment in accordance with current contracts and

secret," he said. "Russia is not taking any additional steps."

"Russian is sending planes to Syria with both military

"We have never made our military presence (in Syria) a

US officials said this week that Russia had been sending

The White House warned this week that a Russian military

Lavrov said he had discussed Washington's concerns

Putin has called for the establishment of a wider

coalition to combat ISIS in Syria and his spokesman said he

would raise the issue in his UN address.

with US Secretary of State John Kerry who had phoned him

buildup in Syria could spark a "confrontation" with US-led

forces carrying out an air campaign against the ISIS group.

ships, armoured personnel carriers and naval infantry to

Syria in an apparent effort to prop up the besieged regime.

he needs to avert 'Libyan scenario'

the headline: "The danger of Abandoning Darul-Islam," or the land of Islam. "Sadly some Syrians and Libyans are willing to risk the lives and souls of those whom they are responsible to raise... sacrificing many of them during the dangerous trip to the lands of the war-waging crusaders," it said. It

tion, sodomy, drugs and alcohol".

seeking to drum up support for the country to accept more refugees. EU lawmakers called for an international conference on migration bringing

AFP, Moscow

requested.

fight Islamic State militants.

against jihadists in the war-torn country.

Vladimir Putin is scheduled to speak.

assistance to the Syrian president if

help and will help the Syrian

government when it comes to

supplying the Syrian army with

ramping up its military presence in

Syria, saying Russia was merely

supplying its ally with humanitar-

But he denied that Moscow was

everything it needs," he said.

humanitarian aid," he said.

twice over the past few days.

"We helped, are continuing to

or risk being blown away. ISIS puts foreign hostages 'for sale'

Two men stand in yellow jumpsuits, staring toward the camera with a chilling message posted below their

portraits: "FOR SALE."

CNN ONLINE

The images, tucked away in the final pages of the latest edition of the ISIS online magazine Dabiq, are part of a troubling new claim: The terrorist group says it's holding two more

foreign nationals hostage. One page reads "Norwegian Prisoner For Sale." The next says "Chinese Prisoner

For Sale."

The pages show images of the men from several angles and ask for an undisclosed ransom to pay for their "release and transfer." The men appear to be wearing tags with their names and identification number. The magazine also lists each man's purported occupation, place of birth, date of birth and home

address. An ominous warning appears beneath an Iraqi phone number at the bottom of each page: "Note: This is a limited time

Speaking to reporters in Oslo late Wednesday, Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg confirmed that a Norwegian man in his 40s was being held hostage in Syria. The kidnappers have asked for specific ransom amounts several times, she said,

but Norway will not pay. ISIS has taken dozens of international hostages, often seeking ransoms for them to swell its coffers. Some governments have

reportedly handed over hefty sums of cash. In other cases, where money isn't forthcoming, the Islamic militant group has publicized its barbaric killings of the hostages, apparently in an effort to score propaganda points with its extremist followers.







(From left, clockwise) Local residents are rescued from their flooded home by a helicopter in Joso, Ibaraki Prefecture; a hotel building falls into the floodwaters at Nikko mountain resort in Tochigi prefecture; people are rescued from vehicles by firefighters in Ibaraki prefecture. Dozens of people were trapped in buildings and several were missing after powerful floods ripped through parts of Japan yesterday, in the wake of torrential rains.

air base kills 54

AFP, Beirut

the city.

Jihadists of the Islamic State group edged closer to a strategic airbase in eastern Syria in heavy clashes that left 54 fighters dead, a monitoring group said yesterday. The extremist group, which has captured territory across

Iraq and Syria, seized control late Wednesday of an army post near the regime-held military airbase outside Deir Ezzor, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. "It was one of the Islamic State's fiercest attacks on the

airport," Observatory director Rami Abdel Rahman said, using an Arabic acronym for the jihadist group. He said 36 IS fighters and 18 regime soldiers were killed.

The seizure of the army post, used by a rocket battalion, advanced IS to barely one kilometre (less than one mile) from the airport.

Abdel Rahman said the jihadists had used two suicide bombers in the assault, one of them a child, driving cars

laden with explosives. More than 50 jihadists were wounded in the fighting, he added.

IS already controls most of oil-rich Deir Ezzor province including about half of its capital, and has fought for more than a year to capture the airport and the rest of

ISIS attack on Syria US intel analysts revolt over rosy ISIS assessments: report

AFP, Washington

More than 50 US intelligence analysts have complained that senior military officials altered reports so as to downplay the strength of Islamic State and al-Qaeda's branch in Syria, the Daily Beast reported Thursday. The online news outlet said senior

officials at US Central Command changed the reports to bring them into line with the White House's rosier public view that the United States was winning the war against the militant groups. "The cancer was within the senior level of

the intelligence command," the report quoted a defense official as saying.

It said the revolt came to a head when two senior analysts at Centcom signed and sent a written complaint to the Defense Department inspector general in July alleging that reports, including some presented in briefings to President Barack

Another 50 analysts supported the

Obama, portrayed the groups as weaker than the analysts believed they were.

complaint, the Daily Beast said, citing 11 unnamed individuals knowledgeable about the details of the report. Peter Cook, the spokesman for Secretary of

Defense Ashton Carter, declined to comment on details in the report, but he did say Carter wanted only undiluted intelligence reports. "He has made clear that he expects

candid intelligence analysis to come his direction, for folks to call it like they see it," Cook told reporters.

Under a directive by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, which

oversees the 17 US intelligence agencies, analytical assessments "must not be distorted" by a particular audience, agenda or policy view. If the assessments were indeed skewed, it

could help explain why public perceptions of progress against the militants has varied. Since the US-led bombing campaign of the Islamic State began in Iraq a year ago, and subsequently in Syria, Iraqi security

forces have retaken some territory previ-

ously seized by the group but not major

Iraqi cities like Mosul and Ramadi.

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