



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on June 1, 2017

European Officials Commandeer Private Property to House Migrants

Faced with [an orchestrated influx of millions of migrants from Africa and the Middle East](#), German officials have started commandeering private property to house the tsunami of new arrivals. Italian property owners have also been forced, [literally kicking and screaming](#), to house migrants against their will. Plans to [put resisters in jail are reportedly being considered](#). And in Sweden, where an extreme housing shortage in Stockholm has been made even more acute by the arrival of hundreds of thousands of migrants in recent years, [authorities are using tax money to outbid Swedes in the intensifying competition for living space](#). Other [fundamental freedoms are also being attacked under the guise of dealing with the self-inflicted “refugee crisis.”](#) And it is going to get worse.



Perhaps the most extreme attacks on private property have come from Germany. In the city of Hamburg (shown), the ruling coalition of extreme left-wing authorities first began seizing private property to house migrants with a controversial law passed in October of 2015. With some 400 migrants arriving in the city each day and migrant shelters already packed to capacity with new arrivals, officials claimed it was needed. At first, it was just commercial property that was supposed to be confiscated and turned into migrant housing, and only if the property in question was vacant. The confiscation was also only supposed to take place if the owner refused to hand over their properties voluntarily in exchange for compensation funds extracted from taxpayers.

But as always occurs with government attacks on fundamental rights, it was a slippery slope — and it did not take long for phase two to begin.

Now, authorities in Hamburg, Germany’s second-largest city, are even targeting and commandeering residential properties as well. According to local and [international news reports](#) this month, authorities have now seized six apartments in the central Hamm district, against the owner’s will. After the properties were confiscated, officials began “renovating” them so they would be suitable for tenants of the government’s choosing. The property owner will be billed for all the “renovation” expenses incurred by the government, a spokesman for the governing council behind the seizures was quoted as saying in the press. The costs are estimated to run into five figures. A “city-appointed trustee” will oversee the process and the housing units commandeered by authorities.

But this is just the start, according to various news agencies. The local government, dominated by the far-left Socialist and Green parties, even established a “hotline” for residents of Hamburg to report any



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properties they may know of which may have been vacant for more than four months. After those four months are up, the residential properties will be subject to being commandeered by local government and being put under the supervision of the government's "trustee," who can then pack the apartments with migrants or other tenants at taxpayer expense. Activists reportedly also set up a website dubbed "Vacancy Reporter" to help authorities locate vacant real estate for authorities to commandeer in Hamburg and beyond.

Of course, multiple government policies have fueled the housing crisis. From failing to approve building permits to imposing draconian restrictions on rent, local authorities have helped ensure an acute shortage in supply. Combined with the surge in demand brought about by the [national government's deeply unpopular policy of inviting millions of Third World migrants into the country](#) at taxpayer expense, the housing and rental-property markets have been radically distorted. And so, city officials have resorted to further attacks on private property rights to deal with the problems government helped create to begin with.

Outside of Hamburg, municipalities have also been evicting tenants from their apartments to house migrants. The first reported case in Germany happened in September of 2015 in the town of Nieheim. It involved Bettina Halbey, a 51-year-old nurse. "I was completely taken aback," she told *Die Welt* after receiving the eviction letter. "I find it impossible to describe how the city has treated me." On social media, she described the move as "a kick in the teeth." Later that month, Gabrielle Keller, in the German town of Eschbach, was ordered by authorities to vacate her government-owned apartment, again to make room for migrants. "The alternative would have been to set up beds in the gym," argued the mayor.

An even more draconian scheme to trample private property rights to house migrants was also floated in the German capital of Berlin. Under that proposal, police would have been authorized to invade private property without a warrant to determine whether the residence would be suitable for migrant housing, according to media reports. However, even amid the escalating "refugee" crisis brought on [by "former" East German Communist Party propagandist Angela Merkel](#) and her "open door" policy, that was considered an unconstitutional bridge too far. More than a few critics suggested Hamburg's attacks on property rights may also be unconstitutional, but no official determination has yet been made.

Still, critics expressed outrage. "Hamburg's situation clearly illustrates the downside to uncontrolled mass migration," argued Matt O'Brien with the Washington, D.C.-based Federation for American Immigration Reform, which opposes mass migration. "Western civilization operates on the notion that the first duty of a government is to protect the life, liberty and property of its own citizens. All other obligations are subsidiary. Hamburg decided to protect foreigners at the expense of German citizens and, in so doing, failed to fulfill the first duty of government. Let's hope that if the U.S. government ever begins expropriating private land in response to a migrant crisis, it's to build a border wall, not to house massive numbers of immigrants that the people of the United States never wanted here."

Local political figures in Hamburg have also spoken out, comparing the attacks on private property to tyranny and shameful communist horrors in Germany's past. "The proposed confiscation of private land and buildings is a massive attack on the property rights of the citizens of Hamburg," André Trepoll with the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) party was quoted as saying in media reports, saying the "law of intimidation" was a "political dam-break with far-reaching implications." "It amounts to an expropriation by the state.... The ends do not justify any and all means." The leader of the Free



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Democrats Party in Hamburg, meanwhile, called it an “unacceptable crossing of red lines” and noted that, ironically, such “coercive measures” would “only fuel resentment against refugees.”

Germany is hardly the only formerly sovereign European nation in which citizens and their fundamental rights — including their private-property rights — are being trampled by authorities to accommodate the avalanche of Third World migrants. In Italy, for example, an elderly hotel operator was terrorized by armed agents of the state for refusing to have his property packed full of migrants. A [horrifying video of the episode went viral across the Internet](#). When Luigi Fogli, 80 at the time, refused to house “refugees” for 7 euros in tax money for each — all of them apparently African men without families present, video shows — authorities simply forced him to do it, literally.

Late last year, the Italian Interior Ministry even floated a scheme, dubbed the “Viminale Plan,” that would have put resisters behind bars for refusing to allow their properties to be commandeered for housing migrants. Under the plan, [widely reported in Italian media](#), thousands of armed enforcement agents from the police and the military would be deployed to oversee enforcement. The Justice Ministry was reportedly prepared to provide trials and detention to those who resisted the plan. And almost incredibly, the commandeering of private property was set to take place without compensation, as the government does not have the funds to pay.

As *The New American* has documented extensively in a series of articles, private property rights are not the only fundamental human rights being targeted in Europe under the guise of dealing with the so-called refugee crisis. Indeed, across Europe and the rest of the Western world, [the globalist-engineered migrant crisis is leading to attacks on a wide array of fundamental liberties including self-government, privacy, free speech, freedom of the press, and more](#). In Germany, authorities have been [raiding apartments and arresting those who criticize foreigners, Islam, or the mass-migration agenda too vociferously](#).

The Islamist terror attacks that have resulted from the crisis and will continue to worsen, meanwhile, are being cited by regional authorities at the European Union and national powers as a pretext to justify the ongoing expansion of the police state at the national, regional, and international level. More than a few political leaders have suggested the [establishment’s agenda behind the migrant tsunami is the destruction of national cohesion, Christianity, and the nation-state on the road to regional and global governance](#). And senior establishment bigwigs such as [former Goldman Sachs boss and UN migration czar Peter Sutherland have all but confirmed it](#). Indeed, [the United Nations is funding TV ads urging German women to wear Muslim head scarves](#).

The attacks on private property rights must be resisted by all clear-thinking people. America’s Founding Fathers warned about just how serious infringements on private property were. John Adams, America’s first vice president and second president, was perhaps the most firm and eloquent. “The moment the idea is admitted into society, that property is not as sacred as the laws of God, and that there is not a force of law and public justice to protect it, anarchy and tyranny commence,” Adams [warned](#). “If ‘Thou shalt not covet,’ and ‘Thou shalt not steal,’ were not commandments of Heaven, they must be made inviolable precepts in every society, before it can be civilized or made free.”

Across the Western world, including in the United States, that idea was admitted long ago. And under the guise of housing migrants, the idea is rapidly being expanded all over the West.

Amid the globalist-orchestrated refugee crisis, in which [globalist Western governments destroyed Middle Eastern and African nations before inviting the victims to Europe and the United States at](#)



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[taxpayer expense](#), the very foundations of Western civilization and Christendom are being eroded. And that was probably the agenda all along. Instead of bombing foreign countries to rubble and then welcoming the Third World into the West, real solutions to the problems must begin by holding accountable the establishment figures behind the tragedies.

Trampling the fundamental rights of Germans, Americans, and Italians is probably the worst possible way of dealing with the crisis. Instead of attacking innocent citizens, [everyone in Brussels and Washington, D.C., who engineered the illegal wars on Libya](#) and [other nations](#) based on illegitimate United Nations resolutions should face legal accountability — up to and including criminal prosecution if crimes were committed, as it seems they were. Property owners in the West and around the world should be left in peace.

Photo: Hamburg, Germany

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