**Dividing Lines: The Human Face of Global Migration [Part 2]**

By Haley Sweetland Edwards *TIME Magazine, February 4 – 11, 2019*

The mass movement of people has changed the world both for better and for worse. Migrants tend to be productive. Though worldwide they make up about 3% of the population, in 2015 they generated about 9% of global GDP, according to the U.N. Much of that money is wired home—$480 billion in 2017, also according to the U.N.—where the cash has immense impact. Some will pay for the passage of the next migrant, and the smartphone he or she will keep close at hand. The technology not only makes the journey more efficient and safer—smugglers identify their clients by photos on instant-messaging—but, upon arrival, allows those who left to keep in constant contact with those who remain behind, across oceans and time zones.

Yet attention of late is mostly focused on the impact on host countries. There, national leaders have grappled with a powerful irony: the ways in which they react to new migrants—tactically, politically, culturally—shape them as much as the migrants themselves do. In some countries, migrants have been welcomed by crowds at train stations. In others, images of migrants moving in miles-long caravans through Central America or spilling out of boats on Mediterranean shores were wielded to persuade native-born citizens to lock down borders, narrow social safety nets and jettison long-standing humanitarian commitments to those in need.

The U.S., though founded by Europeans fleeing persecution, now largely reflects the will of its Chief Executive: subverting decades of asylum law and imposing a policy that separated migrant toddlers from their parents and placed children behind cyclone fencing. Trump floated the possibility of revoking birthright citizenship, characterized migrants as “stone cold criminals” and ordered 5,800 active-duty U.S. troops to reinforce the southern border. Italy refused to allow ships carrying rescued migrants to dock at its ports. Hungary passed laws to criminalize the act of helping undocumented people. Anti-immigrant leaders saw their political power grow in the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Sweden, Germany, Finland, Italy and Hungary, and migration continued to be a factor in the Brexit debate in the U.K.

These political reactions fail to grapple with a hard truth: in the long run, new migration is nearly always a boon to host countries. In acting as entrepreneurs and innovators, and by providing inexpensive labor, immigrants overwhelmingly repay in long-term economic contributions what they use in short-term social services, studies show. But to maximize that future good, governments must act -rationally to establish humane policies and adequately fund an immigration system equipped to handle an influx of newcomers.

It is impossible, of course, for individual migrants like Monterroso and Calderón to fully appreciate their role in this immense global movement. When they left Guatemala on that dark morning, they could hardly consider the news footage that would frame the migrant caravan as a column aimed at breaching the U.S. homeland. But they got a sense of things when they arrived. In Tijuana, Kenia and Yeimi knelt on a sidewalk, piecing together a Frozen-themed jigsaw puzzle. But just across the border, U.S. soldiers, fresh from overseas deployments, gathered to defend the U.S. against people like them. The sound of a military chopper cut the air.