

PWPA USA: Interview of former US Congressman Mark Siljander - Rescue Afghans from Taliban Genocide

Frank Kaufmann
November 5, 2021



On November 5, Dr. Frank Kaufmann conducted an important interview with former US Congressman Mark Siljander about the latter's urgent efforts to rescue vulnerable Afghans from terror and extermination under Taliban rule.

Mark Siljander spent over three decades in Washington, DC starting as a Republican U.S. Congressman and a Senate confirmed U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations (alt. rep.). Read Ambassador Siljander's full bio and interview transcript below...

He has participated in the U.S. National Prayer Breakfast for 40 years.

Mark is the author of best-selling and award-winning book, *A Deadly Misunderstanding; A Congressman's Quest to Bridge the Muslim-Christian Divide*, published by HarperCollins. Siljander's book recounts his journey of discovery and transformation starting as a young Evangelical and Cold War-era Hawk to eventually become a trailblazing peacemaker, both pre and post-9/11, especially between Muslims and Christians, working with the leadership in countries such as Libya, Iraq, Pakistan and the Central African Republic, among others. Most prominently, Siljander developed and helped draft the U.N. Security Council Resolution that deployed U.N. Peacekeepers in Darfur, Sudan; stopping the genocide.

His book, which chronicles these quiet peacemaking efforts, was endorsed by a diverse group of political and religious leaders including the then sitting U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, U.S. Attorney General Edwin Meese, Democrats and Republicans alike including Congressman and Nobel Peace Prize nominee Tony Hall (D-OH) and an Iranian Ayatollah, Dr. Ahmad Irvani. Former Secretary of State James Baker endorsed Siljander's book saying that it was "a blueprint for breaking this logjam of dissension that contributes to so much [religious] conflict today."

His peacemaking efforts and stint as a U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations were acknowledged by former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who publicly recognized his, "...efforts toward a more just, humane and peaceful world." He was also presented with the Mohandas K. Gandhi International Peace Award in 1996 by the Indian American community in Washington, DC.

His academic achievements include a Masters Degree in Political Science and post-graduate PhD work in International Business and EdD studies in Education. As an avid Semitic linguistic student, Ambassador Siljander has served on numerous academic boards and lectured in most higher educational institutions in Khartoum, and numerous diverse institutions such as Oxford University, Edinburgh University, Wheaton College, United Nations, and European Union.

Transcript

Frank Kaufmann: It is an enormous privilege for me to be with Mark today. Please welcome Mark to our program. Congressman, welcome.

Mark Siljander: Thank you very much. It's good to be with you, Frank.

FK: Thank you. Is it all right, if I call you Mark during our time together?

MS: Of course. We're friends and that's my name.

FK: Perfect. Excellent, excellent. Mark, I know you through so many different hats and our listeners have also heard a brief touch on the range of your biography all the way from the several term congressmen to US Ambassador to the United Nations, and even as a linguist scholar. So there's probably many, many interviews that you and I should do together. But for this particular time together, I'm going to be focusing on a work that you've recently become involved in, that has to do with the tragic situation and kind of shocking situation that has erupted in Afghanistan since the US withdrawal. Is that fine with you that we just stick to this as our topic today?

MS: Indeed.

FK: Wonderful. So the US withdrawal, I believe, was by the clock at August 31 sharp. Is that correct by my memory? August 31 the last of us...

MS: Yes.

FK: was out of there. And then the world saw these horrifying scenes of people holding on to the outside of planes and the like. There's been a tremendous amount of politics surrounding the analysis of our withdrawal. And then, of course, very soon after that, I think within 10 or 11 days, 15 US servicemen lost their life in a suicide attack near the airport, just outside the airport. This too, would be a topic for especially a person with the political acumen, such as yourself, but this is not where we're going to focus today. We're really concentrating on the relief work. And then beyond that, the kind of cultural dialogue that you're trying to pursue. First the humanitarian effort, and then to see if there can be some long-term improvement to help the citizens of Afghanistan. Is that correct?

MS: Yes, indeed. That's also correct. Thank you Frank.

FK: Good. Okay, Mark. So when I received the brief summary of the work you're doing, first reference, well, I'll just read the first sentence of what I've used to familiarize myself. And it says, "There are 15,000 rescued Afghan located in humanitarian city in the Middle East. Our network can rescue thousands more". So right there in the first sentence and a half, there're a couple of questions that will probably help our hearers. Can you start off by helping us understand what is this reference humanitarian city?

MS: Well, I've been asked not to be overly specific with the country and location.

FK: Okay.

MS: I can't imagine that most people don't already know. But that's what I've been asked regarding this.

FK: Very good.

MS: But it's in the Gulf and it's a city. It's called the humanitarian city; it is for Afghans. It has been flown or somehow rescued out of harm's way in Afghanistan.

FK: So there's been a concerted effort to rescue asylum seekers, and also on humanitarian need refugees and one of the countries in the Gulf has generously set up a place where these refugees can be housed or taken care of. And there, these people should be relocated. Is that correct? So the humanitarian city is kind of a holding place to get human beings out of Afghanistan as the first step.

MS: Exactly. I wish I could say the name of the country. And hopefully, we'll have been released from that obligation because they're honestly doing a much better job than the US Army did with the bases where we pile tens of thousands of people living literally in their own feces, and it was an embarrassment to our country, an embarrassment to the heart of this nation that gives more than any nation, even per capita in the entire world. Now, I'm not trying to be political at all. It was a boondoggle from the very beginning and continues to be the reason I can't mention or should not mention that as not to mention the name of the country is because our State Department has for some reason asked the leadership in this part of the world not to cooperate with the private groups such as so many within our vast network. But we have to because our government promised most of these people who are either Christian in a small

percentage, or almost all of them at some level, worked with, or alongside, or involved with either US military or some government or NGO.

FK: Yeah.

MS: And promised to take care of them.

FK: Yeah.

MS: And we have already taken care of some. The Biden administration did airlift I don't know, several 100,000 I'm told. Where they are, I have no idea. But I can tell you that there were tens of thousands left behind. And now all private entities are raising their own money from private sources, not government...

FK: Yeah.

MS: to try to rescue the people and now they're stuck in this city. But this country, in conclusion, is doing a masterful job. They've given most all of them I understand COVID-19 vaccines. There is an outbreak for example of measles, which can be, you know, deadly to children...

FK: Yes.

MS: and others. Less so they start vaccinating people. They live in at least reasonable, acceptable conditions vastly better, as we alluded to earlier, than we offer so many of the refugees back in the beginning. So this country is really owed a debt of gratitude for how well they've treated these 15,000.

FK: That's very moving to hear. One gets emotional whenever one hears a whole country taking up a grand humanitarian posture. I myself was worked during the Balkan Wars. And I was working in the refugee camps in Croatia. And, the nation of Croatia was hugely, unimaginably sacrificial in setting up and caring for refugees. A huge amount of its GDP was committed, and it's always moving when a country has that grandeur. So, I look forward to when we'll learn who they are, especially as you've praised them. So clearly, it's hard not to be political. And we'll both constrain ourselves in this because that's not the purpose of our conversation today. But these refugee camps that you described that the US was running that were run in such unsanitary and inhumane conditions, were these outside Afghanistan, or...

MS: Yeah.

FK: where? Okay. And so they must still exist also, trying to dig out of this bad infrastructure in these camps I guess. Because...

MS: You know, I really don't know because we are so consumed with, first of all, we were getting people out and putting them in the humanitarian city. And they, this country, offered I think it was 4 or 5000. Well, obviously, that was three times that number. They still took that many people, but they're saying before you bring more, because keep in mind they're housing, feeding, I mentioned the medical attention, and they're you know, helping them with their basic needs. Before we can bring more, we have to find permanent home countries for this.

FK: Yes.

MS: So that's our present obligation, which is, Frank, it's a matrix of complexities to move these people in these large groups to any country. Because, who's going to pay for it?

FK: Yes.

MS: I mean who is going to pay for their housing, their food, their medical, who's going to train them? Who's going to determine what talents people have, who's a doctor, who's a lawyer, who's a truck driver, who's retired, who's disabled, who's blind, who? You know, all these different things we have, how many children, how many elderlies? Like these are all questions that we literally this network, which I have to give them great tribute as well. A very diverse people, very diverse, Christian, Muslim, you know, people who don't have any faith, they're bonding in a sense over the humanitarian crisis that all these poor people were facing.

FK: Yes.

MS: And so we are slowly trying to figure this out, but you would hope that some government, you know, with we spent 2.3 trillion in 20 years in Afghanistan. You think they could give us 1/10 of 1% or spend that themselves and that we could find host countries, train them, identifying their talents for all of them, And then we could bring another five, or 10,000.

FK: Yeah. There's so much you've raised just in your first commentary here that I'd like to unpack if we have time. But you mentioned, a network. So it's a multi religious community of concerned individuals who are working with all different forms of talents from international travel logistics, to language and translate. It's a network that has just created itself to serve the sudden crisis. Is that correct?

MS: That's exactly right. And I kind of look at, you're on the board of Track Five, in bridges to common ground, which is the NGO that tries to build bridges of understanding and a feast. We're using our networks and connecting people, we feel like we're ligaments, to bring an arm, you know, to the shoulder and the shoulder to the chest. And we're creating a really unbelievable network of incredibly talented people with very unique competencies that can be brought to the table. Like, for example, one has software in various languages that can identify these skill sets of people in refugee situations like this. So then we can tell a host country well, we have 10 doctors, we have 3000 people who could work in a mine, we have 4000 people that have some talent in oil and gas, or nurses or doctors, or healthcare or daycare experts. I mean with artists, we need to know who are these people so we can present them as a more compelling case to these various countries who are least for negotiation. Why should we negotiate? You know, once you think one of the Western governments power houses of the world, but would take care of these 15,000 peoples, and so we can bring more. But really it's sort of left up to us. In fact, not only are they not helping, some of these government entities, I'd argue, are actually obstructionist.

FK: Yeah. It's already hard so early in this content in this interview, conversation are, it's already hard to breathe and we haven't even scratched the surface here. One of the questions that I had is, one gets the impression that getting people out of Afghanistan is manageable. An average lay person, I think, kind of thought the country locked down the airports or closed, the Taliban control Bagram and Kabul. And they tried, like, try to find some way to get out across the border, you know, through the mountains or. But you're talking about moving thousands upon thousands. What is the reality? The Taliban says take them, we don't want them or how is it? What is the reality about people who want to leave the posture of the Taliban and the possibility to leave?

MS: Well, that's a very good question, Frank. First of all, there are certain elements that are best not broadcast.

FK: Yeah.

MS: What we can say is that we're losing people every day. For example, in the Track Five smaller network, we achieved getting 371 people out in one airplane, and it cost \$850,000 to bring those people up and get them to the city. Think of this, US \$850,000.

FK: For 400 people.

MS: And you just would cry to see these children on their families' laps in crowding airplanes. And sometimes the Taliban not in our case, would board the plane and start picking people out and you never see them again. I mean, they're so happy, we're on an airplane, we're leaving. And then they come take them up. There are so many heart-wrenching circumstances. And even one of our close allies is the Seventh Day Adventist network. They had 22 people on their list to get out. And there are only four alive, the rest have been murdered. They go house-to-house. I mean, what's happening on the ground is we don't hear about it. All we hear about is Biden and the elections and Trump. You know what he's saying. But what's happening is, a lot of us are doing you see the US 20 years of US involvement and we look back at all the deaths and mayhem in country and all the American sacrifice, their lives and limbs and \$2.3 trillion. And you wonder, what do we get out of it? The Taliban control and ISIS threatening and killing seven children in a US drone strike. What are we supposed to see it as fate? What we don't know that they were killing children and innocent people rather than terrorists?

FK: Yes.

MS: With all the intelligence drone satellites, over 20 years, we've developed that country. It's just mind boggling to me, as a former US Congressman and somewhat understands the dynamics of it.

FK: Oh gosh, Mark. Yeah, you're making it hard. Because to be this close with the lives of children, and when I read your thing, okay, we have 15,000, they need to be resettled, and I'm thinking, well, maybe people get out more easily. But then when you say, there's a plane with 371, you get more of the picture of it's really hard. It's really touch and go, it's life and death. It's leaving in the night. It's probably undercover like the Underground Railroad kind of thing of getting some people here. There's probably, I mean, even just to get people out, is probably like life and death, like razor's edge stuff going on, I guess.

MS: Yes.

FK: After what.

MS: Yes, it is. We, for example, certain people networks on the ground there, remember we're talking about it's not one network, it's not government and not spies. These are just people who have either relationship, connections, and lists of people they want to get out that they know. Anyway, these networks were able to collaborate in a way with the right people, to get them through all these checkpoints. And sometimes these checkpoints are shut and sometimes are open, you have to know when to get them through. And there are also some people that are coming overground and one of the people that came to my attention is a former Special Forces in Europe. And that's his specialty is helping people get over the borders in these types of environments. So now, he's working with, you know, hundreds of people to get them out. Where we're gonna put them, we don't even know yet. But we have to at least get them somewhere.

FK: Yeah.

MS: Because they literally not all of them, but many, many face eminent death or separation of family.

FK: Yes. So, at the very start of this, I openly described this as a bungled, you know, close to the US involvement or debacle. But at the very end of that, there were a couple of fleeting moments of a kind of, and people were trying to pitch to the public media, of a new Taliban that wants to govern. You know, everybody knows, of course, that they are relatively extremist in their social posture, but they were trying to present themselves and willing media was trying to present them as somehow a different entity, not just a murderous band of marauders, but. Right, do you remember this in the first couple of days?

MS: Yeah.

FK: And, was this even a little bit the genuine hope of any of the Taliban leadership? Or was it just straight, I don't want to call it this, was it straight we have no intention of doing this, this what we're saying publicly, or did it evolve? Did it get worse or? Help us understand what we've heard and what you're describing?

MS: Well, interestingly, Frank, it's all of what you said. Some elements want to be a new Taliban, Taliban version 2. Other elements want to go back to the old Taliban with all burkas and controlling everything, especially women who are in Afghanistan. And so there are competing forces within the Taliban. Now, there are ISIS Ks as they're called.

FK: Yeah.

MS: Who think that Taliban are too moderate.

FK: Yes.

MS: They are the group that killed the service personnel and hundreds of Afghans in the bombing near the airport that...

FK: Yes.

MS: you spoke about earlier. So now we have elements of ISIS K, or whatever one wants to term them with experience extreme. And we have 20 years of indoctrination by many young people, especially at the madrassas in Pakistan...

FK: Yes.

MS: where they were during US occupation or US whatever you want to call it. And then they came back, and now they're radicalized. So I would say it's peaceful Afghans, extreme Afghans, ISIS K, it's all in how it all will ferret out over time, only God knows.

FK: Yes. I would imagine or I've presumed that ISIS K is not merely a more extreme form of kind of social militancy, but a group that is overtly hostile to the Taliban, per se. Like perhaps ethnically or tribally, it isn't just more extreme, it's a different stream of either tribal or ethnic identification, in addition to being more committed to physical violence and terrorism. But I presume that they were also a hostile community to the Taliban, not just a more extreme wing of it. Do you know this?

MS: Yeah. You've hit it. There are tribal issues, there are factions in Taliban, there are factions, extremism within each of the tribes. It's not a one fits all, so to speak, spiritual or religious or ideological perspective.

FK: Yeah.

MS: It's many competing forces within tribes, extra tribal, inner tribal, and I don't claim to be an expert in Afghanistan, but I certainly know what I'm hearing from all these networks that are combining and Frank if you knew and if your listeners knew how extremely diverse, these networks are hardcore military, but compassionate to Evangelicals...I mentioned Seventh Day Adventist to Muslims to atheists, to people who have just humanitarian, they're just their political people that are doing this privately. They're just from every conceivable walk of life, or even some radio for size, you know, Glenn Beck, would publicly pros. He raised like, 30, some million dollars, and we're also you know, he's part where we're working with his people as well. So, it's not like, oh, this is just America. No, we have more than Americans. And it's not just Christian or conservatives. It's extremely diverse, with all one purpose to help humans in a time of crisis, and life-threatening situations.

FK: Yes. So, there are just a couple of things before I shift to the outer exterior questions of once they're out of Afghanistan, and the resettlement of them and costs. I'm going to move to that in a second. But I just wanted to comment when you were talking about the nature of the people in your network. I remember once being on a plane, and I'm sitting next to a man who looked like he was just made out of pure steel, out of central casting, a marine, you know. When the meal came, he goes, "What do you do"? I felt so kind of embarrassed like a soft handed guy. I said, "I run a Peace Foundation". And he goes, "We're in the same business". You're a pure warrior. And that's what you're describing. These are people in the military that are radically committed to humanitarian causes and for peace. That's why they do what they do. Is that correct?

MS: Yes. I work with a retired 2-star Air Force General on a weekly basis. And he is as much of a peace person as I've ever met. He was served in Afghanistan, both Iraq campaigns, and he and I have a very bonded camaraderie of hoping we can do better, and with the military more as peacekeepers than war makers.

FK: Yes. Yeah, all of us have to work on getting our superficiality stripped from our eyes, right? We never know who we're looking at and who we're working with. We can't work on stereotypes and prejudices.

MS: Exactly.

FK: Yeah. Mark, I was reading a piece by a fellow named Madiha Afzaal, he wrote in an emerging media effort called Persuasion, they tried to hold the center. And in his piece he described, he says, here's his sentence, "The country is now on the brink of a humanitarian catastrophe with nearly 23 million people facing acute food insecurity". There are two different types of desperation or urgency. One is if you've had any association with prior governments, or with the efforts of nation building efforts, anybody who's worked with you, they're in danger for their lives. And you've described thousands are losing their lives as under political attack right inside of Afghanistan. Then, there's also what this writer talks about, that's people facing acute food insecurity. But the reason why I brought it up or kept it when speaking with you, is that number 23 million. Now you're talking about 15,000, you're talking, I haven't brought it up yet, but you're talking about the costs per person that you need to get them placed in some country or another. Can you speak to, I mean, as part of the resistance you face, like out of the 15,000x, you know, each one costs x for repatriation or settlement. And a country that they just see a flood, they're afraid to start even with a little because it looks like there's no end behind what comes if we're going to. Sure, I mean, they'd rather turn a blind eye.

MS: So for your question.

FK: My question is, is part of the difficulty you find in settling people is that the governments, it's not that they're unwilling to pay a few \$1,000 per person and get a few thousand people out of this temporary humanitarian city. It's not that they're unwilling to go for those few dollars, but this writer talks about 23 million people facing acute food insecurity in Afghanistan now. And so it's rather these countries are afraid to open the floodgate and would rather just whistle in the dark or turn a blind eye, That's my question.

MS: Okay. There are two separate groups of people. There are those that the Western world particularly the United States made a commitment to protect.

FK: Yes.

MS: They worked in some capacity with some related entities. We mentioned earlier, that those are whom we're focused on and religious persecution as well, for fear of the extreme element of the Taliban factor, ISIS K. So, the countries really don't have to worry about 23 million people flooding their countries because there's no way for them to get out.

FK: Okay.

MS: It is very, very expensive and difficult even to cross borders. Borders are locked down very tightly, although some aren't as serious, and very perilous to attempt to cross. So...

FK: Understood.

MS: I know that the World Food Program says globally, that almost 65% of hunger and poverty globally is caused by conflict is just a good example of a good chunk of that just in Afghanistan. And so many countries are under conflict. So we wait till everything is a horrific crisis and we spend trillions of dollars to try to fix it militarily. And then we have to spend billions of dollars to try to fix the fallout of it all when if we would have spent maybe 1/8 of 1% of that money on conflict resolution in the beginning, we might have been able to mitigate it or obfuscate it all together.

FK: Understood. Yeah, of course, ounce of prevention. So right now, this nation, this saintly nation, or humanitarian nation, they initially offered you 5000 places and that allowed that number to swell to 15 and they're at their limit now, correct?

MS: Yes.

FK: And you're trying to move people out of that city so that we can bring more through that funnel?

MS: Yes.

FK: It's a logjam right now because the difficulty of trying to find resettlement for those people out into various Western nations or don't have to be Western, any nations where they can live safely is the logjam right now. And in your notes, you describe costs for resettlement. You said that the existing network can pay for between 5 and 9000 of these 15. And then you add, but for a limited, perhaps six to 10 months, depending on the cost. And I'm wondering, is your network trying to find permanent resettlement and refugee status to be on the path to citizenship in the countries where they will be placed? Or, is this a constant support for them as non-residents of the countries to which would receive them or allow them to come in?

MS: Well, that note, that's a very long-term quest when you talk about permanent residency or citizenship. We're just trying to find countries and our network is negotiating with at least five now. And they range from Europe, Asia, Middle East, and Latin America at the moment. But we have to get them from where they are to there, that's a cost.

FK: Yes.

MS: And then where they're going to live. And certain countries have facilities like resorts and hotels we can literally take over but someone has to pay.

FK: Yes.

MS: Each person or per night, per room, and also for food and medical attention. But what do you do next? There's no plan. See, this is what is maddening Frank, we're just private citizens. We have our own lives, our own businesses to run.

FK: Yes.

MS: And yet, we have to bring people together that can, as I said earlier, assess talents who can do what. No one's done that. No one has even thought of it. You have to understand, this administration had eight months to work these logistics out. It is like all of a sudden, they said, "Okay, let's get everyone out."

FK: Yeah.

MS: We're gonna accept this deadline, and not go a minute after it". And all of a sudden, they're just moving people. I mean, it was complete, as you saw in the news clips, and total chaos.

FK: Yes.

MS: So what's frustrating me is coming from the United States of America, we have not even considered any of this. And the people that are holding these 15,000, I asked them all, but what's the plan? They said, "We have no plan. Our plan was to save them from imminent death".

FK: Yes.

MS: Okay, now what? We don't know, what do you think? I say are you asking me? I am thinking, "Oh, my gosh, this is not my area of expertise". But what about language training? Where are they going? In a

cultural training so you understand the culture norms, and assessment of potential, what can they do and help and who's gonna pay for it? I mean, we're still struggling through this. But I would say through prayer, and hard work, this network has all these people have a certain area of talents...

FK: Yes.

MS: that will together, make a potential dynamic that we could actually find host countries and find the resources to host them for a limited amount of time so they can get their own jobs.

FK: Yeah.

MS: And be productive citizens or workers in these countries.

FK: Yes. And it's so complex. I mean, you and I both know that trying to do even a small thing and there are eight balls in the air and one guy craps out and everything falls apart and you're trying to do this on a global level in the most complex arrangements, plus all of it with political implications. And the stress of it even for me just listening to you describe this is that we're trying to clear a place for the next temporary group, we're trying to create some kind of cycle or stream or flow so that people can keep getting out. And with every day that is held up, there's death, there's loss of life, right? Every...

MS: Every day, every minute.

FK: Every minute. So there are 15,000 clogged up in the humanitarian city. If we could get 1000 out, we could move another 1000 back into that space, and just get something flowing is what we need is now.

MS: Yes.

FK: The need is...

MS: The host country has even offered to train and help take 3 or 4000 to work, you know, within the country. So if they do that, that'd be great. But they're expecting us to perform, you know, to take at least 2000 people. If we could get...

FK: Yeah.

MS: 2000, then they'd say, "Okay, there's movement now".

FK: Yeah.

MS: "we're open to bringing more". But you just can't, like you said you can't just open the floodgates and just bring nonstop people. I mean, no one can tolerate.

FK: Yeah. Oh, man, Mark, we're so grateful. We're so grateful that you've come into this community, especially with your unique talents and history as a peacemaker. I wanted to go into the side of your unique vision of Track 5 diplomacy with the Taliban. But I think I've hit the point at which I'd like to close on this. I think we have a clear and focused, a piece of new knowledge that you've provided for us. And you've helped us see the challenge that we face. And in a way, apologies to the listeners, what we've heard now, we're in it now together. There are people and people's lives at stake and we're grateful to you, Mark for being as always giving your all with a big heart. Mark, is there anything a listener can do? I mean, we're all going to be praying, we all got to pray now. We know more than we knew a half hour ago. In addition, anything that we need to do as the inheritors of what we've learned today.

MS: You know really, what you said, I believe in prayers. You know, Frank, it's not just a joke. People say, well pray for me, and they forget it 10 seconds later.

FK: Yeah.

MS: This is very serious. We are praying, sitting, listening, talking to a smaller element of the network, and they have no plans, they had no idea what to do with the people. I was almost in tears and just calling out to, I call them Galloway, please what should we do. And I just got a sense that we just need to keep praying for the right people. And often when another one would, I'd get it we talk to someone about a completely unrelated matter, and come to find out that they are experts on guiding people outside of conflict areas. And we talk to another person we find as an expertise in developing a talent survey. And even on the WhatsApp thread, they're saying when is the survey ready? Because we've already had someone donating all the iPads to do the surveys and we have translators on the ground, we're setting up, I mean, how can they come together just sitting in Davidson, North Carolina, I'm not doing anything, really. Just talking to people on the phone and trying to connect people. But there are good deals just keep praying.

FK: Yeah.

MS: The network would grow, the weaknesses that we have would be strengthened, and maybe the US government would step up and say, "You know, we'll help resettle 10,000 people". What's it going to cost the US government, really?

FK: Yeah.

MS: This thing. So why should the private sector and all these people put up millions of their dollars their pocket and struggling when the US government without, you know, just some of the money they were allocating for Afghanistan that's no longer relevant, they gave us 10% of that we could settle all these people tomorrow.

FK: Yeah. Well, this is so helpful, Mark. Your description of the impact of prayer is also good for us. This is the God that is among us, and works through us. And so the right people will be the fruits of prayer to add into this network and the collection of talents. Hopefully, we'll start to bring some step-by-step solutions to this. I would like to close by speaking to our listeners here, if you yourself, have a way to be helpful, find us through any of the many communications lines where this podcast and interview will be run. You will have a way to contact us whether you find us on YouTube, through our websites, and everywhere, where you will come across through the podcast network where you find us, we'll have access to ourselves. And if you're hearing something and you know someone or you are someone yourself with talents that can support this urgent work, as Mark said, there are lives minute-by-minute at stake. And we're very grateful to have Mark so close to the ground and able to instruct us and inform us. Certainly for me, things that I just never even knew. So Mark, thank you very much for taking time today to be with us.

MS: Frank, I would say thank you for your heart, your compassion, for your intellect, and just your willingness to spend these 40 some minutes talking about an issue. It's an issue that most Americans think is so far away from them but it's really close to home. It's part of our responsibility and I'm thankful that you're bringing people to get slightly enlightened for prayer. And maybe as you said, one of them say, "Well, I have a network, I could plug in to do something that would help in this process". You would be more than welcome.

FK: Very good. This is great. Mark, we'll speak again soon. There's so much more that you do. Every bit of it is interesting, and I'm glad we got this one out today. Take good care, and we'll be back together again soon.

MS: God bless you, Frank, thank you for all you do.

FK: Thank you. Bye, bye.