**The European Refugee Crisis and Syria Explained – Notes**

* summer 2015 refugee crisis in Europe
  + Syrian crisis
    - Al-Assad (family of dictators) since 1971
  + Arab spring
    - many regimes overthrown (but not Syria)
  + ISIS enters Syria to build totalitarian state
    - war crimes
      * chem. weapons
      * mass executions
      * torture
      * attacks on civilians
    - citizens trapped between…
      * the regime
      * rebel groups
      * religious extremists
  + Syrians flee (refugees) to neighbouring countries
    - called seeking asylum
    - Arab states taking 0% of them
    - UN not prepared
      * spend $ on weapons not aid
    - European states not prepared
    - divides world views on who should help
  + Western fear
    - Islamic/muslim extremism and high birth rates and crime but…
      * extremism? - almost all are peaceful and numbers are small compared to existing population
      * population? – birthrates often change when people immigrate to western countries
      * crime? – most immigrants are not criminals and add to the work force
    - has taken few refugees compared to Jordan alone