



**Honourable Deepak Obhrai, P.C.**  
Member of Parliament  
Calgary Forest Lawn

# Media Release

For Immediate Release

June 20, 2016

## On World Refugee Day, M.P. Deepak Obhrai calls for apology for Canada's refusal to accept Jewish refugees

(June 20, 2016, Ottawa) During Member of Parliament Hon. Deepak Obhrai's address to the Canadian Humanitarian Coalition at a World Refugee Day fundraising event on Parliament Hill on June 7, 2016, he said "Canada's NGOs have achieved an excellent reputation for their work on the plight of refugees" and congratulated them for their continuous hard work and called on Canadians to donate generously to the campaign.

"However, history shows that there have been dark chapters in Canada's past treatment of refugees.

"On May 18, 2016, an apology was given in the House of Commons by the Government of Canada for its decision in 1914 to turn away the steamship *Komagata Maru* carrying 376 migrants who were seeking refuge in Canada.

In her address to the House of Commons, the interim Leader of the Official Opposition Hon. Rona Ambrose stated 'it is for that refusal that the Canadian government, and all of us here, stand today to recognize the terrible events that occurred when Canada failed to accept those seeking shelter in a new home'.

"We must not forget another terrible incident, in 1939, when Canada refused to accept 907 Jewish refugees on board the German trans-Atlantic liner *St. Louis* who sought safe haven in Canada. As a result, the ship was forced to return to Europe, where 254 of its passengers later died in Nazi concentration camps.

*Continues.....*

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“An apology by the Government of Canada to the survivors, relatives, and to the Jewish community would serve as an acknowledgment of Canada’s harsh treatment of these refugees. It would enable us to reflect on, and learn from this past injustice and strengthen our resolve to be an inclusive nation that protects refugees fleeing persecution,” Mr. Obhrai said.



Hon. Deepak Obhrai, M.P. addresses the  
Canadian Humanitarian Coalition

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