

# **Jerry Brown warns of mass migration in California if global warming continues**

**David Siders, Sacramento Bee, 9-15-15**

Gov. Jerry Brown said Monday that his legislative setbacks on climate change last week should be viewed “not in terms of me,” warning California will endure European-style effects of mass migration if the state fails to act on global warming.

“What we’ve in Europe now with mass migrations, that will happen in California, as ... Central America and Mexico, as they warm, people are going to get on the move,” Brown told reporters at a Mather news conference on California’s wildfires.

Heat, rising sea levels and drought are expected to disrupt populations around the world in coming decades, though the current refugee crisis in Europe speaks to other causes of migration. Millions of people have fled Syria as a result of civil war.

Brown, who has made climate change the signature issue of his administration, suffered a setback when he and legislative leaders – facing opposition from oil companies and moderate Democrats – were forced to abandon a proposal to require a reduction in petroleum use in motor vehicles in California. Another bill, to increase California’s greenhouse gas reduction targets, also fell apart.

Brown maintained that he will continue to seek petroleum reductions under his executive authority.

“You ought to see it not in terms of me,” the 77-year-old, fourth-term Democrat told reporters. “I’m just, you know, part of the flotsam and jetsam of history. I’ll be gone soon enough. But climate change is not going. It’s going to be around even after your newspapers are long forgotten. So this is a matter of deep personal and general significance that everyone ought to be thinking about how they can best respond.”

He said, “We have a chance to minimize this significantly, but it takes real commitment, and it’s not business as usual.”

Brown’s remarks came as wildfires continued to grow in Lake County and the Gold Country. One person, a woman in Anderson Springs, died as a result of the fire in Lake County over the weekend, while hundreds of homes were destroyed.

The fires were unusually fast burning, and by Sunday they had charred several Northern California towns. The Valley fire has burned more than 60,000 acres and is the state’s first priority, said Ken Pimlott, director of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. He said the fire has grown at “explosive rates” and was only 5 percent contained.

Brown has long used the state’s wildfires to draw attention to climate change, with rising temperatures and drought increasing the risk of fire.

“This is not just this year,” he said. “This is the future, from now on. It’s going to get worse, just by the nature of how the climate’s changing.”

Brown, who has declared states of emergency in Lake, Napa, Amador and Calaveras counties, said wildfires will only become “more exaggerated and more intense” in future years.