

# COMMENTARY ARCHIVES

## Year End Commentary -2015

December 15, 2015

For the past seven years President Obama has described numerous global attacks by terrorists as anything but the obvious title, "Islamic Terrorism". He has continuously reminded us that not all Muslims are terrorists (certainly true) although almost all terrorist attacks have been made by Muslims (equally true). However, the latest acts of Islamic Terrorism, namely the Paris massacres and most recently the carnage in San Bernardino, may be the tipping point in the process of the US government mounting a meaningful response to global Islamic terrorism.

It is painfully obvious that the policy of "political correctness" (i.e. to do nothing to offend the sensibilities of any Muslim) has been a colossal failure. The question is how best to respond. The first step is to recognize that there is indeed a fundamental difference in the cultures of the Western democracies and Islamic theocracies. This is not a new revelation.

### [The Clash of Civilizations](#)

The Foundation of International Freedom was organized in 2006 largely on the belief that our Western civilization was engaged in a historic clash of civilizations, as described in a 1993 article in Foreign Affairs by Professor Samuel P. Huntington. In this article he set forth the premise that the fundamental conflicts in the world had become clashes between six major cultural groups, and he noted that they were particularly prevalent between Muslim and non-Muslim countries.

The differences between the two cultures are indeed very real. The Western World, in which the authority of the government is basically granted by the people, is in direct contrast with the rule of the Shar'ia laws that govern Saudi Arabia and other ultra-conservative Islamic states. Countries that have embraced the rights of individuals and free markets have provided a standard of living for their citizens far exceeding the subjects of the Arab states and other totalitarian governments. Of course, the ruling monarchs and their entourage enjoy fabulous wealth, and understandably are reluctant to relinquish authority that might threaten this arrangement. President Assad of Syria is the "Poster-boy" of this club of dictators.

However, the Islamic and Western cultural heritages do not have to "clash". Each can go its own way, as long as one does not seek to forcefully impose its way of life on the other. Western businessmen have worked in Islamic countries for many years, living within the restrictive edicts of the host countries. As an example, the Arab Emirates have used their wealth with Western expertise to create a thriving modern society with minimum conflicts. Most Muslims regard IS as a threat to their core beliefs.

Muslims in the West

Muslims have lived peacefully in Western countries for many years, quietly practicing their faith while becoming fully integrated and model citizens in their host countries. However, the flood of recent arrivals in Europe and Scandinavia has established separate Islamic communities surrounding major cities. These areas have established Shar'ia law and have become breeding grounds for terrorists. The significantly higher birth rate within Muslim communities has created a demographic situation whereby Muslim activists use free elections to change their host societies to accept Islamic traditions.

It is particularly ironic that any Muslim emigrants seek to replace the Western societies which have been so successful in offering better lives and opportunities for its citizens with the repressive life under Shar'ia law. Under Shar'ia law women are treated as second class citizens, homosexuals can be killed and honor killing is accepted. The effort to approve any use of Shar'ia in the United States should be regarded as sedition and should be legally prohibited.

### **Syria**

The civil war in Syria began five years ago by a large segment of the population of 23 million in protest against the oppression by the brutal regime of Bashar Al-Assad. After stating that "Assad must go", Obama erased his famous "Red-Lines" and accepted Putin's offer to allow Al-Assad to continue in power if he agreed to cease gassing his fellow-citizens. Realizing that there were many other ways to kill them (e.g. barrel bombs) he quickly agreed and Russia became our de facto partner in the debacle. The result has been that the fighting has continued, killing over 250,000 Syrians and over two million refugees have fled to Europe, dramatically expanding the immigrant crisis and increased Islamization of their host countries. This has been a specific objective of Islamic State.

### **Iran**

Since the fall of the Shah in 1979, Iran has become essentially a Shi'a theocracy under the regimes of the Supreme Leaders, Ayatollahs Ruhalla Khomeini and now Ali Khamenei. Iran, with a majority Persian population, is actively seeking to expand its influence with the weak Iraqi government. The Iraqis of southern regions are predominantly Shi'a Arabs, living in an area blessed with some of the largest hydrocarbon reserves in the world. The prospect of Iran controlling these fields and the potential income is a major incentive.

As a result of the recent Iran nuclear treaty, most sanctions are about to be removed and the \$150 billion which has been withheld will be released. All the while, Iran continues to develop long range ballistic missiles, whose only real utility is to carry nuclear weapons. Its nuclear program may or may not be on a temporary hold. Meanwhile, Iran continues to sponsor conflicts in Yemen and along with Russia, is the primary supporter of Bakar Al-Assad in Syria. Russian air power has kept him in power for the last six months.

### **Islamic State (IS, ISIL and its affiliates, or "Daesh")**

Following the withdrawal of the American-led coalition forces from Iraq, the Shi'a led government of Nouri Al-Maliki proceeded to disenfranchise the large Sunni population of the country. These actions created the vacuum which resulted in the formation of Islamic State.

Mohammed Al-Baghdadi's stated objective is to create a new Caliphate, declaring himself the new Caliph.

The last Caliphate was the Ottoman Empire which until 1924 encompassed most of the Middle East. Thus, the term Caliphate represents the pinnacle of Islamic culture, which has great appeal to the pride of many followers. Using barbaric methods unseen since WWII, IS proceeded to capture Mosul, the second largest city in Iraq providing them a large source of funds looted from the banks, individuals and from oil production.

### **IS Sponsored Terrorism**

Through the use of sophisticated social media, IS has been highly successful in attracting new recruits from countries around the world. They have also expanded the reach of the proposed Caliphate by establishing affiliates in Libya, Tunisia, and Nigeria (Boko Haram). In addition, IS has actively sought to export terrorist acts by individuals living abroad. The Muslim team of Syad Rizwan Farook and his wife Tashfeen Malik, who committed the San Bernardino massacres of 14 co-workers, are examples. Potential terrorists are difficult to identify and security authorities expect more attacks in the future.

In an excellent article entitled "How to Beat This Enemy",<sup>[1]</sup> Maajid Nawaz states "Islamism is not Islam, but an offshoot of Islam. It is a Muslim theocracy". He further states that "Islamic State's leaders insist that the U.S. and the rest of the West are waging global war against all Islam and Muslims. This is obvious nonsense."

To further this false premise, a major objective of IS terrorism is to promote a backlash against Muslims now living in the Western countries to disrupt the peaceful co-existence with the new host countries. Their reasoning is that to the extent that IS attacks create this backlash, IS can be seen to be the protector of Islam (especially Sunnis) against the "Infidels" thereby driving more malcontent youth into their web.

Until the Islamic State ceases to exist, it will continue to sponsor terrorist attacks and recruit new followers. Like cancer, the longer it exists, the faster it will spread.

### **World War III**

Seventy four years ago Japan launched a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. The following day this action was declared an Act of War which brought the US into World War II. Since the attack on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, there have been 27,401 terrorist attacks around the world by Muslims (See [www.thereligionofpeace.org](http://www.thereligionofpeace.org)). These cumulative attacks in many countries over this long period of time constitute acts of war waged by fanatical Jihadist against countries they consider enemies of Islam, or simply "infidels".

Each country that has been attacked by Islamic State terrorists has justification for a military response to destroy IS. Although the United States military and our allies in the coalitions have

been engaged in a modest effort for some time, the US should recognize that we are indeed at war specifically against the Islamic State. The objective should be to destroy IS as quickly as possible.

### **How to Defeat Islamic State**

Most military experts concur that IS will not be defeated without the use of ground forces. Thus far, the Iraqi Army has failed dismally in its efforts to regain significant lost territory, primarily because the local populations are predominantly Sunni Arabs, distrust the Shi'a government. Ideally, the majority of the ground forces should be from the Arabic countries that will benefit from the elimination of IS (e.g. Kurds, Jordan). NATO military forces have unique qualifications to assist in the effort. The campaign should also include the use the new weapons of global conflicts, including financial and cyber warfare, social media and any other means to diminish the attraction of Islamic State.

Regarding the probability that our military will sustain losses, an Army veteran once told me, "Our citizens are in either one of two classes, either sheep or sheep dogs. The duty of the sheep dogs, our military, is to defend the sheep". Most of our service people are volunteers, proud of their vocation, and willing to undertake dangerous missions to protect our country and all others of good will. The decision to "slip the dogs of war", to destroy Islamic State will be welcomed at home and with our European and Middle East allies. Most people of good will, no matter whether Christian, Muslim or any other faith, concur that tyrants who maintain power over their citizens by sheer brutality should be deposed.

The gold standard for waging war against Middle East tyrants was established by President George H. W. Bush in the Gulf War in 1991. After Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in August 1990, the diplomatic community began efforts to induce him to withdraw his forces from Kuwait. When diplomacy finally failed, President Bush gave the orders to implement the war plan. Ground action began on February 24, 1991 and following liberation of Kuwait and a rout of the Iraqi army. A grateful Kuwait government subsequently reimbursed the US for most of the costs involved.

Although some politicians argue that our government should only undertake actions which directly affect the United States, or colloquially stated, "Our dog is not in that hunt". While we should carefully assess what is possible to achieve, free countries should do all they can to assist the helpless and defeat tyranny wherever found. It is just the right thing to do.

*Byron*

Byron K. Varme  
Executive Director

December 15, 2015

[1] Wall Street Journal Review, December 12-13, 2015  
3\_Never\_Fight\_Ground\_Wars\_in\_Asia\_-3-1-2011.doc  
97.5 KB