

# France Must Lead the Way in Destroying ISIS

There are a few comparatively bright spots in the otherwise unspeakable horror of the terrorist outrages in Paris. As I wrote here after the Charlie Hebdo and Jewish Market murders in Paris in January of this year, the French know better than any other democracy how to deal with monstrous assaults on civilization of this kind. Their security prevented the entry of suicide bombers at the premier stadium of France, where the terrorists had clearly hoped to kill and wound thousands of spectators, preferably including the president of France, while on television as all Europe watched a France–Germany football game. President François Hollande, the least impressive and least successful of the six successors to General Charles de Gaulle as president of the Fifth Republic, effortlessly assumed the dignity, eloquence, and inflection of the holder of his great office in these moments of the utmost extremity. Calm, unflinching, in spare, improvised, and perfect fluency, as if his words had been composed by Camus, or by a French Orwell, he described the terrorist incidents, still unfolding, as “an act of war,” and declared a state of emergency, closed France’s borders, effectively declared martial law in Paris – a metropolitan area of approximately 13 million, and a city that has been for four centuries one of the greatest, most beautiful, civilized, admired, and beloved urban sites in the world.

There was not the slightest hesitation – as there has been in some English-language media, in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada – to describe the incident as Islamist terrorism, nor did the French authorities dither with pious insipidity before detaining and interrogating all the families and relatives of the prime suspects, while deploying their air force to plaster the guilty ISIS in its lair in Syria. Paris

and the Paris police know all about violence. There was never in France going to be any ghastly waffling and sniveling about the causes of the discontent of the terrorists. Of the ten cardinal archbishops of Paris between 1781 and 1871, two fled for their lives, four were executed or murdered, and four died naturally in their cardinalatial palaces and were mourned with suitable formality in Notre Dame. The Paris mobs overthrew regimes in Paris seven times between 1791 and 1871, and were suppressed many times during the first four republics, two empires, and the last three monarchical dynasties, including a restoration, and without counting the general disorder around the Liberation of 1944, during which the Gaullist victors executed rough justice among their Communist and Nazi-collaborationist enemies. The Paris mobs even erected barricades and hurled paving stones at the police in 1962 and 1968. Paris has seen it all before. As General de Gaulle famously said to the International Red Cross when it remonstrated with him about the severity of French techniques in the Algerian War, "Blood dries quickly."

It does in France, but the French, as a people, know, as the major Western democracy with the largest Muslim population and the greatest experience with Islamic countries and with trying to govern them directly and not through suborned satraps as the British generally did, that blood spilled by this form of atrocity can dry only when it is avenged, as the gentle socialist François Hollande, transformed by the affront and by his office, said, "pitilessly." France knows when liberty, equality, and fraternity, like life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness – which President Obama invoked in his predictably platitudinous, though sympathetic, comments – must give way to savage and counter-terrifying violence. The emergency Hollande has declared in France has already produced a good deal of information about the perpetrators, which presumably induced ISIS to claim the authorship of the crimes, as it was about to be outed anyway.

France will lead the world in the following wholesome understanding: A substantial part of the fundamental texts of Islam is violently hostile to non-Muslims, and to many categories of pallid Muslims also. ISIS is Islamic terrorism, and has no mitigating qualities. It is both evil and incapable and undesiring of co-existence with the West and its values, Judaeo-Christian in origin but of equal application to religious skeptics. It is also irreconcilable with regimes of other kinds, such as India, China, North Korea, and many of the quasi-tribal African countries, but they will eventually figure that out for themselves. Fortunately, France is a powerful enough country to force the world forward in what must be a war of extermination against ISIS; it would galvanize the world, including most of the Muslim world, cowering in equivocations, and could achieve the end of this phase of the struggle with terrorism.

The ghastly, unutterably contemptible quavering about ISIS must end: It is an unmitigated evil with almost no support – perhaps 50,000 active warriors in all Islam, and the usual riff-raff of useful idiots scattered about different countries prepared to become human torpedoes against all forms of civilization, starting with Muslim civilization, such as it now is. ISIS must be physically exterminated, let us be clear, in a just and virtuous act of war: Anyone who favors, and becomes an armed agent to carry out, acts of indiscriminate terror, the slaughter of innocents (such as the attractive young couples and decent people at the restaurants and concert hall in Paris on Friday), unless they believably repent, must be exterminated, and this monstrous moral, theological, and political heresy of an ISIS Caliphate must be crushed into nonexistence by the application of whatever level of military force and punitive retribution is required.

The next CNN or MSNBC commentators who inflict upon viewers excessive conditionality about the unambiguous wickedness of this enemy should be relieved of their misspeaking tongues

with red-hot tongs, but not on a cell-phone camera for the delectation of the devotees of the antics of ISIS. For my part, I have given up hope that Obama or Kerry is capable of doing anything except dissembling and bloviating, and swinging in the wind as issues absolutely vital to the values of our civilization are determined by, in Bismarck's phrase, "blood and iron," in fierce exchanges of fire. Obama and Kerry will be oblivious and fatuously placatory as deadly projectiles ricochet around them. It has become a Buster Keaton film. If Hollande asked Obama for assistance, the U.S. president – who, on television the morning of the Paris massacres, announced the "containment" of ISIS, as if it were a state with borders – would send 20 veterans of the Peace Corps to advise the Paris police on how to deal with grumpy people of another pigmentation.

Just as France must be seen in a historic context to show what a terrible mistake ISIS has made in targeting it, U.S. national-security policy must be seen as it has evolved. Franklin D. Roosevelt was a well-travelled and multilingual man and knew that the United States had to be engaged in Western Europe and the Far East to prevent mortal threats from reaching American shores. In January 1941, he warned the nation against those who would, "with sounding brass and tinkling cymbal, preach the 'ism of appeasement." In his war message of December of that year, following the attack on Pearl Harbor, he promised that, after winning the war just unleashed, "we will make very certain that this form of treachery never again endangers us." The United States eschewed appeasement and deterred direct aggression for 50 years. America's enemies struck upon a method of evading Roosevelt's defenses, by launching terrorist attacks from organizations not obviously linked to any government and nurtured in failed states where the ostensible government was not apparently involved. Unfortunately, after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, George W. Bush took it as his mission to establish responsible government in places where it

had not existed before, rather than merely punishing the authors of crimes against America and humanity.

Roosevelt's advice was followed until Barack Obama determined that appeasement was a useful antidote to past American wrongdoing, against Iran, Cuba, and the Palestinians, and, very tentatively, at least certain varieties of Muslim terrorists. Administrations between Roosevelt and Obama saw that the whole non-Communist world had to be enlisted to prevent the triumph of totalitarian Communism directed, initially, from Moscow. Soviet-Chinese divisions were very intelligently and prudently exploited by Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger, and Ronald Reagan ultimately exposed, in very pacific terms, the inadequacies of the Soviet system, which fell like a soufflé before him.

The pursuit of U.S. foreign policy since – from George H. W. Bush's intelligent but largely unformed New World Order, to Bill Clinton's ad hocery (fairly agile, except for his feeble under-response to the first terrorist attacks), to George W. Bush's trigger-happy and unwise desire to turn Iraq into the State of Connecticut, to the incumbent's mad effort to apologize for the American national interest and befriend America's mortal enemies – has descended ever more swiftly to the present depths, in which Obama naturally expresses regret that innocent Parisians have been murdered in large numbers, but, apart from invoking Lafayette and normal human sympathy, evinces not the slightest notion of what to do about what his own paralytic moral enfeeblement and over-hasty departure from Iraq have encouraged.

One thing that should *not* happen is that the door be slammed even more severely on the masses of poor refugees who are fleeing precisely the terror that has just afflicted the magnificent boulevards of Paris. The Syrian refugees, especially the very large proportion of them who are Christians, are unlikely to be jihadists, and it ill behoves this country, which, with the best of intentions, smashed up

much of the Middle East, to accept only a numerically contemptible token of the refugees of its ill-considered policy there. It is unlikely that Hollande has quite the panache to do it, but if he announced the insertion of the core of trained French soldiers in a proposed boots-on-the-ground force of 50,000 (i.e., 1,000 times more than the sub-tokenistic addition Obama triumphantly announced a couple of weeks ago), to exterminate ISIS – to kill every member, or every reasonably suspected active and able-bodied member – all serious countries would join. This expedition should be followed by a Turkey-Egypt-Iran-Saudi Arabia Conference, under the cosponsorship of the traditional great powers, to divide Syria and Iraq between them and ensure an autonomous Kurdish state; to put an end to Iranian meddling in Lebanon and Gaza; to recognize a Palestinian state with realistic borders and a right of return to Palestine and not Israel; and to declare a protocol for identification of the criteria of a failed state and for the obligation of international intervention in such states. Since the G-20 is meeting now in Turkey, the members should advise their hosts that Turkey will be expelled from the G-20 and from NATO if it furnishes so much as one more handgun in assistance to ISIS.

Great things could come from this horrible tragedy in Paris, but only with leadership. No sane person could expect such a response from the incumbents in Washington, but it may not be too late for Paris (especially given that this is the only possible road to re-election for François Hollande).

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