

No Bombing Role for Canada in the Middle East

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I remember in March 2011 feeling proud of Canada's air force. Flying their first bombing run in the NATO campaign to oust the government of Libya, two of our CF-18s abandoned the plan to drop their payloads on an airfield because it was evident there would be civilian casualties.

The next day we got with the program and Canada played its modest part in the NATO overthrow of one of Africa's most prosperous nations. We learned later that the so-called rebels we supported prominently featured Al-Qaida-linked mercenary types – a favourite regime change tool for western Intelligence (see French journalist Thierry Meyssan's latest article, "The French Republic taken hostage," on www.voltairenet.org/en; Meyssan was an eyewitness to the Libyan horror show).

Tens of thousands of people killed, Libya utterly destroyed, the whole region destabilized, North African migrants and refugees pouring into Europe to escape their respective hellholes – the fruits of regime change are indeed bitter.

With Libya taken out, the same formula was applied to Syria. When an all-out attack was being prepped two years ago, based on claims (now discredited) that the Syrian government was gassing its own people, the public in the U.K. and U.S. sent a strong message to their politicians that they didn't want to be dragged into another war in the Middle East. With the help of Russian diplomacy, war was averted.

But regime change was still the objective and so, handily, "ISIS" emerged. Pure Hollywood villainy whose prime aim seems to be to reshape public opinion in the West – just as the 9/11 attacks did – and make war palatable as a show of toughness and an instrument of revenge. Like 9/11, the propaganda shock value of the Paris attacks has stirred up a visceral fear and rage against "militant Muslims" among a substantial chunk of the population.

Despite all the political rhetoric about fighting the Islamic State in Syria, regime change could well be the true goal of the post-Paris-attack war strategy.

Russia's combat role in the past six weeks, launched at the invitation of the Syrian government, appears to have done more to degrade and destroy the terrorists than the U.S. and its coalition partners have done in more than a year. In Iraq especially, the widespread belief is that the U.S. has never been serious about defeating ISIS.

That's why I'm feeling a bit proud again – this time of our new prime minister. Justin Trudeau ran for office promising to withdraw our CF-18s from the combat mission in Iraq and Syria, and by all accounts he is going to stick to that promise, despite the post-Paris war fever.

“Our side” in the Middle East – and that includes France, Britain and the U.S. – has been compromised by years of deceit backing imperial designs. Our role should be in peacemaking, or we should have no role at all in that region.

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