

**WORLD WAR III IS HERE:
ISIL'S DAYS MAY BE NUMBERED,
BUT WILL THE WORLD WIN THE PEACE TO FOLLOW ?**

World War III is upon us.

There can be no question of this.

More than 66 countries, thus far, have joined hands to fight ISIL – The Islamic State of Iraq and The Levant.

With regard to World War I and World War II, the lines were clearly drawn as to who was fighting whom and for what reason or reasons, but, in the case of ISIL, the fighters of the enemy of the 66-nation coalition were, as was made only too obvious on Friday, November 13, 2015, not easily recognisable.

Until terror struck!

Further, the French police and the French intelligence service – Direction générale de la Sécurité intérieure – were completely taken by surprise by the unexpected, but well-coordinated ISIL attacks on French soil.

Then, it was too late: The dead and critically injured lay in serried ranks in hospitals in Paris.

At the conclusion of that Friday night of horror, more than 129 innocent people lay dead, with more than 100 more innocents, lying in near-death condition in hospitals, throughout the Capital City of France.

It was the worst attack on French soil since World War II.

Apart from the fact that ISIL appears to be engaged in the concomitant ploy of encouraging genocide among its ranks, specifically targeting non-Moslems, and, at the same time, carving out, on a grand scale, Iraqi/Syrian land and labelling it as its caliphate, one is not quite certain as to its leader's ratio decidendi in its many attacks on cities and towns in Syria and Iraq – and, now, in the very heart of France.

What the world of reason and rational thought should be considering, as a matter of extreme importance, today, is the fact that many tens of thousands of people, from many parts of the world – including France – are quite willing to join this terror organisation that has become synonymous with barbaric acts of depravity, including mass rape and murder.

To restate the mountains of evidence with regard to the unconscionable acts of members of ISIL is to reiterate that which has been proved, time and time again, in video footage of the beheading of men, women and children, produced by ISIL in order to strike fear into the hearts of those who view these horrors, to the many bones, lying in mass graves, the pitiful remains of thousands of innocent victims of ISIL fighters.

And these acts of barbarism continue to this day.

There have been numerous allegations that past acts by Western nations have been responsible, in large part, for the birth of ISIL.

Some people claim that the attack on Iraq by members of the armed forces of The United States of America,

the United Kingdom, Australia and Poland was the ‘*cradle*’ from which was born that which is known today as ISIL.

Operation Iraqi Freedom

On March 19, 2003, Operation Iraqi Freedom was launched by The United States of America with the support of its three coalition partners.

The invasion of Iraq lasted just 21 days and, at the end of the numerous skirmishes and battles, the Ba’athist Government of President Saddam Hussein had been deposed.

When President George W. Bush was informed of the success of the invasion in which 195,194 soldiers of the coalition nations had taken part, with American Army personnel, having been the flag-waver with its contingent of 76 percent of the total invasion force, he scribbled on a piece of paper, which he gave to his aide: ‘*Let Freedom Ring!*’

One has to forgive the triteness of this message – because President George W. Bush is not the greatest of thinkers to which the world has been witness, as history has come to realise – sadly, only too late.

For the sake of historical accuracy and posterity, ‘*Let Freedom Ring*’ is part of the lyrics, written by Samuel Francis Smith in 1831, in “*My Country ‘Tis of Thee*’ ”.

This song has become one of the de facto national anthems of The United States of America.

(No doubt, President George W. Bush had heard those words, during his studies of the history of his country.)

In arranged, formal interviews with select members of the Fourth Estate in Washington, D.C., following the success of the attack on Iraq, President George W. Bush talked of bringing the Western style of democracy to the downtrodden people of the Middle East.

He said, among other things, that the attack on Iraq was ‘*to disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction, to end Saddam Hussein’s support for terrorism, and to free the Iraqi people*’.

Well, as history has proved, the coalition forces found no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, during and/or after the invasion of the country, contrary to intelligence, brought to light by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), a branch of the Government of The United States of America.

The flawed intelligence of the CIA stated that Saddam Hussein had been manufacturing weapons of mass destruction in large quantities and for some considerable time and that the coalition’s invading forces would be in harm’s way if these devastating weapons of war were unleashed.

As for President George W. Bush’s idea of freeing the Iraqi people from decades of enslavement under the regime of Saddam Hussein, it is questionable as to whether or not the Iraq that the coalition forces left behind was, indeed, preferable to the Iraq under the dictatorial regime of Saddam Hussein.

In hindsight, many historians, politicians and sociologists are firmly of the opinion that the March 2003 attack on Iraq was a most-unfortunate error of judgement on the part of the Government of The United States of America, as well as those countries’ leaders that supported his plan of action to invade the birthplace of Saddam Hussein.

As for the innuendo to foist Western democratic principles on the people of the Middle East, starting with Iraq, it is quite probable that President George W. Bush was living under the illusion that the majority of the human population of the Middle East had, for centuries, been awaiting the birth of Western democracy in their part of the world.

As **TARGET** () wrote, back in 2003: Is Western democracy the best form of government for the peoples of the Middle East, today?

The coming into being of ISIL is suggestive that not everybody in the Middle East is desirous of embracing Western democratic values.

Of that, there can be no argument.

Some people in this world of ours even enjoy the idea of allowing one leader, a caliph if you will, to tell them what is best for them.

Whether or not democracy is the best form of government in today's world, this medium cannot say with any certainty, but it appears to have been proved that it is the best form of government for many nations at this time in the history of Western civilisation.

Having stated the above, would the Government of the People's Republic of China have become the second-largest economy of the world if it had attempted, back in 1949, to try to teach the 1.30 billion, human inhabitants of the country to embrace Western democratic principles?

In **TARGET**'s opinion, the answer is a definitive, 'No'.

Under the aegis of The Communist Party of China, like it or lump it, the People's Republic of China has risen, in a period of just 66 years, to be a respected member of The United Nations.

The Government of the People's Republic of China remains a one-party state and, at this time, there has been no suggestion of an intention to change its political stance.

The Government of the People's Republic of China, in just 66 years, has helped create more billionaires, in any currency that one may like to employ, than any other nation on the face of this earth.

And, as has always been the case in other communist countries, communism, inevitably, leads to capitalism.

Will Might Prove To Be Right?

The 66-nation coalition that is determined to defeat ISIL by force of arms is quite likely to prove to be too powerful a military force for the many thousands of fighters of ISIL.

The world, no doubt, shall be extremely relieved, at the conclusion of this struggle, to learn that the threat of ISIL has been relegated to the annals of history.

But will brute force win hearts and minds?

In the past, force has never won the hearts and minds of the impoverished; and, brute force has never been able to subjugate the human population of a conquered country in its entirety.

Case in point: Germany's invasion of Norway on April 9, 1940, proved to be a thorn in the side of the invading army despite the fact that Norway was, in reality, unable to repel the invading forces of the Wehrmacht.

The Government of Norway, in the early hours of April 9, 1940, faced with the German demand that Norway accept '*the protection of the Reich*', responded with the now famous reply:

'We will not submit voluntarily; the struggle is already underway.'

There followed spirited fighting, mainly by a handful of isolated, Norwegian military units and irregular volunteers who, out of patriotism, joined with the regulars.

This combined force took on the might of the German Army at a terrible loss of life.

Although, militarily, the Norwegian irregulars and the relatively small, poorly trained military units of the legitimate Government of Norway of 1940 had not a ghost of chance of winning a decisive battle against the well-trained and much-better armed Germany military force, it is, nevertheless, an example of how a determined foe, in the face of adversity, is willing to shed its blood for an ideal that it holds as being sacred.

The Norwegian resistance of 1940 is a lesson to the effect that no invading force can fully subjugate a people by force of arms.

ISIL can never hope to win against the military might of the 66 nations of the world that have declared war against it and, by the same token, the 66 nations of the world cannot hope to win the hearts and the minds of the surviving ISIL fighters by force of arms.

This medium notes one tragic problem of today: People, who are dispirited, for whatever reason, tend to try to hang onto anything in times of extreme stress, even a solitary leaf of a tree, rather than look for a strong bough in order to brace themselves.

The 66 nations that are attacking ISIL targets, today, for good and valid reasons, might well win the many battles that will surely follow, including, most likely, the deployment of a large invasion force by land, but these same 66 nations must, invariably, look much further than just defeating ISIL, militarily: The coalition must look to win the peace that will surely follow the bloodshed.

And the battle for the hearts and minds of those who, once, voluntarily joined the ranks of ISIL fighters, or those who might have been considering joining ISIL, but did not, for one reason or another, will be a drawn-out fight, proving to be a more difficult task and lasting much longer than the battle that is hotting up, today, in ISIL strongholds in Syria.

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