

# Age of Despair and the Paris Terrorist Attacks: Reaping the Whirlwind of Western Support for Extremist Violence

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Global Research, November 15, 2015

[Empire Burlesque](#) 14 November 2015

Region: [Europe](#)

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

*We, the West, overthrew Saddam by violence. We overthrew Gadafy by violence. We are trying to overthrow Assad by violence. Harsh regimes all — but far less draconian than our Saudi allies, and other tyrannies around the world. What has been the result of these interventions? A hell on earth, one that grows wider and more virulent year after year.*

Without the American crime of aggressive war against Iraq — which, by the measurements used by Western governments themselves, left more than a million innocent people dead — there would be no ISIS, no “Al Qaeda in Iraq.” Without the Saudi and Western funding and arming of an amalgam of extremist Sunni groups across the Middle East, used as proxies to strike at Iran and its allies, there would be no ISIS. Let’s go back further. Without the direct, extensive and deliberate creation by the United States and its Saudi ally of a world-wide movement of armed Sunni extremists during the Carter and Reagan administrations (in order to draw the Soviets into a quagmire in Afghanistan), there would have been no “War on Terror” — and no terrorist attacks in Paris tonight.

Again, let’s be as clear as possible: the hellish world we live in today is the result of deliberate policies and actions undertaken by the United States and its allies over the past decades. It was Washington that led and/or supported the quashing of secular political resistance across the Middle East, in order to bring recalcitrant leaders like Nasser to heel and to back corrupt and brutal dictators who would advance the US agenda of political domination and resource exploitation.

The open history of the last half-century is very clear in this regard. Going all the way back to the overthrow of the democratic government of Iran in 1953, the United States has deliberately and consciously pushed the most extreme sectarian groups in order to undermine a broader-based secular resistance to its domination agenda.

Why bring up this “ancient history” when fresh blood is running in the streets of Paris? Because that blood would not be running if not for this ancient history; and because the reaction to this latest reverberation of Washington’s decades-long, bipartisan cultivation of religious extremism will certainly be more bloodshed, more repression and more violent intervention. Which will, in turn, inevitably, produce yet more atrocities and upheaval as we are seeing in Paris tonight.

I write in despair. Despair of course at the depravity displayed by the murderers of innocents in Paris tonight; but an even deeper despair at the depravity of the egregious

murderers who have brought us to this ghastly place in human history: those gilded figures who have strode the halls of power for decades in the high chambers of the West, killing innocent people by the hundreds of thousands, crushing secular opposition to their favored dictators — and again, again and again — supporting, funding and arming some of the most virulent sectarians on earth.

And one further cause of despair: that although this historical record is there in the open, readily available from the most mainstream sources, it is and will continue to be completely ignored, both by the power-gamers and by the public. The latter will continue to support the former as they replicate and regurgitate the same old policies of intervention, the same old agendas of domination and greed, over and over and over again — creating ever-more fresh hells for us all to live in, and poisoning the lives of our children, and of all those who come after us.

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