

Québec City Murder of Muslims, Islamophobia is Rooted in the “War on Terror”

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*An interview with **Ken Stone** by **Ann Garrison***

The Hamilton Coalition to Stop the War (HCSW) issued a statement on the [murder of 6 Muslim worshipers and the wounding of 19 more](#) at a mosque in Québec City, Québec, on January 29, 2017. Hamilton is a major city in Canada’s Ontario Province which has also suffered attacks on Muslims and mosques. I spoke to HCSW spokesman Ken Stone.

Ann Garrison: Ken Stone, the Hamilton Coalition to Stop the War is against the entire War on Terror, not on just any one of the wars that the U.S. and Canada are waging in Muslim countries. Is that correct?

Ken Stone: That is correct. We regard to Bush and Obama’s War on Terror is really a War of Terror against the mainly Arab and Muslim people of the Global South, in order to steal their energy resources and to use their strategic locations after they’ve been conquered, to further encircle those countries that the U.S. deems their competitors on the global chessboard, including Russia, China, and Iran.

AG: And this statement regards the January 29 shooting attack on worshipers at the Québec City Islamic Cultural Center, also known as the Great Mosque of Québec City, for which French Canadian student and white supremacist Alexandre Bissonnette has been arrested. Is that correct?

KS: That is correct. He has been charged with six counts of first degree murder and five counts of attempted murder. He is also known to like Donald Trump on Facebook and to like Marine Le Pen of the far right party in France, and is known as a troll on the Internet in the Québec City area against immigration to Québec.

AG: Prime Minister Justin Trudeau characterized this as a terrorist attack on innocents for practicing their freedom of religion, and many of your fellow Canadians came out to demonstrate and protect mosques for the same reason. Could you explain how your coalition statement goes further to contextualize this within the War on Terror?

KS: Well, the demonstration that we participated in here in Hamilton was a very impressive turnout of 600 people on less than 24 hours notice with the general theme that “an attack on one is an attack on all.” We appreciated that very much, but then some people were trying to blame this terrorist attack on Donald Trump’s election in the U.S.A., and the changes to immigration and refugee policy that he made on the same weekend that the shooting took place. Our view is that the problem goes a lot deeper. It goes into 16 years of

the War on Terror. Canada has participated in virtually every war that the U.S. empire has waged against Muslim countries during this time. Bush waged two wars but Obama stretched it out to seven Muslim countries that he was attacking before he retired. The problem goes as far back as George Bush Senior's first war on Iraq, the Gulf War of 1990 to 1991.

In all these wars, the main themes are that:

- the U.S. is the cop of the world, and its NATO partners are there to help it do its dirty deeds, which are not supported by the UN Security Council and are therefore illegal;
- violence and war is an acceptable tool for remaking whole regions;
- the countries that are being attacked are run by terrible dictators and that, by association, the people of those countries are bad and even their religion - Islam - is bad.

So with nearly 27 years of this kind of conditioning, it's not surprising that you have these lone wolf attacks, like that by Alexandre Bissonette, because these ideas are permeating the culture, and they can influence young minds and particularly young and unstable minds. So if we want to stop these kinds of terrorist attacks on Muslims in Canada, we have to stop the wars and we need Canada to get out of NATO.

AG: You have a list of seven demands for the Canadian government here. Could you go through this list?

KS: Sure. We call for the Canadian government to:

- re-establish diplomatic relations with Syria and Iran;
- end its punishing economic sanctions against Syria, Iran, and Russia;
- bring home all Canadian troops and military equipment from Syria and Iraq, Ukraine and all other frontier states bordering Russia;
- terminate the arms deal with Saudi Arabia;
- withdraw from the "Friends of Syria" group of countries that organized the proxy war against Syria;
- quit NATO and join the Non-Aligned Movement instead;
- develop an independent, peaceful, and humane Canadian foreign policy.

AG: That's quite a list. Do you have any hope that the Canadian government will respond to any or all of these demands?

KS: We hope that the Canadian government will re-establish diplomatic relations with Iran soon. The liberal party promised to do that when they were in opposition, but they have not yet.

The mission to Ukraine is due to end in March, and we hope that there will be pressure from

the anti-war movement all across Canada to pressure the liberal government not to renew the mission to Ukraine and other border states bordering Russia because those are provocations against Russia.

And the Saudi arms deal? Well, that is so unpopular in Canada that the liberal government has been running for cover. There've been legal cases and other actions to try to end it, so we're hopeful about that one as well.

AG: OK. thanks to the Hamilton Coalition to Stop the War for publishing this statement and to you for speaking to the Black Agenda Report.

KS: Thank you. The Black Agenda Report is invaluable and we have posted many of its articles to our [Facebook page](#). We particularly appreciated Glen Ford's recent piece, [If Americans Truly Cared About Muslims, They Would Stop Killing Them by the Millions](#).

***Ken Stone** is spokesman and treasurer for the [Hamilton Coalition to Stop the War](#). He is also a former steering committee member of the [Canadian Peace Alliance](#), and a member of the [Syria Solidarity Movement](#). See the Coalition's website to read the [HCSW Statement on the attack on the Islamic Cultural Centre in Quebec City](#).*

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