

The “Collateral Damage” of US-NATO Wars: Europe’s Refugee Crisis, Depraved Morality of UK Prime Minister David Cameron

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UK Prime Minister David Cameron this week said “as a father I felt deeply moved” by the image of a Syrian boy dead on a Turkish beach. As pressure mounts on the UK to take in more of those fleeing to Europe from Syria and elsewhere. Cameron added that the UK would fulfil its “moral responsibilities.”

On hearing Cameron’s words on the role of ‘morality’, something he talks a lot about, anyone who has been following the crisis in Syria would not have failed to detect the hypocrisy. According to former French foreign minister [Roland Dumas](#), Britain had planned covert action in Syria as early as 2009. He told French TV:

I was in England two years before the violence in Syria on other business... I met with top British officials, who confessed to me that they were preparing something in Syria. This was in Britain not in America. Britain was preparing gunmen to invade Syria.

Writing in The Guardian in 2013, Nafeez Ahmed discusses leaked emails from the [private intelligence firm Stratfor](#), including notes from [a meeting with Pentagon officials](#), that confirmed US-UK training of Syrian opposition forces since 2011 aimed at eliciting “collapse” of Assad’s regime “from within.”

He goes on to write that, according to [retired NATO Secretary General Wesley Clark](#), a memo from the Office of the US Secretary of Defense just a few weeks after 9/11 revealed plans to “attack and destroy the governments in seven countries in five years,” starting with Iraq and moving on to “Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Iran.” Clark argues that this strategy is fundamentally about control of the [region’s vast oil and gas resources](#).

In 2009, Syrian President Assad [refused to sign](#) a proposed agreement with Qatar that would [run a pipeline from the latter’s North field](#) through Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria and on to Turkey, with a view to supply European markets in direct competition with Russia. Being a Russian ally, Assad refused to sign and instead pursued negotiations for [an alternative \\$10 billion pipeline plan with Iran](#) crossing Iraq and into Syria that would also potentially allow Iran to supply gas to Europe. Thus Assad had to go.

And this is where Cameron’s concerns really lie: not with ordinary people compelled to flee war zones that his government had a hand in making but with removing Assad in order for instance to run a pipeline through Syrian territory and to prevent Iran and Russia gaining

strategic momentum in the region.

Ordinary folk are merely 'collateral damage' in the geopolitical machinations of bankers, oilmen and arms manufacturers, only to be shown any sympathy when the media flashes images of a dead Syrian boy washed up on a Turkish beach or people drowned at sea trying to escape turmoil at home. It is then that people like Cameron are obliged to demonstrate mock sincerity in the face of public concern.

It is not only Syrians who are heading for Europe and the UK but also people from Libya, Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere. Countries that Britain has helped to devastate as part of the US-led long war based on the Project for a New American Century and the US right to intervene unilaterally as and when it deems fit under the notion of the US 'exceptionalism' (better known as the project for a new imperialism - the 'Wolfowitz Doctrine').

Cameron said that Britain is a moral nation and would fulfil its moral responsibilities. Large sections of the population - ordinary men and women - are certainly 'moral' but that is unfortunately where any notion of morality seems to stop. Former British Ambassador to Uzbekistan Craig Murray has called the UK a rogue state and a danger to the world. Last year, he told a meeting at St Andrews University in Scotland that the British Government is deeply immoral and doesn't care how many people it kills abroad if it advances its aims. Moreover, he said the UK was a state that is prepared to go to war to make a few people wealthy.

He added that Libya is now a disaster and 15,000 people were killed when NATO (British and French jets) bombed Sirte, something the BBC never told the public. Murray told his audience what many already know or suspect but what many more remain ignorant of:

I've seen things from the inside and the UK's foreign interventions are almost always about resources. It is every bit as corrupt as others have indicated. It is not an academic construct, the system stinks.

Murray was a British diplomat for 20 years. But after only six months, he said that in the country where he was Ambassador, the British and the US were shipping people in order for them to be tortured and some of them were tortured to death. As far as Iraq is concerned, Murray said that he knew for certain that key British officials were fully aware that there weren't any weapons of mass destruction. He said that invading Iraq wasn't a mistake, it was a lie.

Back in 2011, 200 prominent African figures accused Western nations and the International Criminal Court of "subverting international law" in Libya. The UN has been misused to militarise policy, legalise military action and effect regime change, according to University of Johannesburg professor Chris Landsberg. He said it is unprecedented for the UN to have outsourced military action to NATO in this way and challenges the International Criminal Court to investigate NATO for "violating international law." In 2015, the outcome has been to turn Africa's most developed nation to ruins and run by armed militias fighting one another.

Is this the stability and morality Cameron preaches?

Yet for public consumption, Cameron flags up his 'morality' by stating that the UK would

continue to take in “thousands” of refugees. But he cautions that this is not the only answer to the crisis, saying a “comprehensive solution” is required. Awash with self-righteous platitudes he hoped would drown out any hint of hypocrisy or irony, Cameron added: “We have to try and stabilise the countries from which these people are coming.”

One year ago, Cameron told the United Nations that Britain was ready to play its part in confronting “an evil against which the whole world must unite.” He also said that that “we” must not be so “frozen with fear” of repeating the mistakes of the 2003 Iraq invasion. He was attempting to drum up support for wider Anglo-US direct military action against Syria under the pretext of attacking ISIS.

At the same time, Cameron spoke of the virtues of the West’s economic freedom and democratic values as well as the horrors of extremism and terror. Cameron’s was a monologue of hypocrisy.

Over a million people have been killed via the US-led or US-backed attacks on Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria. Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, so we were told. It did not. That was a lie and hundreds of thousands have paid with their lives. We were told that Gaddafi was a tyrant. He used the nation’s oil wealth well by presiding over a country that possessed some of the best indices of social and economic well-being in Africa. Now, thanks to Western backed terror and military conflict, Libya lies in ruins and torn apart. Russia is a threat to world peace because of its actions in Ukraine, we are told. It is not. The US helped instigate the overthrow of a democratically elected government in Ukraine and has instigated provocations, sanctions and a proxy war against an emerging, confident Russia.

But how far in history should we go back to stress that the West and Cameron and his ilk have no right to take the moral high ground when it comes to peace, respect for international law, self-determination, truth or democracy? The much quoted work by historian William Blum documents the crimes, bombings, assassinations, destabilisations and wars committed by the US in country after country since 1945. And since 1945 the UK has consistently stood shoulder to shoulder with Washington.

Cameron stood at the UN and talked of the West’s values of freedom and democracy and the wonders of economic neoliberalism in an attempt to promote Western values and disguise imperialist intent. But it’s a thin disguise. The Anglo-US establishment has imposed its economic structural violence on much of the world by bankrupting economies, throwing millions into poverty and imposing ‘austerity’ and by rigging and manipulating global commodity markets and prices. Add to that the mass illegal surveillance at home and abroad, torture, drone murders, destabilisations, bombings and invasions and it becomes clear that Cameron’s ongoing eulogies to morality, freedom, humanitarianism, democracy and the ‘free’ market is hollow rhetoric.

Apart from attempting to legitimise neoliberal capitalism, this rhetoric has one purpose: it is part of the ongoing ‘psych-ops’ being waged on the public to encourage people to regard what is happening in the world – from Syria, Iraq and Ukraine to Afghanistan and Libya, etc – as a confusing, disconnected array of events (perpetuated by unhinged madmen or terror groups) that are in need of Western intervention. These events are not for one minute to be regarded by the public as the planned machinations of empire and militarism, which entail a global energy and trade war against Russia and China, the associated preservation of the petro-dollar system and the encircling and intimidation of these two states with military hardware.

Any mainstream narrative about the current migrant-refugee 'crisis' must steer well clear of such an analysis. Instead, we must listen to Cameron talking about the West 'helping' to stabilise the countries it helped to destabilise or destroy in the first place. It's the same old story based on the same misrepresentation of imperialism: the US-led West acting as a force for good in the world and reluctantly taking up the role of 'world policeman'.

Whether it's the now amply financially rewarded Blair or whether it is Cameron at the political helm, the perpetual wars and perpetual deceptions continue.

Cameron plays his role well. Like Tony Blair, Cameron's media-friendly bonhomie is slicker (and cheaper) than the most experienced used car salesman. And like Blair before him, Cameron is the media-friendly PR man who beats the drums of war (or mock sincerity, as the situation dictates), courtesy of a global power elite, who through their think tanks, institutions and financial clout ultimately determine economic policies and decide which wars are to be fought and for what purpose:

"... the Davos-attending, Gulfstream/private jet-flying, money-incrusted, megacorporation-interlocked, policy-building elites of the world, people at the absolute peak of the global power pyramid. They are 94 percent male, predominantly white, and mostly from North America and Europe. These are the people setting the agendas at the Trilateral Commission, Bilderberg Group, G-8, G-20, NATO, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization. They are from the highest levels of finance capital, transnational corporations, the government, the military, the academy, nongovernmental organizations, spiritual leaders and other shadow elites. Shadow elites include, for instance, the deep politics of national security organizations in connection with international drug cartels, who extract 8,000 tons of opium from US war zones annually, then launder \$500 billion through transnational banks, half of which are US-based." - David Rothkopf ([Project Censored](#) 'Exposing the transnational ruling class')

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