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Turning the Cradle of Civilization Into its Graveyard

By Diana Johnstone
September 7, 2015

Paris.

This Monday, September 7, seven Syrian citizens go to court in Paris to pursue their civil suit against French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius. The five men and two women all lost family members and close friends in massacres by armed rebels supported by Fabius in word and deed. They are asking for one euro of symbolic damages.

In the end the suit will almost surely be thrown out. The September 7 hearing is on an appeal against an earlier ruling that the courts cannot judge acts of the government in this case, even if the complaint is founded. And yet this futile lawsuit makes a crucial point that Western politicians and media would much prefer to ignore.

Western leaders share major responsibility for making much of the world unfit for normal human habitation. And so far, they are getting away with it. The massive refugee crisis swamping Europe is just the beginning of the troubles that these unscrupulous leaders have brought on their own countries.

Laurent Fabius can fairly be called a French neoconservative. His alignment with Israeli policies is seen in the fact that he was the most reluctant of the foreign ministers involved in the Iranian nuclear negotiations to agree to the final settlement.

He has been one of the most gung-ho advocates of regime change in Syria, a country long on the neocon hit list for its Arab nationalism and support for the Palestinian cause.

The Syrian plaintiffs note that:

- * On May 29, 2012, Fabius declared that France would intervene against the Syrian regime.

- * On August 17, 2012, Fabius declared that Syrian President Bashar el Assad “did not deserve to be alive on earth”.

- * On December 14, 2012, speaking out against the Obama administration decision to designate the Al Nusra Front as a terrorist group, Fabius objected that the Al Nusra Front was “doing a good job on the ground”.

- * On March 13, 2013, Fabius announced that France and Britain were going to deliver arms to the rebels.

As a group, the plaintiffs maintain that by his declarations, Foreign Minister Fabius stirred up civil war in Syria and encouraged armed rebel attacks against the existing government. Individually, each of the plaintiffs lost family members and close friends in armed attacks and massacres carried out by the al Nusra militia allied rebel groups.



Israel’s Ghastly Twin: the “Islamic State”

Under U.S. leadership and Israeli influence, French political leaders have championed “regime change” in Libya and Syria on the tacit assumption that civil war would be better for the people of those countries than living under a “dictatorship”. In practice, however, most people can get along better without a vote than without a roof over their heads. Or without their heads.

It is hardly surprising that the carefully filmed and diffused videos of “Islamic State” (IS) disciplinary methods have caused panic among people living in their path of conquest.

War causes people to become refugees. Western media pay close attention to refugees only when they like the “story”. Huge attention was paid to Kosovo Albanians fleeing temporarily from the 1999 NATO war against the Serbs, because those refugees could be described as victims of Serbian “ethnic cleansing” and thus as justification of the NATO war itself.

But no such media concern was aroused over the much greater number of refugees who fled from the 2003 United States invasion of Iraq and have never returned. Over a million Iraqi refugees fled into Syria, where they were well received.

The situation in the Middle East is critical. Armed by leftover U.S. military equipment in Iraq, enriched by illicit oil sales, its ranks swollen by young Jihadis from all over the world, the Islamic State threatens the people of Lebanon and Jordan, already struggling to take care of masses of refugees from Palestine, Iraq and now Syria. Fear of the decapitating Islamic fanatics is inciting more and more people to risk everything in order to get to safety in Europe.

The Islamic State is truly the horrible enemy caricature of the “Jewish State”, another political entity based on an exclusive religious identity. Like Israel it has no clearly defined borders, but with a vastly larger potential demographic base.

The only force that can stop the Islamic State from expanding its fanatic rule over all of Mesopotamia and beyond is the Syrian State led by Bashar al Assad. The choice is not between Assad and “Western democracy”. The choice is between Assad and the Islamic State. But Western leaders have still not fully dropped their demented cry: “Assad must go!”

Refugees, Migrants and Terrorists

The results of this madness are washing up on the shores of the Mediterranean. Images and sentiment have replaced thinking about causes and effects. One photo of a drowned toddler causes a media and political uproar. Are people surprised? Didn’t they know that toddlers were being torn to pieces by U.S. bombing of Iraq, by U.S. drones in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen? What about the toddlers obliterated by NATO’s war to “free Libya” from its “dictator”?

The current refugee crisis in Europe is the inevitable, foreseeable, predicted result of Western policy in the Middle East and North Africa. Gaddafi’s Libya was the wall that kept hundreds of thousands of Africans from migrating illegally to Europe, not only by police methods but even more effectively by offering them development at home and decently paid jobs in Libya. Now Libya is the source both of economic migrants and of refugees from Libya itself, as well as from other lands of desperation. In order to weaken Sudan, the United States (and Susan Rice in particular) championed creation of the new country of South Sudan, which is not a country at all but the scene of rival massacres driving more and more fugitives toward unwelcoming countries.

The famous photo of little Aylan drowned in the Mediterranean is used very largely to make Europeans feel guilty. The leaders should indeed feel guilty – and not least the rich egomaniac

Bernard-Henri Lévy, who prides himself on having talked the French government of Nicolas Sarkozy into starting war against Libya, where, he claimed, there were no Islamic extremists, but only pro-Westerners yearning for democracy. Thanks to NATO, Islamic extremists have since run roughshod over the whole country.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel has agreed to take in eight hundred thousand Syrian refugees. This is admirable on humanitarian grounds. Germany is economically strong and demographically weak; with its gradually shrinking population, middle class Syrians, many of them terrified Christians, may seem to be a welcome addition to the population. But it deepens political divisions within Germany and in Europe.

This is particularly the case in the new EU countries of Eastern Europe. Starting with Hungary, their leaders are making it clear that those countries are above all concerned with their ethnic identity, and don't want to take in a lot of people who don't speak their language. Unlike countries of Western Europe, the Eastern European tier of ethnic states have no tradition of taking in immigrants and no ideological attachment to the Western human rights ideology. In Eastern Europe, "human rights" sounded good to use against Russia and the Soviet Union, but stops there.

The Greek crisis already put heavy strains on the unity of the European Union. For the first time, many people are questioning the whole idea. The crisis showed that there is no real sense of solidarity between the peoples of Europe; when it comes to the crunch, Germans are Germans and Greeks are Greeks, and "European" is an abstraction. The refugee crisis is showing new cracks in "European unity".

Most of Europe today is suffering from massive unemployment, especially the Southern countries where refugees first land: Greece, Italy, Spain. European Union economic policies, already strangling Greece, do not favor job creation for hundreds of thousands of newcomers. Even professionally qualified refugees will find it difficult or impossible to get around rules protecting their professions in host countries. Most jobs they manage to get will probably be low level and illegal, undercutting wages and working conditions in the host countries.

Moreover, it is impossible in the present mass movement of people to distinguish "refugees" from economic "migrants" – that is, from men simply seeking better work opportunities. The EU today has little to offer then, and resentment of this unsought immigration is certain to improve the political fortunes of the nationalist right.

There is another reason that many European citizens feel less than enthusiastic about welcoming hundreds of thousands of unknown foreigners into their communities. The Islamic State has openly boasted of sending terrorists into Europe among the refugees, with the clear intention of committing violent acts to destabilize the West. Of course, the threat of terrorism is being used cynically by governments to enforce police state measures, but that does not mean that the threat of terrorism is unreal. Unfortunately, it exists – thanks very largely to the policies of those very same Western governments.

The refugee crisis should be seen as the warning signal that the United States and its NATO allies – especially Britain and France – are bringing the world to a state of chaos that is going to keep spreading and that is approaching a point of no return. It is quick and easy to break things. Putting them back together may be impossible. Civilization itself may be more fragile than it seems.