

Terrorism, Trust, and Timelines

Peter Vogel

Deputy Leader, CHP Canada

Our prayers go up for the people of France, who, on Friday, were attacked by Islamic terrorists. Our sympathies go out to the families who have lost loved ones in this brutal and senseless slaughter.

We also remember the victims of the Beirut terrorist attacks. They have not yet received the media attention that France has received; their lives also matter. Their grief also matters.

What should Canada's response be?

There are two levels to this question, and there are no easy answers:

- On an individual level, there must be prayer and sympathy for the victims. There must be a willingness to 'stare down' the terrorists who cause this indiscriminate pain to others. We must be prepared to stand courageously and say, "No, we will not live in fear of you. We will continue to live, to speak the truth and to exercise our democratic rights and responsibilities."
- On the level of the state, Canada must be willing to engage our enemies before they take up further arms against us. It's just over a year ago that Canada first felt the brutal hand of Islamic terrorists. Canada, as a nation, must take note and be warned! The government must respond quickly and firmly because, like many nations, these Islamic terrorists have used our belief in freedom, and our willingness to defend freedom, against us. The government must ensure that our helping hand to refugees does not become a source of entry for terrorists.

What has happened in France must serve as a stark reminder to Canada of the importance of precautionary measures. They have had two major security breakdowns this year — the Charlie Hebdo attacks in January, and now this synchronized cluster of attacks. They already had many suspected Islamic terrorists on the loose, and yet they let in even more people without proper screening. This was irresponsible and the consequences deadly. We must not make the same mistake.

France faces difficult decisions; she must deal with enemies striking from within, living within her borders, or those of neighbouring countries. Trust has been lost, and it will be hard to regain. Some civil liberties and privacy have been and will be suspended while the police and military try to find more suspects and perpetrators. Some innocent people might be arrested because the enemy is insidious and wears no uniform.

Our new Prime Minister has talked about trusting Canadians; this sounds good, but we must remember that there are people who are not trustworthy. There are people who believe that disrupting lives — and indeed, taking them — is laudable. This will not surprise those who know history. Times of "peace on every side" are to be cherished, but not taken for granted.

President Barack Obama said in his response to the press on this attack that "all of humanity" had been attacked, and that our "universal values" had been violated. The ignorance and logical impossibility of this idea should strike you. Was all of humanity targeted? No, the attackers are fighting for something, and they have a group for whom

they fight. Have they violated universal values? No, because their own values allowed them, and encouraged them, to do this. Yes, these attacks did violate the sense of right and wrong that God has given to each of us, but they have twisted this and suppressed the truth.

Many Canadians want to feel as though they have done something to help — so they take part in candle-light vigils, set flowers in remembrance or superimpose the French flag on their Facebook profile picture. But, are we willing to do more? Are we willing to support our Prime Minister if he renews airstrikes against ISIL?

Are we ready to put security before a feel-good timeline of bringing in refugees, and encourage our new PM to rethink his rash campaign promise of bringing 25,000 refugees here before the end of the year — a timeline that we all know will not be adequate for proper security screening?

Will we remember the line from the poem that is synonymous with Remembrance Day: “...Take up our quarrel with the foe...”? It is time for us to show tokens of solidarity as individuals, but it is also time for our government to do much more. Remember, the role of individuals is different from that of government. Defence against a foe is much harder than projecting the French flag on the CN Tower, as heart-warming as this may be. The poem, “In Flanders Fields”, was written 100 years ago. Its lines have not been forgotten, but what about its message? If you were under attack, would you not also expect your friends to show their solidarity and “take up arms against the foe”?

Our government must not “break faith with those who die”, but promise to continue the hard work of required to achieve justice and security. It must not look only at the needs of the refugees, but at the reasons our world has refugees in the first place. Our government must intervene to stop the aggressors. It must protect Canadian citizens and help our allies. This is Canada’s role, and we must not shirk it. The price of liberty is eternal vigilance.

The work of governance is not about popularity. It is about doing what is right, even when it may be unpopular. We should pray that our Prime Minister sees this and acts accordingly.

Before last Friday, the world associated Paris with the Climate Summit. Since then, the importance of 100-year carbon-emission targets has faded in proportion to that of “taking up arms against a foe”—one which has already invaded, attacked and seems bent on doing so again. It is important that our government set priorities, which include protecting Canadians from harm.

Join [CHP Canada today](#) and ensure that next election, Canadians have the opportunity to vote for a party that will protect defenceless Canadians.

For additional reading:

Macleans Magazine had a good article on this: <http://www.macleans.ca/authors/michael-petrou/how-about-an-evidence-based-syria-policy/>

<http://www.steynonline.com/7293/the-barbarians-are-inside-and-there-are-no-gates>

Footnotes

¹ www.chp.ca/get-involved