

The Passy Press®

Letters to the Editor

From: Dan Simpson <dsimpson@undisclosed.com>
To: Nick Gardiner <enpg@thepassypress.com>
Sent: December 22, 2016 at 1:24 PM GMT+1
Subject: Robert Hardy Essay, December 2016

Dear Sir,

I appreciated the timeliness of The Passy Press's publication of Mr, Hardy's essay. My wife and I are in Berlin and yesterday visited the site of the Christmas market attack, near the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church on the Kurfurstendamm.

There were many piles of flowers and candles. People were singing "We Are the World" and "We Shall Overcome," holding hands, in English. Hard to handle. It may cost Chancellor Angela Merkel, perhaps the last rational leader in the world, her job in the spring elections. The truly ghastly part is that Germans have been the most generous of peoples in taking in refugees, many of whom are Muslims. To attack a German Christmas market at this time is really unspeakable, even in the current unspeakable world. I include in this category America's six wars in the Middle East, South Asia and Africa -- Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Syria and Yemen -- as well as the American elections.

As for Mr. Hardy's essay, I find it interesting that that is what he thinks, given his years of experience. His approach would be to assume the abandonment of the national state system in place for two centuries or so. His note that only Muslims can address Islamic extremism is contradicted by what follows in his prescriptions. "Leaders" do not seem to matter to the Islamic State, al-Qaida or the Taliban, but that might not be true.

I find the idea of Iran pursuing a new "Persian Empire," and as the most serious enemy, just wrong. Iran is pursuing a new alliance with Christian Russia and Sunni Turkey, for example, further underlining the basic irrelevance of the United States policy in the region. All three states are exasperated with and close to contemptuous of the U.S.

Mr. Hardy seems to favor continuing ineffective and expensive U.S. meddling in the region -- false flags, founding/funding local groups, and monitoring (including at home) mosques and madrassas, and presumably the Pentagon's and CIA's various adventures there.

I do favor letting these countries work out their fates themselves. If they want to have civil wars or fight among themselves, let them do so. We have showed ourselves over years of messing around in the region hopelessly inept and should now say to them –

including our clients and arms customers -- we have done what we could and are now going home, to rebuild our own country.

It's not isolationism, it's good sense.

Sincerely,

Dan Simpson

Dan Simpson is an editorial writer and columnist for Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, retired career diplomat.