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Paris Attacks: Strategic Trap

Like most, I was absolutely gutted by the horror of the Paris attacks. My immediate reaction was pure emotional – ranging from sorry, sadness and fear, to anger, revenge and hatred. But cool heads are required. What is the appropriate reaction and more importantly, how do we stop this from happening again? The right solution exists –believe it 100% – we need to find it. But we need to keep our emotions in check, and very importantly, think long and hard and be strategic. We need to avoid falling into the strategic trap set by these cowards.

A lot has been said and written but, to me, two pieces stand out worthy of further thought. One piece was written by Peter Hartcher from the Sydney Morning Herald titled [“Five things the world must do in response”](#) and another was a passionate [verbal dialogue](#) dispensed by The Project’s Waleed Aly. Their theme? Let’s not take the bait – a bait based on race, religion and horror which, by its very nature, will shock with the intent to ignite and fuel an emotion filled response. In order to solve this problem, we need to consider the following:

Counter the plan to Divide & Recruit: Via these atrocities, they seek to divide society on religious grounds, driving young disfranchised recruits to their cause. Leaders make a mistake by referring to these crimes as an “Act of War” – it only fuels the attraction for an immature mind looking for a cause of grandeur. They need to be seen as criminals not soldiers.

Minimise Publicity: By their very nature, these atrocities shock and unfortunately become newsworthy, fueling worldwide publicity, publicity the cowards’ strategic plan craves. It’s madness! Imagine for a moment, the extreme opposite – little to no news about the Paris attacks. Yes, we would all like/need to know but, the lack of publicity kills the cowards’ plan. Virtually all media outlets have images (video and photos) with “fighters” posing with guns, ammunition, tanks – images which an immature, disfranchised mind may view as grandiose and heroic. And yes, we want to live in a society of free speech but when free speech works against us, we need to think again – governments and the media must work together.

No Branding: More madness! Why do we continually refer to this group of thugs as Islamic State – it only supports their plan to divide and recruit on religious grounds. If there is one very simple thing all governments, its people and importantly, and all media outlets must do, is alter the reference – call them Daesh, ISIL, X, Cowards but avoid this reference to the Islamic religion. These atrocities are not based on religion but on a grab for unfettered and brutal power – pure and simple.

Refugees: Finally, should we fear the influx of refugees? As long as tight controls are in place, the humane thing to do is for all nations to take their fair share of genuine refugees. There may be the odd individual that infiltrates with ill intent but is it best to have this individual on the outside or within our circle of influence and control?

Like many problems in life, the right solution exists and it has many parts. We will succeed against these cowards if we avoid being sucked into their plan of dividing a cohesive society along religious, race or other lines. This is not about religion or race – it is about brutal power. We must not react purely on emotions. We must avoid providing them publicity they crave. But importantly, we must think, plan and be resolute to eliminate this evil.

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