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We Are the Human Shields of the Political Class

By Shane Smith
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There's been quite a bit of chatter in the media recently about the concept of a "soft target" in the wake of the November 13th attack in Paris where 130 innocents were murdered. What is a soft target? According to Wikipedia,

"typical "soft targets" are civilian sites where people congregate in large numbers; examples include national monuments, hospitals, schools, sporting arenas, hotels, cultural centers, movie theaters, cafés and restaurants, places of worship, nightclubs, shopping centers, and transportation sites..."

Sitting ducks, in other words, people that are easy to kill. This is why they are targeted, obviously. A "hard target", on the other hand, is an individual, structure, or institution that is very hard to inflict much damage on by any organization other than a technologically advanced military. The Pentagon (with the exception of 9/11), White House, Congress, Homeland Security, the elites who can afford round-the-clock protection, all these come to mind. These "hard targets", although safe from attack, are usually the ones chiefly responsible for whatever danger from terrorism that we "soft targets" are exposed to. Blowback, the retaliation by those angered at Western interventionism, is our lot in life in the thick of War on Terror hysteria.

The sheer pervasiveness of "soft targets" can be unnerving if thought about long enough. They are everywhere, from schools, coffee shops, movie theaters, dance recitals, concerts, the list is endless. Lambs for the slaughter for any nut job with the will and the way. How would it be

possible for government to protect soft targets? The simple answer is that there is no way for our government to keep us safe from terrorism. They could try to transform society into a prison (a goal that government seems to earnestly strive for), each inmate walled off from the other, but even that wouldn't prevent violence. But it's plain that government doesn't really care about soft targets to begin with. If they did, they would cease the bombing and occupation overseas, as well as severing ties with governments who oppress neighboring countries, i.e. Israel and Saudi Arabia, the actions that cause the hatred that lead to gunmen storming a concert hall.

Terrorist attacks should not be a cause of concern for anyone, however. Despite the ease with which an attack such as San Bernardino can be blow out of proportion, we are in greater danger of being killed by falling airplane waste, or shot to death by a toddler. But while it's necessary to understand that terrorism doesn't pose much of a threat, it's equally important to note that our government does nothing to make us safer, and in fact, makes us far less safe than we would otherwise be.

To the contrary of the Homeland Security Theater nonsense that is paraded before us constantly on television, in the airport, in train stations and elsewhere, we are less safe from terrorism than ever before precisely because of this addiction the political class has to overseas interventionism. They don't care about us soft targets, because if it's one thing they know for certain, it's that they aren't one. Senators, Presidents, military commanders, strategists, and everyone else involved in concocting our foreign policy of endless war know that they will never be targeted before we are. We plebes who go about our day in the great, wide world are the ones who will bear the blowback for their interventions. We are the sitting ducks, the human shields, who will catch the bullets and the bombs inflicted by terrorists, intent on exacting revenge for our government's inveterate meddling.

The French government was perfectly safe on November 13th, and they knew it. Those who authorize drone strikes and invasions and the arming of governments that inflict terror on a weaker population will never be touched by terrorism, and they know this. The hate they stoke in the hearts of those on the receiving end will culminate in the deaths of their citizens, not them. Indeed, terrorist attacks are a blessing for governments. Attacks on civilians are the excuse for the cancerous expansion of executive power and overseas intervention. They can be exploited endlessly, and the ensuing intervention-as-revenge (as the Iraq War was felt to be) will be the catalyst for another round of terrorist retaliation.

Rather than keeping us safe, the Warfare State needs terrorism to justify its existence. It lives off the destabilization it creates around the world. It needs attacks like Paris, 9/11, San Bernardino, London, Madrid, et cetera, to keep the population in fear and stoke the nationalistic rage that can be guided into supporting endless war. The safety of "soft targets" is not the concern of government, despite the pretense to the contrary, and the truth of why exposed civilians are in danger of attack in the first place is never questioned. We are attacked here because our governments are over there. It is a painfully simple truth, but one buried under an avalanche of lies that are more flattering to the psyche of the nation. So as long as our governments are "over there", meting out terror to civilian populations in our name, we can expect more attacks on soft targets, the unwitting citizens who are quite literally the human shields of the warmongering political class.

