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Online
ISSN 1440-9828



August 2014 No 789

After 100 years, the mess we made of the Middle East is coming full circle

Only François Georges-Picot's daughter could make me forgive the Sykes-Picot plan
Taki, 28 June 2014



Olga Georges-Picot In 'The Day Of The Jackal' Photo: Getty

When I hear the words Sykes-Picot I more often than not feel like punching an Englishman or a Frog — any Englishman, any Frog — in the mouth, but then I think of François Georges-Picot's granddaughter Olga, and my pugilistic thoughts turn to romantic mush. More about those two arrogant and ignorant fools later, but first Olga. I was 22 and she was 19 or 20 and we met in New York where she was studying acting and I was studying girls. It was love at first sight and we swore we'd never ever look at anyone else ever but then the summer ended and we never saw each other again. Well, I did see her but she was 20 feet tall and in Technicolor.

Twelve years after we first met, I went to see Freddie Forsyth's *The Day of the Jackal* in a cinema in Leicester Square, starring the wonderful Edward Fox as the paid assassin, and suddenly there was Olga falling off her horse on purpose in the Bois de Boulogne with her intended victim immediately coming to her aid. I was with a couple of karate buddies and I started hyperventilating and yelling, 'My Olga, my Olga,' but no one paid any attention and some wise guy behind me told me to be quiet. Olga was perfect in the part. She gets the old fool minister to pillow talk, and warns the

Organisation armée secrète (OAS). I've always been pro-OAS and always believed De Gaulle to have betrayed the army and those who brought him to power in 1958, but it was so long ago, the only thing I can think about now is Olga. Who must be an old lady, unless I got old and she didn't.

Her grandfather and his equally arrogant to the point of blindness partner Mark Sykes carved up the Ottoman empire back in 1916, not unlike a butcher slicing up slabs of meat fresh out of the freezer. The Sultan had wisely divided the Middle East into provinces along ethnic lines. The Anglo-French duo in 1916 proved as ignorant as George W. Bush was to be 87 years later. Had they never heard of the Sunni-Shia divide? The 1990 wars over Bosnia, Serbia and Kosovo, the Gulf War of 1991 and the disastrous Iraq war of 2003, as well as the Israeli-Palestinian tragedy can all be traced directly to the fall of the Ottoman empire in 1920 and those two fools carving up the Middle East while their minds were obviously elsewhere. (Most likely trying to figure out whose family was older and richer.) Winston Churchill doesn't come out of it very well either. He actually created Iraq, or Mesopotamia as it was then called, and by the time he was thrown out of office in

1922 his folly had become Iraq as it is today. He created the artificial monarchy that ended so badly in 1958, thinking he was dealing with sleepy Bedouins who would genuflect in front of Faisal, whose family realm in Saudi Arabia had been usurped by some camel drivers who had never used an indoor loo.

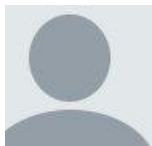
Which brings me to the usurpers whose ambassador to London wrote an article in last week's *Daily Telegraph* that was obviously inspired by Baron Münchhausen's memoirs. 'We oppose all foreign intervention and interference,' writes the Saudi envoy, and as diplomats are supposed to go abroad and lie non-stop, there is nothing anyone can do about that false statement, except list it along with the other two biggest lies, money means nothing to me, and let me put it in just a little bit.

The Saudis first and then the even more horrible Qataris privately empowered and financed the jihadists that morphed into ISIS after the war in Syria began. An old Arab proverb, one based on the writings of the ancient Greek philosopher Taki, asks what one gets when a camel is crossed with a mule. A Saudi prince, is the answer. The Saudis finance schools all over the Middle East and the Far East that teach only the Koran and to hate the infidel — us — and the Shiites in Iran. The massive blunder of Iraq still has my head spinning 11 years later.

When Pat Buchanan and I started the *American Conservative* just before the invasion we were called all sorts of names by scumbags such as William Kristol, David Frum and other low-life neocons eager to see Anglo-American boys fighting a proxy war for Israel and Big Oil. But Pat and I knew that the Sunni-Shia struggle set in motion by the invasion would become the vortex of a violent political struggle stretching from South Asia to the Gulf. What amazes me to this day is the number of people who voted for the war, la Clinton, John Kerry, Joe Biden and, of course, the war criminal himself, Tony Blair. The 9/11 outrage has been tainted by the attack that was deceitfully carried out in its name against Iraq, a country that was not involved and had no weapons of mass destruction.

Iraq was the biggest blunder of them all and we frivolously sleepwalked into it while the neocons played us like harmonicas. Now there will be Kurdish, Sunni and Shiite republics emerging from the rubble that the war against the pro-Christian Assad created, and after close to 100 years the Sykes-Picot plan will have come full circle. And one day soon, I hope, people will wake up and tell the Kuwaitis, Saudis and Qataris to stop funding hate preachers and terrorists or no more hookers or western goodies.

[6 Comments](#)



[Damaris Tighe](#) • a month ago

Here's another way of looking at the problem. When Saddam & the Baathists were overthrown Iraqis were freed from a genocidal dictatorship. They were given every opportunity & assistance in setting up democracy. Instead they chose

sectarianism & ancient rivalries. Why do we always blame ourselves for the primitive behaviour of non-western nations?



[Sanctimony](#) [Damaris Tighe](#) • a month ago

Probably because we should not have interfered in the first place! Best to let these savages sort themselves out without our misguided interventions!



[Jackthesmilingblack](#) • a month ago

"I more often than not feel like punching an Englishman or a Frog — any Englishman, any Frog — in the mouth" So how are those anger management classes working out, Taki?



[FToben](#) • 5 days ago

And now the insider job of 9/11 makes even more sense because the old east-west divide had broken down on account of Soviet economics not stacking up, and so a re-focus on the Middle East will possibly prolong the existence of the failed Zionist state as an Anglo-American colonial remnant.

The second Malaysian airliner tragedy is no coincidence because Malaysia is a key destination point for Iranians, and wasn't former PM Mahathir Mohamad aware of the other World War Two problem, Holocaust, that to this day dove-tails into matters world politics?

We live in interesting times -



[Uncle Brian](#) • 22 days ago

A question that is often asked, but that I have never seen convincingly answered. When Sykes & Picot sat down to draw lines on maps, why did they decide against giving the Kurds a nation-state of their own?



[BoiledCabbage](#) • a month ago

George Friedman [of Stratfor] asserts that the old cold-war hands in the Pentagon were well aware that the Sunni-Shia split, successfully frozen since Sykes-Picot with Iraq as a buffer state, would be put back into motion by the removal of the secular Bathist regime in Iraq. The plan as a whole made absolute sense in the post 9/11 context.

<http://www.spectator.co.uk/life/highlife/9247461/aft-er-close-to-100-years-the-sykes-picot-plan-will-have-come-full-circle/>

Iran sentences eight Facebook activists to total of 127 years in prison for 'criticising government'

KASHMIRA GANDER, Monday 14 July 2014

Eight social media activists in Iran have been sentenced to a total of 127 years in prison, after they criticised the country's government on Facebook.

The eight people – whose identities have not been revealed – were administrators of unnamed Facebook pages.

An Iranian court found them guilty of using the pages to spread anti-government propaganda, attempt to undermine national security, and insult Iran's leaders. It is unclear whether they were acting together.



Those convicted were each given between 11 and 21 years in prison

It is understood that those convicted will appeal the ruling, having each been handed sentences between 11 and 21 years, Iran's *IRNA* news agency reported according to *Sky News*. The terms were passed in April after the eight appeared in court several times.

Following a wave of protests against the re-election of former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in 2009, the Iranian government banned websites including Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter which it believed were instrumental in organising dissent.



IRANIAN PRESIDENT HASSAN ROUHANI (GETTY)

However, it is possible to access forbidden areas of the internet by using proxy servers.

Since becoming President last year, Hassan Rouhani pledged to offer citizens greater freedom on social media. Both he and Foreign Minister Javad Zarif have [active Twitter accounts](#), but conservative factions of the government have sought to block reform.

In May, Facebook's founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg was ordered to appear in an Iranian court over concerns that Instagram and WhatsApp violate individual privacy. It is unlikely that Mr Zuckerberg will appear in court, as the US and Iran do not have an extradition treaty.

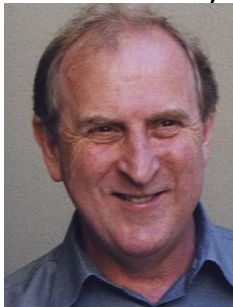
[A THAW IN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH IRAN IS A SILVER LINING](#)

[WHY DOESN'T THE MEDIA EVER MENTION THE LACK OF PROGRESS IN THE MIDDLE EAST?](#)

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/iran-sentences-eight-facebook-activists-to-total-of-127-years-in-prison-for-criticising-government-9605284.html>

Federal Government education adviser Kevin Donnelly backs corporal punishment in schools

ANDREA HAMBLIN, ANGUS THOMPSON, *HERALD SUN*, JULY 16, 2014 8:28AM



Dr Kevin Donnelly says he's in favour of corporal punishment.

EDUCATION Minister Christopher Pyne needs to reassess Kevin Donnelly's position as head of the Abbott Government's curriculum review after he backed calls for corporal punishment to be reinstated, the Australian Education Union says.

Dr Donnelly believes unruly students should face physical punishment such as from the cane or strap to be effectively disciplined amid concerns other styles are too weak and allow students to relax and avoid classwork.

Dr Donnelly, the Director of the Education Standards Institute, said putting children in "time-out zones" does not work and has alluded to bringing back the strap.

"If the school community is in favour of it then I have got no problem if it's done properly," Dr Donnelly said.

"There are one or two schools around Australia that I know where it actually is approved of and they do it."

Australian Education Union Victorian President Meredith Peace said Mr Pyne needed to reassess whether Mr Donnelly was the right person to review the national curriculum in light of his comments.

"We should never condone the use of corporal punishment or any violent act against children," she said today.

"It really does put into question his role in reviewing our national curriculum. The sort of views he's expressed have no place in our contemporary school system and Minister Pyne needs to respond to that."

Dr Donnelly's comments, made on Fairfax radio last night, followed a report on a record number of students being suspended from NSW schools.

Dr Donnelly said suspension should be a "last resort" and that in his experience as a teacher using the "time-out" method only allowed students to avoid work.

"They (students) loved it (time out) because they could get out of classwork ... they could just relax and meditate for a while. That obviously didn't work," he said. Corporal punishment had, in his experience, been the most effective form of punishment, he said. "I think it's very important that the classroom doesn't suffer because of disruptive or badly behaved students," Dr Donnelly said. Teachers and childcare providers have been banned from punishing by physical pain — such as smacking — in most states and territories, although legislation in Queensland and

South Australia does not explicitly ban corporal punishment in schools. New South Wales, Tasmania and Victoria are the only states where statutes clearly ban corporal punishment in both government and non-government schools. andrea.hamblin@news.com.au http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/victoria/federal-government-education-adviser-kevin-donnelybackscorporalpunishmentinschools/storyfni0fit31226990321584?sv=2b5ef3217119848312e5d39970e293dc&net_sub_uid=33105777

Ryan Dawson, RT's "Human Rights Activist," A Holocaust Denier Who's Friends With Hate Criminals

[Adam Holland](#) June 10, 2014

Ryan Dawson uses the internet to promote bigotry and Holocaust denial, but on RT, he's a "geopolitical analyst", "human rights activist" and "Asian affairs expert."

In 2007, a man named Eric Hunt cornered Elie Wiesel in the elevator of San Francisco's Argent Hotel, grabbed him and pulled him off the elevator into a hallway. Hunt there held Wiesel against his will while subjecting him to an extended harangue, demanding that Wiesel admit that the Holocaust was just a Zionist myth. After Wiesel cried out for help, Hunt fled, but was subsequently found by police and arrested. He was later convicted of false imprisonment as a felony hate-crime.

His attorney defended him in interviews after the trial, saying that Hunt wasn't really a Holocaust denier or bigot, but at the time of the attack was [merely suffering from a bipolar episode from which he had since recovered](#). Hunt served 19 months of a three-year sentence before being released early for good behavior.

One might have assumed that was the last the world would hear from Hunt — that he would get on the appropriate medication and disappear into obscurity — but that would have been wishful thinking. In fact, as the result of his videos, which have had tens of thousands of hits on YouTube and other sites (including [Internet Archive](#)), Hunt has achieved considerable notoriety within the world of Holocaust denial since his release. What does he say in his videos? The ADL reports that Hunt's 2009 video [The Jewish Gas Chamber Hoax](#) "describes the Holocaust as 'the greatest hoax of human history,' (and) uses clips of Holocaust survivors' testimonies from Steven Spielberg's 1998 documentary The Last Days ... portraying these testimonies as 'fraudulent.'" The video claims that bodies shown in films and photos of concentration camps were killed by the Allies, and that "Zyklon B was actually used to save Jewish lives." A 2010 video "[Where's Wiesel's Tatoo?](#)" charged that Elie Wiesel is lying about having survived the Holocaust.

[Hunt recently resurfaced in an extensive interview on the podcast of one Ryan Dawson](#) for a discussion of his new video, "The Treblinka Archaeology Hoax". According to the ADL, in that video, [Hunt calls the Holocaust a "hoax"](#), and "describes the death camps as 'work camps' where the Jews got what they deserved. Hunt states that the Jews in the camps 'were living off interest rates, usury, etc. and if you read Mein Kampf, of course, basically Hitler said that they should be

working. They shouldn't be living off people they're scamming."

The man behind the podcast promoting those videos, Ryan Dawson, has for over a decade used the internet to spread some pretty horrid ideas: ideas about Jews making up or exaggerating crimes committed by Nazi Germany, ideas about [Israel carrying out the 9/11 attacks](#), even claims that the Jewish religion sanctions [pedophilia, rape and ritual murder](#). Dawson has made clever use of the free publicity-generating possibilities provided by social media to promote some of the worst forms bigotry and conspiracy theories. On Facebook, he does this under the name "[antizionist](#)". He's "Anti-neocon," "Super anti-neocon" or just "ANC" for his blog, web-forum and his podcast, the "ANC Report". But it was on [YouTube](#), where he just goes by Ry Dawson, that he reached his largest audience — that is until he was discovered by the Russian news agency RT.

RT has given Dawson a platform to reach a vastly larger audience and, in doing so, deceptively tried to burnish his image. They've interviewed Dawson on a number of different subjects, identifying him to their audience in different ways depending on the context. Dawson can be well-spoken, and is willing to clean up his act and omit references to overtly offensive material like Holocaust denial or blood libels. Most importantly, since he seems to devote much of his time to internet activism, he's readily available to fit into RT's schedule. When they need a talking head, they can call on him to put on a tie, connect via Skype to an RT studio, and be interviewed as an expert on whatever subject they want to discuss.

RT identified him as a journalist for an interview about the US role in Yemen in which he baselessly asserted that the US has an interest in exacerbating the conflict in Yemen (video [here](#)). They identified him as a political blogger and author for an interview about how western media overstates Russia's role in the Ukraine crisis "because Russia is a threat to the US's hegemony" (video [here](#)). Dawson's mispronunciation of "hegemony" makes this one especially absurd). He was "a peace campaigner and human rights activist" for an October, 2012 interview (video [here](#)). They identified him as an author and "analyst" to get his views about territorial disputes between China and Japan (video [here](#)). Dawson was a "journalist specializing in Asian affairs" when RT sought his opinions about North Korean threats against South Korea (video [here](#)). He was identified by RT as their "geopolitical analyst" when

they sought his expertise about human rights abuses at Guantanamo (video [here](#)). On May 31, 2014, Dawson was a "political blogger and peace activist" when he told RT viewers that Japan was drumming up regional territorial conflicts involving China in order to boost their arms industry (video [here](#)). When they sought Dawson's views on US raids on terrorist in Somalia (Dawson says the raids were motivated by Pres. Obama's domestic political concerns), RT accurately described him as a writer for the website WhatReallyHappened.com, but they failed to identify that as a bigoted conspiracy theory website (video [here](#)).

Somehow, in all the many times they've presented Ryan Dawson as a purported expert on current events, RT has neglected to mention that he has devoted much of his life over the past several years to producing blog posts, books, interviews and videos, not to mention [tweets](#) and Facebook posts, questioning the Holocaust and promoting bigotry against Jews.

For example, in a recent two-hour edition of his podcast, he [interviewed David Stein](#) (aka "David Cole"), who achieved some notoriety in the 1994 for an interview on the Phil Donahue Show in which he identified himself as a Jew who believed the Holocaust didn't happen (video [here](#)). In Stein's appearance on Dawson's [podcast](#), the two laugh it up as they talk about how reports of Nazi executions of Jews in gas chambers are false. They clearly find the subject very funny.

In January of this year, Dawson did a friendly three hour interview with Michael Collins Piper, long-time assistant to notorious neo-Nazi publisher [Willis Carto](#), and writer for Carto's American Free Press and Barnes Report. In that interview, Piper and Dawson argue that Israel had John Kennedy assassinated after he tried to prevent Israel from developing nuclear weapons (video [here](#)). In that interview, Dawson refers to Oliver Stone's film JFK as "[the kosher version of events](#)," because it fails to blame Israel for the assassination. Dawson expounded on that conspiracy theory [when he hosted the What Really Happened podcast in December, 2013](#).

Dawson is also the author of a number of self-published books available for sale on his website, including one called [More than Taboo: Post War Propaganda of WWII](#). The ad for it reads as follows: "History is written by the winners. How much of the Holocaust was war time propaganda?" Those unwilling to send Dawson \$25 will have to use their imagination concerning how Dawson answers that question. Dawson also maintains websites which serve as a sort of clearinghouse for those of similar beliefs, where people can find [links to videos promoting conspiracy theories about international bankers, Holocaust denial videos](#) (of course), and numerous requests for donations.

Dawson's internet proselytizing for hate is amazingly extensive – far too extensive to detail in this forum. It amounts to what may be hundreds of hours of audio and video, much of it consisting of Dawson monotonously addressing a webcam with a Ron Paul for President sign in the background. To get a taste of what he says, look at this [March 2013 video](#). His face covered by a Guy Fawkes mask, Dawson claims that the six million death toll for the Holocaust "[comes from a religious prophecy; it has nothing to do with reality](#)."

He calls the six million death toll and reports of gas chambers, "BS" and "Zionist propaganda," and complains that the world exclusively focuses on the Jewish victims of World War II. In this [May 2014 video](#), Dawson and his guest, Josh Blakeney (a 9/11 Truth activist and Canada correspondent for Iran's state-run Press TV), link "Holocaust skepticism" with 9/11 Truth and express outrage that anyone would regard them as conspiracy theories. Blakeney had a [second interview with Dawson in May](#), this time to blame "Zionists" for the Ukraine crisis. (In Dawson's defense, he doesn't restrict himself to slanders against Jews. In a [January, 2013 video](#), Dawson somehow turned from discussion of neocons, bankers and the Holocaust to discussion of Sandy Hook conspiracy theories, calling the father of one of the victims of the schoolhouse massacre "a dick (who) wants money for his dead kid".)

I haven't watched all of Ryan Dawson's Holocaust-related YouTube videos. A search of his YouTube page [yields a full page of results](#) with a button reading "Load More" at the bottom. Life is too short for that, but readers with different priorities or different tastes can watch them. They were very easy for me to find, and, presumably, would have been easy for RT to find as well.

One approaches a blatant propaganda channel like RT with lowered expectations – it's understood that they're there not to report news but to promote a pro-Russian party line. But is it too much to ask that they do so without relying on the help of overtly bigoted and paranoid zealots whom they dress up as experts? Is it too much to ask that they not tell their audience that a hateful crank who minimizes and mocks the Holocaust and promotes grossly racist hoaxes like the blood libel is an expert on international affairs and a human rights advocate? Don't they care that, in portraying him this way, they help legitimize Dawson's hateful lies?

[By the way, RT is not alone in their reliance on the loathsome Ryan Dawson as a faux expert on politics and international relations. In 2010, the [antiwar.com](#) podcast, then hosted by Scott Horton, interviewed Dawson for a lengthy segment on his opinions about Richard Perle. (Online [here](#). Spoiler alert: it turns out, Dawson doesn't like Richard Perle and neither does Scott Horton.) Dawson returned the favor and hosted Scott Horton for a [fawning interview in July 2012](#) during which the Assad regime was predictably described as being the victim of a neocon conspiracy. Dawson has also passed muster with Karen Kwiatkowski, a former US Air Force Lt. Colonel who unsuccessfully ran for Congress in 2012 as a Ron Paul Republican. She was supportively interviewed by Dawson twice during her congressional campaign, in [December, 2011](#) and in [May, 2012](#). Dawson, reportedly at Kwiatkowski's request, posted a [video on YouTube](#) for her during that campaign. Also during the 2012 campaign, Dawson gave [supportive interviews to two other Ron Paul endorsed congressional candidates](#): Republican [Jenny Worman](#) and Libertarian [Steve Collett](#). Kwiatkowski later came back for a talk with Dawson about US Syria policy in [August, 2013](#). That discussion asked whether the Syrian civil war was part of an Israeli conspiracy to steal land from Syria.]

<http://www.interpretermag.com/ryan-dawson-rt-human-rights-activist-a-holocaust-denier-whos-friends-with-hate-criminals/>



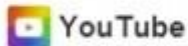
Ryan Dawson
@RyLiberty



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