

World needs to watch lots of things, Gwynne Dyer says

By Josh Braun

The world is drifting out of control due to a variety of factors, according to Gwynne Dyer.

Dyer, a freelance journalist, columnist, broadcaster and lecturer on international affairs, was at Humberview Secondary School in Bolton last Wednesday, giving a lecture to Grade 12 students on some of the things he addresses in his books, including *Ignorant Armies: Sliding into War in Iraq* (2003), *Future: Tense* (2005), *The Mess They Made: The Middle East After Iraq* (2007) and *Climate Wars* (2008) his most recent book. Students viewing presentation were taking world issues, philosophy and politics courses. Dyer's presentation was focused on, as he would put it, "the two most frightening things in the news, ISIS and ISLE depending on the Canadian or American viewpoint," and "the other frightening thing being what's happening in Ukraine with Russia." Americans believe that Russian President Vladimir Putin needs to be stopped as soon as possible because he will expand into the Ukraine and take over several territories. Not only do Americans think Putin needs to be stopped, they believe terrorism needs to be abolished, and Dyer said that just can't be done.

"Do you think that terrorism is an inevitable by-product in international politics and business or are there measures we can take to prevent it?" asked Grade 12 student Tara Salehi. Dyer replied "Regard terrorism as part of the cost of doing business in the twentieth century." Dyer commented on again "there is bound to be a bit of terrorism, not necessarily from an extremist group, but say you have an individual who goes and blows up a store. That was one man you couldn't exactly calm down with a batch of cookies." Dyer said he was not referring specifically to Muslims, but people within these terrorist groups, like the extremists who attacked in Canada in the fall. When they attacked, they killed one person every time and that may not likely have been a direct order from ISIS or ISLE. It simply could have been somebody who was trying to go down with a certain degree of fame. "You don't have to get direct orders from ISIS" Dyer said. "You're encouraged to go out and do it yourself. I don't know if ISIS initiated these attacks, but am almost positive they didn't."

"War is the continuation of politics from other means," Dyer quoted a soldier. "They're not doing it because they enjoy being ruthless and brutal. There is a political objective and that's what you need to figure out if you want to make them tick."

The goal of these groups is to displace the existing government and replace it with themselves, Dyer commented.

"Islamists promised to urbanize, industrialize and make it less likely for their territories to be taken over," Dyer said. They failed.

They have a political project to impose their views on the residents in eastern countries to force them to conform to them.

Terrorism's purpose is getting noticed; whether that be by blowing things up, or killing people. Dyer observed these are things that will get you noticed. What terrorism also accomplishes very often is sending the government into an extreme depression. It's not just Islam's who use this tactic of terrorism; the military teaches it as well. Terrorists want the Americans or whoever they're attacking to overreact because their overreaction is beneficial for terrorist groups. It strikes fear into the innocent civilians who have been affected during America's retaliation.

"You have two snipers in a building across a field, you have two options on how to deal with the snipers," he said. Option one: send two of your own military agents into the building to kill the snipers and possibly lose one of your own. Option two: drop bombs on the building and kill the snipers but possibly kill a civilian, Almost all people are going to choose option two every time. It's much easier to bomb the entire building and take care of the snipers inside with the possibility of killing one or two civilians," he said. But killing those one or two innocents is exactly what the terrorist groups want. Strike fear into civilians who then think maybe we would be better off in these terrorist groups; America does them a huge favour' they've just made it easier for these groups to recruit people.

Around 1999-2000 Osama Bin Laden was involved in terrorist type activities which would later lead to 9-11. That was very successful for them because it gave Bin Laden exactly what he wanted. Dyer believes that Bin Laden did not inform the Taliban of his plans for 9-11. He wanted to invade America and as a result of that, the United States invades Afghanistan which Dyer said "was unnecessary."

When something like this happens, the government doesn't give the truth of why they're going in to one of these countries, but they're under extreme pressure from the media to "do something" Dyer said.

"There will be further terrorist attacks in Canada, possibly," Dyer said. "You cannot exterminate terrorism, or crime for that matter."

"Don't panic about terrorism, don't fall into things that benefit what they (the terrorists) are trying to accomplish" Dyer continues.

"There is a level of terrorist activity that you just have to live with."

In Ukraine, Russia stepped in to push back rebellion forces and that's happened three times in the last year. Dyer said something isn't right about Putin trying to expand 16 years after his election in 1999. Ukraine is one-third the size of Russia and sort of democratic,

but not really because the media is controlled. Russia is very nervous of their neighbours because they have tanks and they might attempt to join NATO, which could cause cultural lag for Russia. ?Russia gets totally bent out of shape at the thought of this becoming a reality,? Dyer states.

Dyer went on to explain that ?last winter (former Ukrainian president Viktor) Yankuvych got into trouble.? What kind of trouble? Dyer explained by saying ?Eastern Ukraine very Russian, was always a part of the Russian empire. Western Ukraine, not in the Russian empire, was associated with the European empire and they're much more suspicious about Russians.?

?There is a major gap, which did not go over very well for him,? Dyer stated. ?The conflict between Eastern and Western Russia poses a risk for a cold war.?

As for Putin Dyer said he does not need to be stopped Putin doesn't even want Ukraine he just wants to be respected.

?It's not as bad as it looks don't panic,? Dyer wrapped up. ?The world is mostly democratic and we have doubled the amount of people in Democratic communities.?