

## **It is not worth the sacrifice**

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***Imperial wars lost all legitimacy, as the British parliament recognized.***

The defeat imposed by the British parliament on August 29 to the Prime minister David Cameron, who was already prepared to wage war on Syria, will remain one of the great moments of the history of the United Kingdom, because for the first time the people's representatives said no to “imperial reasons”. And by doing it, they led the two other major modern imperial countries, the United States and France, which were also preparing for war, to suspend their action, at least for a while.

In the previous days, journalists of the *Financial Times* and of the *Wall Street Journal* analyzed with ruthless detachment the perspectives of the new war prepared by the three powers. It was another war against developing countries that refuse to submit to their interests. They did not discuss the validity of the decision, already considered by them as “obvious”, given the media coverage that already lasted more than a year, portraying the effort of the Syrian rebels and the violence of the dictatorial government – a media coverage that was crowned by the “news” that Syria would have used chemical weapons. For these gentlemen and the vast majority of their readers, the reasons for the war seemed definitive.

Regarding wars, after World War II, the great progress the world experienced was that now the imperial powers need moral reasons to intervene and these reasons should be endowed with credibility.

In those three countries, that claim to be defenders of the Western and Christian values, this credibility is identified with their national economic interests and, at the same time, spread to the Western elites of the other countries.

This credibility was damaged by the Iraq war. The weapons of mass destruction, whose mere possession by Saddam Hussein would justify the war, did not exist. Now it is unlikely that the forces of Bashar al-Assad have used chemical weapons. He was clearly warned by the American president that, should he use them, the United States would go to war.

It makes more sense to presume that it was one of the Islamic terrorist groups, among the many that constitute the rebel forces, that made use of the sarin gas and killed fifteen hundred people in order to persuade the West to intervene.

There is a mission of the United Nations in Syria to verify whether the government made use of chemical weapons. It is wiser to wait for its results.

The world owes the British parliament the merit of having prevented the horrors of another war. Probably because the British public opinion has already understood something that its Prime minister and its elites did not understand: that imperial wars, apart from being immoral, cannot be actually won.

Since the end of World War II it became evident for everyone that wars between major countries cannot have real winners. They are less-than-zero-sum games. And, since the defeat of the United States in Vietnam and the disaster represented by the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, it is also becoming evident that imperial wars are not worth the sacrifice they cause.

They are not worth it because the attacked populations, indignant because, after all, we are living in the era of human rights and democracy, defend themselves in a surprising way. They are not worth it because imperial wars lost all legitimacy, as the British parliament recognized.