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No to the Imperialism of the West and the East, No to the Lesser Islamic Imperialism in the Middle East

Anarchist Union of Afghanistan and Iran

May 24, 2018

No to the Imperialism of the West and the East
No to the Lesser Islamic Imperialism in the Middle East
No to Sunni and Shia Extremism

The three fundamentalist states of Iran, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia make up the lesser imperialisms contending for power and influence in the Middle East today. It's important to understand how these states are able to build and leverage international legitimacy and support toward their own imperial ends

The Iranian state's radical form of Islam is being challenged by intensifying leftist struggles against religious domination as a force of reaction and an obstacle toward achieving liberatory goals. To counter this, the Iranian state has devoted its immense resources toward shaping and influencing the understandings and positions of western leftists and so-called anti-imperialists in relation to itself. They are able to take advan-

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tage of lobbying efforts such as NIAC (National Iranian American Council) to spread their propaganda and influence among leftists and intellectuals in the West. This has allowed the Iranian state to largely insulate itself from scrutiny and criticisms for its imperialist policies on the international stage. These efforts have been effective to such a degree that when imperialism is spoken of, it's broadly understood to only concern the actions of the United States

Despite the prevalence of this US-centric view of imperialism, Western and Eastern states such as Russia, China, the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, and others aggressively act on their own imperialist aspirations and interests regionally, and often work in tandem with US imperialism to plunder resources and impose their own forms of brutal military and political control. The events of the past decade in the Middle East provide clear and ample evidence for this analysis

The US created the conditions for Daesh and then Turkey unleashed them on the region to repress the revolutions of the Arab spring and protect their own imperialist interests. The presence of Daesh has allowed the Iranian state to pursue its own form of Shia imperialism in Syria, Iraq, and other countries. Our position on "imperialism" is fundamentally at odds with that of the duped and brainwashed anti-imperialist Western left (and east). In our view, "imperialism" is imperialism regardless of who perpetrates it, and there are no good or justifiable forms of imperialism

Just as we've experienced in Afghanistan and Iran, there is no practical difference between the Sunni and Shia extremism (violent totalitarian permutations of political Islam). In fact, Shia extremism has existed for over 40 years, and can trace its lineage back to the some of same people that burned down Cinema Rex in Abadan, Iran in August, 1978. Today, some of those responsible for the arson that burned to death approximately 630 people (a figure that would later increase to 677 deaths) are members of the Iranian parliament

After the usurpation of the revolution of 1979, this Shia extremism instituted a wide array of brutal and inhumane practices such as public executions through stoning, amputating limbs, gouging out eyes, flogging, torturing political dissidents, and disposing of their bodies in locations like wells in Jahrom, in southern Iran. During the November 2019 uprisings in Iran, they murdered at least 1,500 people in a mere 5 days using military weapons and frequently targeting the heads of overwhelmingly unarmed protesters. This includes killing tens of children aged between 13 and 18 years old. After the uprising, the state television broadcasted a program where a cleric billed as an expert on the Quran said that the appropriate punishment for those who had dared to rise up was to chop off an arm and leg from opposite sides of their bodies and then execute them. This cleric said that even if ten thousand people were to be killed, it would be trivial in the service of Islam. Both the Sunni and Shia extremists claim their legitimacy and justify their brutality by citing the Quran and are the same in practice

We oppose manifestations of religious domination embodied in both states (Islamic Republic of Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, etc) and non-state actors (Al Qaeda, Daesh, the Taliban, etc) and not religion or religious people. As anarchists we strive to defend the people of the region, most of whom are Muslims, against these manifestations of violent totalitarianism that leverage and abuse religion to justify their domination of the people

This is why we maintain a steadfast stance against imperialism and religious domination that doesn't arbitrarily excuse or downplay imperialism based on who perpetrates it. We struggle to free ourselves and others by fighting against all states as the greatest adversaries of the people of the world

Long Live Anarchy
Long Live Revolution and Freedom

Anarchist Union of Afghanistan and Iran, May 24, 2018