The Crucial Fact Regarding Iran

As the world waits to see whether World War III is inevitable, one major fact continues to be missing from up-to-the-minute news reports: Iran (and North Korea) are the last remaining avatars of the ‘Communist threat’ that has kept the world on edge for a hundred years. Although never mentioned, while they have adopted liberal economic systems, neither Russia and China have abandoned what FDR called ‘economic freedom’, in other words a social-democratic domestic regime. Similarly, the theory behind the Iranian Revolution of 1979 was socialism, as incarnated by Ali Shariati, an academic inspired by Shiism’s revolutionary origins. There is a very good article online that fills in the blanks left by the American media to this day.

As the world is unexpectedly confronted with the real threat of World War III, it’s urgent to expose what will be its true cause: the right-left divide that goes back to the dawn of mankind. Although Europeans are conversant with socialism’s role in the revolution that gave rise to Iran’s religious government. (Marxists having never been ostracized in the Old World), its role in the West’s standoff with the Muslim world has never been recognized on this side of the Atlantic.

Without putting labels in place, the media recognizes that the trouble began in 1953, when the US took down the left-leaning government of Mossadegh, after it had the temerity to nationalize Iran’s oil. Washington replaced him with the Shah, who turned out to be even more right-wing than we bargained for, ultimately setting the stage for the
1979 revolution that took him down. As usual, Washington, which believes the world revolves around the US as the earth revolves around the sun, saw only the humiliating occupation of its Teheran Embassy that followed Mossadegh’s toppling, etching its magical-sounding 444 days in the national consciousness. What the Revolution meant to the Iranian people was, of course, of little consequence.

Forty years later however, Americans are faced with the real possibility that their government could start a nuclear war, without really knowing why. Donald Trump’s minders were (perhaps!) sleeping off their New Year’s libations when he ordered the assassination of the beloved head of Iran’s elite Quds Force, General Qassem Suleimani, in what can only be called an act of war. From the images on my television screen, I can see that this was no ordinary military commander, but also an orator, with a profile to match, accounting for his inordinate popularity.

A few days ago, the US embassy in Bagdad, which covers an entire square mile, isolating it from the people it is supposed to dialogue with, was attacked by mobs in retaliation for an American attack on the capital of Iraqi Kurdestan. Using the death of an American contractor in that attack, Mike Pompeo claimed that the Iranians were plotting to kill other Americans to justify the assassination of Suleimani, claiming that it served as an isolated tit for tat, rather than the start of all-out war. Delivered in his usual misleadingly suave tone, he fails to mention that Trump’s order followed meddling by officially Shiite Iran in its majority Shiite neighbor Iraq, that has been under right-wing Sunni rule since the US invasion of 2003.

The question now is whether the Europeans will succeed in reversing the historic trend of the US saving them from themselves, and somehow save the world from Washington’s folly. One thing is certain: as America’s Democrats stab each other in the back instead of getting behind Bernie Sanders, the only candidate qualified to take on the left-right divide, the world can only wait with bated breath the end of the puppet Trump era.

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