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A Declaration of the Cherikha-ye Fedai-ye Khalq about the Plan of Imperialism, Zionism, and Other Reactionaries and the Need for the [Middle Eastern] Region's Revolutionary Forces to Unite (Excerpts)

Citation:

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Summary:

Iranian leftists like the Constitutional Revolution's Social Democrats, in 1905-1909, and proper Marxists like the members of the Iranian Communist Party—one of the earliest in the Middle East, founded in 1920, and enjoying considerable standing in the Comintern—never succeeded to capture the state in modern Iran. But as works like Maziar Behrooz' *Rebels with a Cause: The Failure of the Left in Iran* (2000) and Stephanie Cronin's edited volume *Reformers and Revolutionaries in Modern Iran* (2004) remind us, Marxism was an influential sociopolitical and ideological force in Iran in the 1920s and especially from the 1940s to the 1980s.

Thus, from its birth as a general leftist party in 1941 via its transformation into a properly Marxist party—memorably analyzed in Ervand Abrahamian's *Iran between Two Revolutions* (1982)—to its repression after the CIA-led coup d'Etat of 1953, the Tudeh was the most powerful party of mid-century Iran and the biggest of its kind in the Middle East.

Moreover, from the 1950s to the 1960s Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi (1919-1980; r. 1941-1979) and his regime saw the remaining Tudehis and 1960s Maoist splinter groups in Iran and in exile as a threat. It was against this political backdrop, too, that some socioeconomic policies like the 1963 land reform picked up long-standing communist demands, though that reform had other roots, too, and sought to neutralize Iran's land-holding urban upper class. And in early 1971, it was a new Marxist group, the Sazman-e cherikha-ye fada'i-ye khalq-e Iran, The Organization of the Iranian People's Fada'i Guerillas (OIPFG), that launched an armed struggle against the shah's regime, a history told in Peyman Vahabzadeh's *A Guerilla Odyssey: Modernization, Secularism, Democracy, and the Fada'i Period of National Liberation in Iran, 1971-1979* (2010). The Fada'i-ye Khalq denounced the Tudeh for sitting on its hands, excoriated the Soviet

Union and soon also China for accommodating the shah, and forced competitors like the Islamo-Marxist Mujahedin-e Khalq to spring to action as well. Many fada'iyin died an early violent death.

Even so, several ones wrote influential theoretical texts while in prison, like Bizhan Jazani (1937-1975), or in the underground, like Amir Parviz Puyan (1947-1971) and Mas'ud Ahmadzadeh (1947-1972). Although hailing from two different groups that had been active before early 1971 and then joined to form the Fada'i-ye Khalq, they had much in common. Thus, they welcomed Cuban, Chinese, and Vietnamese armed revolutionary experiences, but never saw them as simple models to emulate. They had contacts with the leftist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a story and whose long aftermath is analyzed in Naghmeh Sohrabi's "Remembering the Palestine Group: Friendship, Global Activism, and the Iranian Revolution" (2019). And partly drawing on Regis Debray and Latin American urban guerilla theorists, they most crucially stressed the need for a self-sacrificing vanguard that attacks the state to shatter workers' lethargy. (As this did not happen, by 1975 some fada'is split and turned to political agitation; some even joined the Tudeh.)

At the same time, there were disagreements, too. Perhaps key was the nature of the US-Iranian relationship. Ahmadzadeh saw the shah as a US puppet pure and simple, whereas Jazani though he had considerable autonomy while under US control. In this regard, the text produced here hews closely to the Ahmadzadeh line, which was dominant at the time of publication, in 1973. The text is an English translation of a Persian text published in the (obviously prohibited) fada'i publication Nabard-e Khalq; it did not have a byline. The text is of interest in this collection not only because of its systemic reference to US imperialism but also because of its region-wide perspective.

Original Language:

Persian (Farsi)

Contents:

Translation - English

Bayanieh-ye cherikha-ye fedai-ye khalq darbarez-ye naqsh-e imperialism wa-sahiunism wa-sayer-e mortaja'in wa-zarurat-e ettehad-e niruha-ye enqelabi dar manteqeh

["A declaration of the Cherikha-ye Fedai-ye Khalq about the plan of imperialism, Zionism, and other reactionaries and the need for the [Middle Eastern] region's revolutionary forces to unite"]

US-led world imperialism is hatching new plans in the region [the Middle East]. The [Arab-Israeli] War of June 67' and the Zionists' temporary success, accomplished with US imperialist assistance, has altered the region's earlier political balance and is posing new problems.

After the June War, we witnessed an unprecedented apogee of the Palestinian Revolution, one so fast and encompassing that it gave the imperialists a terrible scare. Since that moment, the enemy has not ceased coming up with new conspiracies against the Palestinian Revolution. These conspiracies, together with disagreements internal to the Palestinian Revolution, have pummeled the [Palestinian] body [politic]. The events of Black September [Jordan's attack on, and expulsion of, the Palestine Liberation Organization in 1970] constituted a turning point in the history of the Palestinian Revolution, whose conclusions one absolutely needs to make use of. One can find the road to victory only if one draws conclusions from temporary defeats.

Formidable and close to Iran and Turkey, the Palestinian Revolution has drawn fighters from [those two countries]—which have fully ready domestic agents—into the struggle against imperialism and Zionism.

Many of our fighters were zealous to depart to Palestine in order to fight Zionism shoulder to shoulder with their Palestinian brothers. The encounter of Iranian and Turkish fighters with the Palestinian Revolution, and the peak of armed struggle in those countries, made imperialism scramble. As we are speaking, world imperialism is facing insurrectionist hotspots in Palestine, Dhofar [in Oman], Iran, and Turkey. It's for this reason that imperialism is studying and putting together a region-wide counter-revolutionary plan.

Reactionaries cooperating with [US] imperialism in these plans include: the regimes of Israel, Iran, Turkey, Masqat [Oman], and the other reactionaries of the region. All these governments share the same interests and anti-revolutionary objectives. These regimes have shown their true anti-revolutionary color, and imperialism aspires to unit these reactionary forces, creating one coordinated anti-revolutionary fight.

The dark imperialist-Zionist-reactionary coalition is trying to isolate the region's [revolutionary] movements' political and military positions, to destroy them one by one. Thus, the region's [revolutionary] forces in return have to act not separately from each other but under one flag and united. The experiences of the last few years have taught us that under conditions of imperialist unity, a [revolutionary] movement can barely if at all win on its own. Faced with the union of counterrevolutionary forces in the region, we, too, need to consider fighting in coordinated and united way.

The role of the Iranian regime in the region

Due to its special geopolitical position, Iran's territory is of great interest to imperialism. Furthermore, the existence of oil reserves (75% of the world's oil reserves are in the Persian Gulf) is another key reason why the United States is great interested in Iran's territory, all the more because the energy problem has become a vital daily issue for imperialism. ... For the above-mentioned reasons, the United States has made heavy military investments, building many air force bases across Iran. These bases include the Vahdati Base in Dezful, the Shahrokhi Base in Hamadan, and the Khaneh Base. As well, various radar control stations that guide satellites and long-range [military] planes have been set up in the furthest points of Iran. During the June 67' War, a number of the planes that attacked the Arab countries were taking off from just these bases. And as we are speaking, multiple air and naval bases are being built along the Persian Gulf to repress the progressive movements there.

With the decision to build a dictatorial fascist system in the country, Iran's regime—a fully dependent stooge of [US] imperialism—has prepared the ground for any and all types of imperialist ventures. Imperialism does not any more directly occupy

territories—if and as it is able to impose dependent regimes on people. Local satellite governments secure its objectives best. Right now, Iran's imperialist mercenary regime has become the gendarme of the region. [Iran] has not ordered 700 US helicopter gunships and other military equipment totaling US\$3 billion only to repress domestic [revolutionary] movements. This equipment was bought for anti-revolutionary [measures] across the region. The appointment of Richard Helms [1913-2002], the former CIA director [1966-1973], as the United States' new ambassador to Iran [1973-1976] signals how important Iran's role in the region is to America. Iran's espionage services, which in reality are branches of the US CIA, are busy gathering intelligence across the region and are preparing various plots against the region's revolutionary actors and organizations. Most Iranian press and commercial representatives in Arab countries and the Persian Gulf sheikhdoms are CIA agents.

As we are speaking, the Iranian regime, helped by US advisers, is exercising its power in the region's counterrevolutionary fight, replacing Britain [which withdrew from the Gulf in 1971] in accordance with an imperialist plan. Taking off from bases on the Persian Gulf coast, Iranian helicopters continuously attack armed effectives of the Dhofar revolutionaries, and lately, an Iranian parachutist regiment has joined military operations against the Dhofar revolutionaries. The Iranian regime intends to use securing maritime petroleum transport as a cover to repress the progressive and revolutionary Dhofar front. Under these conditions, all revolutionary forces of the region have to use all their resources, be they political, economic, or military, to aid the people of Dhofar.

On the ties between Iran and Israel

Iran and Israel function as imperialism's two principal bases in the region. For reasons mentioned below, the Iranian regime abstains from granting Israel full diplomatic recognition, and Israel does not have an embassy in Iran. There are two reasons for this lack of recognition. First, due to ancient, traditional ties, the Iranian people's heart is filled with deep friendship to the Arab people. Hence, the [Iranian] regime would provoke popular anger if it would fully recognize Israel. Second, as imperialism and Zionism have aligned their [political] opinions *vis-à-vis* the Arabs, their ability to openly influence Arab countries has decreased significantly—and for exactly this reason, the Iranian regime assumed the mission to be Zionism's fifth column inside Arab countries. The Iranian regime pretends to cooperate with the Arabs, and is trying to draw Arab governments to its side. The Iranian regime has mounted a very shameful and shrewd plan *vis-à-vis* the Arab peoples. By declaring its support of Arab interests at the United Nations and by signing manifold resolutions, the Iranian regime is publicly adopting a pro-Arab position. But this posturing has no practical effects whatsoever, because no UN resolution is binding. With such deceitful maneuvers, the Iranian regime has safeguarded its diplomatic relations with the Arab states. And when US agents were expelled from Arab countries following a rupture of US-Arab diplomatic relations, Iranian agents have taken over the tasks of US functionaries. Using diplomatic circumstances and various immunities, Iranian agents put the best facilities at the disposition of US and Israeli intelligence services. Iran and Israel seem to have [only] a *de facto* recognition, but in essence their relationship is very deep. The economic cooperation between Iran and Israel, which do not yet have established full diplomatic relations, surpasses Iran's cooperation with the Arab countries, and Israeli companies are often registered in Iran under the name of a third country. While few Israeli companies' names show up in official documents, Zionist capital is active in many [Iranian] companies.

The wireless system of the Iranian police and SAVAK is the product of the Israeli Motorolan [*sic*; should read Motorola] factory and has been installed by a mixed US-Israeli company. The massive Tehran intelligence system has been built by the Israeli company Hedish-Rassco.

Iran's police and SAVAK are entirely managed by Israeli specialists; and the automatic gun used by the Iranian police is the Israeli Uzi. Israeli agricultural [projects] are widespread in north and south Iran, and many land plots are being mechanically cultivated by Israelis. In the plain of Qazwin and around Jiroft, modern agricultural activities are managed by Israeli specialists and individuals.

In Iran, Zionists are setting up pro-Israeli associations in order to organize [Iran's]

Jews and in order to send the youngest and most initiative elements of Jewish Iranian society to Israel. Iran's regime is facilitating these [activities] in any way it can. Jewish Iranian capitalists like Elghanian and Arieah pay the Israeli regime every year millions of dollars in aid, and Iran's regime not only does not interdict this act, but encourages this aid through tax breaks.

Most important, the fuel of the Israeli war machine is guaranteed by Iran. Fuel destined for Israel is effected from Khark Island. This happens secretly, in order to keep good relations with Western [*sic*: should read Arab] countries. Nobody knows which one of the dozens of oil tankers is loaded with destination Israel. Normally, third countries' ships are used. On the face of it, Iran sells oil to a third country, which then outs the oil at Israel's disposition. This way, a ship's destination is normally not specified, and official logs do not mention the name Israel.

All of this, to recap, constitutes the formation of a sinister imperialist axis in our region. It is the duty of all anti-imperialist forces in the region to unite against and fight this Iranian-Israeli sinister axis.

The Iranian fighters have assumed, and will assume, their part in the struggle against this sinister axis. We have several times attacked Israeli organizations in Iran. However, the Iranian regime's policy of not publicly mentioning these operations is seeking to lessen the effect of some of those operations. We will continue to launch operations against Zionist interests in Iran and in any other point where we can. These operations fully conform to our general goal, the union of the region's revolutionary forces working against the enemy, and we will continue to pursue it.

We firmly believe that imperialism, Zionism, reaction, and all the sedition they create is condemned to disappear. This is history's decree, which the united hands of our people will execute.

"In faith in victory"

"Death to world imperialism"

"Death to Zionism and the other reactionaries in the region"

"Strong be the union of the revolutionary forces of our region"