

250 YEARS TOO MANY

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The Iran War is Simply the Latest Outrage of 250 Years of US Imperialism

The United States' war on Iran is only the latest outrage in an unbroken, 250 year reign of terror. The current war isn't even the first time the United States has had designs upon Iran; the CIA organized the ouster of Iranian prime minister Mohammad Mosaddegh in 1953, replacing Iran's democratic government by an autocracy led by the Shah. The US-backed Iranian regime was overthrown in 1979 during the Iranian Revolution, in which the masses rose up to overthrow the Shah's autocratic rule. In the end, the Islamist elements of the revolution out-manuevered the communist elements, and established the theocratic Islamic Republic of Iran we know today. In 1980 the US provoked then Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein into invading Iran, leading to the destructive, eight year long Iran-Iraq war. The US supplied arms to both sides of the war, in an effort to destroy both countries - by the war's end in 1988 nearly 500,000 people has been killed. After the end of the Cold War following the collapse of the US' only peer imperialist rival, the Soviet Union, the US sought to bring the entire planet under its dominion - this period is often referred to as the unipolar moment, as the US was the only superpower in the world at this time. This period, lasting roughly from 1991 to 2015 was marked by an extremely aggressive US foreign policy; the US bombed twelve countries and put around twice that number under economic sanction. Ultimately unrealized plans were even more ambitious: after the September 11th attacks in 2001, the United States formulated a plan to invade seven Middle Eastern countries in five years, starting with the invasions of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003. The capstone of the plan would have been the invasion and occupation of Iran.

This west Asian blitzkrieg failed to materialize, due to the fact that the US war machine was bogged down repressing the righteous resistance of the Iraqi and Afghan people, and attempts to remold the governments of those nations in the image of the United States largely failed - the plan was impracticable the begin with. But, the Middle East is, and always has been, a key strategic region, due to its abundance of natural resources, and its control of key trade routes. Thus, US intervention has beset the Middle East for the past twenty years in the form of the wholesale destruction of Libya in 2011, the deployment of US troops into Syria in 2014, the continuing oppression and genocide of the Palestinian people, and now the war on Iran.

Why Does the US Want to Destroy Iran?

Iran is the United States' primary competitor in the Middle East. This, plain and simple, is the reason for the war. Prior to the war, 21% of global oil exports transited through the Strait of Hormuz, which is a chokepoint - there is no other way in or out of the Persian gulf. As has been demonstrated since the start of the war, Iran is strategically positioned to dominate the strait. While the US doesn't need the oil itself, historically it has always strived to keep oil prices low, and the oil which flows from the Persian gulf is critically important to both US allies and rivals. Besides oil, the Gulf States are also important exporters of strategic commodities such as helium, sulfur, fertilizer, aluminum, and petroleum-based products (plastics, etc), which are vital to the global agricultural, medical, aeronautical industries - and the to military-industrial complex. Thus, Iran's ability to project power into the Persian gulf and strait of Hormuz is unacceptable to the United States.

Iran has also proven its ability to assert itself across the broader Middle East. It materially supports and trains state or near-state actors, such as Hamas, Hezbollah and Ansar Allah (better known as the Houthis), as well as various Islamist militias in Iraq and Syria. Iranian backed groups were vital to the defeat of ISIS, and are universally counterposed to US influence in the region. Iranian-backed groups have frequently targeted US bases in the region, and frequently attack Israel, the US' primary attack dog in the Middle East.

Iran is an objective threat to US dominance in the Middle East, and the Middle East is the lynchpin to global dominance, thus, the United States has set itself to wreak death and destruction in Iran, until such a point as it is no longer a threat, whether that be because a new, US-friendly Iranian regime comes into power, or because Iran simply collapses as a nation.

100 schoolchildren are buried after being killed by a US-Israeli airstrike on an elementary school.



US-Iranian Competition is Driven by Imperialist Rivalry

The Islamic revolution in Iran overthrew a US-back absolute monarch, the Shah. The US and its allies have repeatedly interfered in Iran's domestic affairs, up to and including drawing Iran into a major war (the Iran-Iraq war), and after the Obama administration and Iran spent years negotiating a nuclear deal - the JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action - no, you're not crazy, this name is just gobbledeygook), which came into effect in early 2016 and allowed Iran to have a limited, civilian nuclear program, as well as significant sanctions relief, the Trump administration simply canned the deal at the first opportunity. In other words, the US has spent the past 44 years demonstrating its perfidy to the Iranian state, and people.

This has driven Iran into the arms of the US' chief, imperialist, rivals - Russia and China. The era of US unipolarity is over, having been replaced by a multipolar world order, owing to the meteoric rise of China; China is now the world's largest economy, and it uses that power to spread its influence over the world. 82% of the oil which transits the strait of Hormuz is destined for East Asia - especially China. This oil is critical for China's ever growing industrial capacity, and so it is within China's national interest to foster alliances in the Middle East - it's motivation is similar to the US' motivation in that regard. Iran's intense opposition to US influence in the region makes it an attractive ally to China, which only further intensifies the regional competition between Iran, the US, and the US' allies - for the US, Iran is part of the wrong imperialist camp.

All of This Means Death and Destruction for the Iranian People

Strategic competition between nation-states leads necessarily to war. The people of the United States are insulated from the effects of war; we are separated from the conflict zone by massive oceans, but the people of the Middle East are not. Over 6,000 people in total have been killed in the war, mostly in Iran (3,375) and Lebanon (2,509), and over 1.1 million Lebanese people have been displaced from their homes by the US and Israel. This is simply what the US empire does. Over 5.2 million civilians have been killed in all US wars, and this number does not factor in deaths from economic sanctions, repression from US-aligned regimes, or economic catastrophes caused by US foreign policy. Behind Enemy Lines has chosen to stand with the people of the world against the US empire. This year marks the 250th anniversary of the founding of this wretched country, and we aim to celebrate not the United States itself, the resistance to the United States. This June and July, leading up to the 4th of July, we will be in Philadelphia, were the Declaration of Independence was signed, to show the world we stand with them. Join us.

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Read about our "250 Years Too Many" Campaign and why we're organizing people against celebrating the 4th of July



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