

State of Mankind

How much do you know?

Excerpts from *How the Specter of Communism Is Ruling Our World*

(55)

The Communist Core of Islamic Extremism

Class struggle is another Marxist idea central to Islamic extremism. Karl Marx spent his whole life trying to incite conflicts between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in order to amplify these conflicts to the point of no return and finally “solve” the conflict through revolution. The Islamic extremists operate in much the same way.

Did destroying the World Trade Center in Manhattan do anything to help realize the united Muslim world that Qutb wanted? Absolutely not. It was merely a means of exacerbating the conflict between the Western and Muslim worlds. In the West, the terrorist attacks incited hatred of Muslims, and vice versa in the Muslim countries. Their method is the same as the conflicts between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie promoted by Marx and Lenin in order to create the conditions needed for launching revolution.

It is no exaggeration to say that Qutb’s theories bear greater resemblance to communism than to traditional Islam. While the Islamic

extremists profess a religious opposition to communism, in fact, they absorbed the pure essentials of communist revolutionary doctrine. As one scholar has noted, “The arguments made here are that the real enemy confronting the free world remains Communism and that radical Islam is nothing more than Communism cloaked in the traditional garments of Islam.”

It is not only in the Muslim world where violent extremism has been introduced. The Western counterculture movement spread leftist ideology around the world, and with it Lenin’s terrorist teachings. Finnish political historian Antero Leitzinger believes that modern terrorism was born between the years of 1966 and 1967, developing at the same time as the international communist movement. According to Leitzinger, this is no coincidence. In the 1960s, as radical student movements ran amok in the West, many foreign-exchange students from the Muslim world became connected to leftist thought and brought leftist concepts such as violent revolution back home with them.

In 1974, Abdallah Schleifer, professor in media research at the American University in Cairo, met Ayman al-Zawahiri, who later became second in command of Al-Qaeda. Al-Zawahiri, who was studying medicine at Cairo University at the time, boasted that Islamic extremist groups recruited the most members from elite institutions, such as medical and engineering schools. Schleifer replied that he was not surprised: During the 1960s, these schools had the highest concentrations of young Marxists. He noted that Islamism was simply a new trend that developed in the student revolts of the 1960s.

Schleifer recalled: “I said, ‘Listen, Ayman, I’m an ex-Marxist. When you talk, I feel like I’m back in the Party. I don’t feel as if I’m with a traditional Muslim.’”

It is curious that many associate Islamic extremism with fascism (Islamofascism), and for various reasons, fail to mention its communist origins. Fascism is a form of nationalism and has no particular religious background. When considering Islamic extremism in terms of its overall approach and doctrine, it becomes apparent that it shares more in common with communism.