

Third World Revolutions

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Introduction

Jack Goldstone the writer of the *Revolution* wrote about several countries that involves a change including Chinese, Cuban, Nicaragua, and Iran. He made a statement about how these countries wanted to make an impact through the good and the bad. He wanted a reason the idea and their purposes.

The Chinese Revolution

Goldstone wrote about the beginning of the Chinese Revolution. “Mao Zedong, the leader of China’s Communist Revolution, was born in 1893, at the twilight of China’s Imperial era. The son of a peasant grain merchant, Mao placed the peasants at the core of his communist revolution. Mao made many mistakes; tragically, his policies killed ten of millions. Nonetheless, he restored China’s independence after a century of defeats and humiliations by foreign powers, and his communist Party raised China to become the world’s second largest economy.”¹

Goldstone explained on the importance of Mao’s strategy. “Eventually, Mao’s strategy was proved correct. Forced to retreat far inland to evade Chiang’s forces, in 1930 Mao established a rural base in Jiangxi in southern China. Carrying out land reforms and building up his peasant Red Army, Mao gained control of an area that proclaimed the ‘Soviet Republic of China.’ The following year Japan invaded Manchuria, forcing the GMD to turn attention to defending China against Japanese. Nonetheless, Chiang remained determined to wipe out Mao’s forces.”²

The Cuban Revolution

Fidel Castro wanted to take control the army and got the help from sugar workers to start the Cuban Dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista and developed a communist regime. “Batista

¹ Goldstone pp. 78-79

² Goldstone pp. 81

had created a classic personalist government in Cuba. In 1952, he cancelled elections and used the army to take over the country, relying on the support of elites connected to foreign business investments.”³

During the early 1950s, Fidel Castro, his brother, and many other participants disrupted the Moncada military in Santiago, Cuba. Goldstone wrote about the concept of the attack. “The attack was a fiasco almost half the rebels were killed and the rest captured. At their trial, Fidel gave a strring speech against Batista, claiming that ‘history will absolve me’. Nonetheless, the rebels were sentenced to fifteen in a maximum security prison. A year and a half later they were freed, as Batista sought to improve his public image by granting an amnesty to the Moncada rebels.”⁴

Goldstone explained the main reason on why the Castro Brothers migrated to Mexico to work on their mission. “The Castro brothers fled to Mexico to plan their next step. There they met Che Guevara, an Argentine physician who had traveled around Latin America. Che had become a radical advocate for the poor and had been outraged by the American overthrow of a populist government in Guatemala. Only the Castros, Che, and about a dozen of their supporters survived. This little band fled into the Sierra Maestre in eastern Cuba.”⁵

Goldstone mentioned on how Castro expropriated the international business to take over the land. “After taking power, Castro nationalized foreign businesses operations and undertook land reforms. True to his word, he began national literacy and health campaigns, building thousands of new schools and clinics. Castro believed that only a communist-style revolution could bring justice to Cuba, given its long domination by foreign business interests. Yet for

³ Goldstone pp. 85

⁴ Goldstone pp. 86

⁵ Goldstone pp. 86

nearly years Castro did not openly proclaim his intention to establish a communist state, fearing the United States would move to crush his revolution.”⁶

Goldstone wrote about Castro’s advocacy for the United States. “Although Castro remained a national hero for standing up to the United States, the economy did poorly under communism and survived only with support from the Soviet Union, and later from allies such as Venezuela. Castro encouraged thousands of his opponents to flee to the United States, where most settled in Florida. Castro’s victory, and his defiance of the United States, inspired other would-be revolutionaries.”⁷

The Nicaragua Revolution

Goldstone explained how the Nicaragua Revolution began. “In 1972, a massive earthquake struck the Nicaragua capital of Managua. Although no one realized it at the time, the quake not only realized at the time, the quake not only destroyed much of the city but also marked the beginning of end for the Somoza dynasty, which had ruled Nicaragua since 1936. Nicaraguan politics to the 1920s had been a history of feuding families with private militias had repeated U.S. intervention. In 1926 a civil war erupted between leading families contending for the presidency, and the United States sent the Marines to help keep order.”⁸

Goldstone mentioned the economy in Nicaragua in the early 1960s to mid-1970s. “From 1960 to 1975 Nicaragua’s economy grew strongly as the United States sent aid to cement Nicaragua’s support in the wake of Cuba’s communist revolution, and exports of coffee, cattle, timber, and rubber expanded. But due to rapid population growth (Nicargua’s population doubled from 1950 to 1970), restrictions on union organizing, and increasing concentrated

⁶ Goldstone pp. 87

⁷ Goldstone pp. 88

⁸ Goldstone pp. 94-95

land-ownership, the benefits of Nicaragua's economic growth went overwhelmingly to the upper-class elites, and inequality thus increased."⁹

Things became crowded in Nicaragua in the late 1970s. "In early 1979, crowds in many cities, including the capital, built barricades and took control of neighborhoods. Somoza ordered the guard to fight back, bombing Managua, and shooting thousands, including an American television journalist. In May 1979 the FSLN launched a final offensive with coordinated urban uprisings and guerilla advance into major cities."¹⁰

Goldstone talked about the important role on the Marxist-Leaning FSLN and the concentration on the business and religious purposes. "But the alliance between the Marxist-leaning FSLN and the business and religious communities did not last. The FSLN threatened to nationalize more private lands and businesses. In addition, when Ronald Reagan was elected president of the United States in 1980, he saw the Sandinatas as no different from Cuba. He imposed an economic embargo and gave aid and military support to the former guard members in Honduras to form a 'contra' army to harass the Sandinastas. As the costs of the Contra war rose, people began to look for an alternative. In the 1990 elections, Violeta Chamorro ran against Ortega and was elected president. The FSLN also their majority in the legislature, although they retained nearly half of the seats."¹¹

The Iran Revolution

Goldstone mentioned the concept of the Iran Revolution. "Although Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi of Iran claimed to follow in the line of ancient Persian kings, his family had come to power, like the Somozas, in a military coup. The shah's father, Reza Khan, was a general in

⁹ Goldstone pp. 96

¹⁰ Goldstone pp. 97

¹¹ Goldstone pp. 98

the Iranian army. In 1921, Reza Khan deposed the Shah, and in 1925 took the title of shah (king) for himself.”¹²

Goldstone wrote on how Reza Shan came into scene during World War II. “When World War II broke out, Reza Shan sought to remain neutral and bar the Alies from using Iran as a supply corridor to Russia. But in 1941 Britain and Russia invaded, deposed the “old” shah, and in exchange for compliance with their demands, allowed his son Mohammed Reza Pahlevi, to take the throne as the new shah.”¹³

Goldstone explained on how opposition became a huge involvement in Iranian Revolution. “Many groups were involved in the opposition—communists who had influence with oil and industrial workers, liberal intellectuals, and students who wanted to replace the shah’s dictatorship with democracy, traditional merchants and peasants who hated the shah’s aggressive support for western dress and culture, nationalists who wanted to end U.S. influence, and various groups of clergy.”¹⁴

Goldstone made it clear one of Iranian’s main critics. “The most influential critics, however, the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Khomeini had been exiled for his criticism of the shah since 1964, spending most of his time in Shi’a holy city of Najaf in Iraq. While in exile, Khomeini relentlessly criticized the shah for betraying Iran and Islam; he developed a plan for an Islamic Republic, which would embrace Islamic virtue, democracy, and Iranian nationalism.”¹⁵

Conclusion

Jack Goldstone explained how people create a revolution in their country. Mao Zedong conquered the Chinese Revolution. Fidel Castro ruled the Cuban Revolution and fight for Cuban

¹² Goldstone pp. 99

¹³ Goldstone pp. 99

¹⁴ Goldstone pp. 100

¹⁵ Goldstone pp. 100-101

to migrate in the United States. He talked about the creation of the Nicaragua Revolution including economy, and religion. He mentioned about the impact of the Iranian Revolution.

Bibliography

Goldstone, Jack A. Essay. In *Revolutions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.