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Fears and Hopes

Even those opposed to our revolution's goals and ideals concede its greatness. Unprecedented conspiracies and planning against us offer ample proof that this revolution has been taken seriously, its greatness indisputable even to its enemies. The Islamic revolution has spread its momentum across the Muslim world and beyond. It has given new hope to Muslims and downtrodden peoples who seek freedom and justice, hence affecting the world's intellectual and political climate.

This sort of transformation cannot help but create friction and anxiety in the society that originated it. Thus, our society's post-revolutionary anxiety comes from the flux we are going through as we enter a new phase in our history. But this should be no cause for worry.

At the same time, proportional to its extent and seriousness, the fears and hopes that this transformation have given rise to are great as well: fear of all that threatens the revolution and hope for the bright, fulfilling future of revolutionary society.

Thus, we expect thinkers to know not only the pillars of the revolution but also the problems that it encounters. Thinkers must focus on the relationship of the revolution to current realities in the world. Only in this way can we preserve all that is true and just, changing what is not.

In my mind, the primary challenge confronting our revolution is the fundamental opposition or schism of its pillars with what is prevalent in today's world. The intellectual foundations and goals of our revolution are at odds with most globally dominant values, sometimes negating them altogether. This is only natural because every revolution opposes the current order, having arisen precisely for this purpose in the first place. But in our case, this opposition is particularly intense because of the power our opponent wields in the world of ideas.

The world opposed to our revolution possesses a mature, well thought-out intellectual and political system that has been centuries in the making, fine-tuned by generations of seminal scientists and thinkers. A centuries-long tradition of invention and innovation has developed into a solid socio-political

system whose main ammunition is the title it has to a deeply entrenched value system. Its political and philosophical vision commands a large, global audience and capable scientists and experts back its system.

Our opponent also commands an awesome economic, political, and military power, more diverse and complex than anything we have seen in the past. But this should not intimidate us because great revolutions have come face to face with powerful intellectual and political systems in the past and succeeded in transforming them. We who claim that our revolution is great cannot be overwhelmed by the power of the revolution's opponents.

What makes our predicament more challenging, however, is that the West's 'intellectual, moral, and political system, as portrayed and propagated today, is attuned and adaptive to basic human nature. People are naturally drawn to it.

The champions of modern thought and civilization claim that their vision rests on 'freedom', a claim that we must take seriously especially now that socialist thought has withered with the demise of Soviet communism. This has been taken to mean that a system based on Western notions of freedom is the only one that can endure.

The opponent of the Islamic revolution relies on the principle of 'freedom' and derives much of its power from this because freedom represents a central, instinctive human goal. When freedom is depicted as allowing people to do whatever they desire, this depiction matches the strong human urge to live free of limitations. But in practice, limitless freedom is not possible, and 'freedom', the way the West defines it, is reducible to license or being free of the encroachment of others.

Thus, the yardstick here is the thought and will of humans, Champions of modern values believe that no obstacles should be placed in the way of people that would prevent them from doing whatever they desire–unless these wishes conflict with the wishes of others.

Although it must incorporate a series of human-designed restrictions, the system is in general agreeable with instinctive and basic human needs and desires, which do not have to be learned. In other words, all of the physical, worldly inclinations that the current Western order satisfies are strong motivations in every human's life. No work or education is necessary to find these inclinations compelling, and a system that satisfies them seems highly attractive.

Our revolution, on the contrary, has called people to values whose attainment requires much will, effort, and labor. We base our system on abstinence, honesty, and rectitude, which are not inborn in human nature. And although humans have the talent to attain them, to achieve them they must labor over many difficulties and accept that paying moral dues requires much work.

Thus the opponent of our revolution, while possessing much economic, political, military, scientific, and technological power, puts forth a set of values that are agreeable with basic human needs and inclinations. This makes its system look as though it has amoral and utopian vision, too.

The West claims that it not only allows humans to be free of restrictions on their behavior and instinctive wishes, but that such a life is morally superior to all other systems because the main goal of human life the will to freedom–is fulfilled.

True, humans are attracted to nothing the way they are attracted to freedom, and they have arguably never sacrificed as much for the attainment of any goal as they have for freedom. Today, humans are offered a system that invites them to eat and drink as they like, dress and speak as they wish, and to think freely.

Simultaneously, the goal of life in such a system is prosperity and power, both viewed as serving the greatest, holiest goal of humanity, namely freedom. The West uses the most basic and hence powerful human instincts to solidify its position. This is misleading because despite what it claims, the West is far from achieving true freedom.

We want a system based on abstinence and high morality that only comes through relentless endeavor and the courage to embark upon moral and spiritual growth. This is true freedom, but people need to be taught to see it this way. What further fans the flames of antagonism between our opponent and us today is the power and reach of global electronic communications.

In our era each person is effortlessly in contact with others in all corners of the world. The borders that separated societies in the past have vanished at the hands of new communication technologies that allow instantaneous transfer of information and news across continents.

Our opponent also controls this vital resource, possessing the complex technical knowledge to mass–disseminate images and sound waves to the world community: an uncanny skill for public relations and manufacturing consent through sights and sounds using the most refined, complex, and effective methods of science and technology to win others over to its thoughts and lifestyle.

Ours is a time when no one can blind the individual mind to what goes on in the world. Everyone everywhere is defenselessly bombarded by a barrage of information on world events, guided by views that world powers want disseminated.

Our opponent does not tolerate societies that differ from it, seeking to nip all independent movements in the bud. The West thinks of nothing but its own interests, and if a people turn away from its values or refuse to serve its interests, it focuses all of its vast capabilities to force them to surrender or risk annihilation. And this is precisely why our revolution has encountered waves of conspiracies and

pressures from the moment it was born.

We must clarify the relationship of our revolution to the difficulties it meets abroad. But this should not make us ignore our own internal problems.

One of the most important difficulties we face is the separation of Islam from the practical demands of the social and, political sphere. Now that our Islamic revolution wishes to institutionalize a new mode of individual, and social life as we encounter the world and its realities, we suffer from a void in our ability to regulate society and human relations through Islamic ideas that work.

For centuries Islamic thought has been artificially relegated to the sidelines. Islam has not been allowed to govern and regulate social relations. Instead, society's reins have either been in the hands of anti-Islamic forces or controlled by groups who have merely used Islam for self-aggrandizement, propagating it solely to legitimize their power and rule.

Real Islam, during this long hiatus, turned into a force of opposition against corrupt and obsolete systems, which ruled in its name. Today, our revolution yearns to build a system based on real Islam. Still, even our vision of real Islam encounters inadequacies when it attempts to address today's practical problems.

We are fortunate that the relentless effort and struggle of courageous thinkers and clergy saved real Islam from falling prey to political vicissitudes by transferring knowledge of such an Islam to new generations, never letting it perish.

Islamic thought delves with unrivaled richness into matters that transcend time, space and material reality, shedding a profound light on issues above and beyond the workaday world. Islamic mysticism or *'Irfan is* unique in the history of human thought.

Compared to other systems of transcendental knowledge, 'Irfan is the best equipped to address supernatural phenomena. But today, as we wish to put Islam into practice and apply its teachings to the material, social and political world, we encounter an intellectual void that can only be remedied if we rely on authentic Islamic sources, principles, and rules of conduct.

Our Islamic revolution's utopian visions were clearly articulated in the slogans that came to define our ideology in the early days of the revolution. These slogans either flowed directly from the minds of the people or were articulated by the aware, enlightened leadership and subsequently embraced by the masses.

Our goals may seem beyond reach at the moment. A value system is only as strong and durable as the realistic and practical affirmation of its tenets. It cannot exist in the realm of thought and imagination

alone. To get to our ideal in an 'un-ideal' world, we must achieve an appropriate balance among order, welfare, and pace in our society.

If the rhythms of our society do not meet the demands of the times we live in, it is only natural that we encounter puzzles and difficulties. It is precisely here that we need a mental breakthrough. Arriving at a practical, workable system attuned also to the demands of the revolution must be given the highest priority.

Our society's fabric is strained by vice; economic and political difficulties loom large, and we still suffer from the diluted identity of 'Westoxication'-neither ourselves, nor Western. But if the root of the problem is to be found elsewhere, and we can solve the problem at its root, we will succeed in overcoming other difficulties more quickly, with greater confidence and effect.

In practical matters, as we have depended on theology to give order to the individual and social world, we face serious inadequacies. This can mean only that our theology must evolve to meet the demands of the revolution and also the practical needs we have today. Here we can turn to the grand leader of the revolution, Imam Khomeini, who was a visionary Muslim leader, philosopher, theologian, and mystic.

We turn to him to uncover the void and inadequacies we must overcome to achieve our goals: We must bring about the realization of the practical laws of Islam, undeterred by the deceitful West, the invasive East and their globally dominant modes of diplomacy. For as long as theology is trapped in the books and in the clergy's chests, there is no harm done to world devourers.

And until the clergy are active in every sphere, they will not realize that religious authority and knowledge is not enough. Centers of religious education and the clergy must be abreast of the times and have the pulse of the present in their hands and know the needs of the future. Always a few steps ahead of events, they must come up with effective responses. Our current methods of running our society are likely to change in the years ahead. And human society may come to utilize the issues facing Islam. 1

We all agree that the Imam soared at the peak of religious mystical awareness. The yearning of the revolution for truth and justice blossomed under his leadership. Based on the Imam's thinking, a cleric who is unaware of the demands of his time, and lives with ideas that are hundreds of years old, will not be able to relieve society from today's strains, however noble his intentions might be. As well as understanding today's demands he must have the pulse, thoughts, and needs of the future in his hands, so he can shape events instead of being at their mercy.

The Imam says in another place: In Islamic government there should always be room for revision. Our revolutionary system demands that various, even opposing, viewpoints be allowed to surface. No one has the right to restrict this. It is crucial to understand the demands of society and governance such that Islamic government can make policies that benefit Muslims. Unity in method and practice is essential. It

is here that traditional religious leadership prevalent in our seminaries will not suffice.2

And,

one of the greatest problems of religious leadership is the role of time and place in decision making. Government specifies a practical philosophy for dealing with sacrilege and internal and external difficulties. But these problems cannot only not be solved by a purely theoretical view of religion but will lead us to dead ends and the appearance that constitutional laws have been breached. While you must ensure that religious infractions do not happen–and I hope God doesn't bring that day–you must focus all your effort on ensuring that when encountering military, social and political issues, Islam does not seem to lack practical utility. 3

And on another occasion,

But on the question of the educational methods and research in religious schools, I believe in traditional theology and deem straying from it to be inappropriate. Religious leadership is proper and correct only in this way. But this does not mean that Islamic theology is not dynamic. Time and place are two determining elements.4

We should not doubt that many of the views that have guided us thus far are not sufficient for managing social affairs. We must achieve a new vision and understanding. Relying on current religious leadership is necessary but not sufficient.

If this central concern is overshadowed by peripheral matters, society will be held back from achieving a desirable solution to problems. Serious as these problems are, however, we cannot lose our hope in the future. Most important, our young intellectuals must maintain an active and hopeful presence on the social stage.

The late Imam was an irreplaceable blessing for our revolution and the establishment of the Islamic Republic. His legacy remains a great reviver of God's religion in our time. His main difference from other religious revivers is the central leadership role he played in the establishment of Islamic government. He was aware that if religious leaders, thinkers, and intellectuals are not confronted with practical problems, they will not think of solutions. But when Islam came to the political scene, established a government, and took power into its own hands, it confronted the necessity of fulfilling the rational expectations of all people who had put their hopes in the revolution. This encounter was a great step toward the establishment of a new system of thoughts, values, and skills appropriate for our time and place, capable of addressing human needs within an Islamic framework.

The Imam's greatest legacy is indeed the establishment of Islamic government, which has managed to

stand despite many pressures and conspiracies against it. The enemies may have hoped that after the Imam's passing away, the system's pillars would unravel. But with the grace of God this did not happen. The institutionalization of leadership after the Imam and our continuing in his path of revolutionary struggle are a source of great hope to us all.

Another source of hope is the current condition of humankind in our era. Our Islamic revolution has raised a storm across the Islamic world and among all of the worlds downtrodden. Thus the utopian yearnings and explosive power latent in the hearts of the world's dispossessed greatly buttress our revolution. If we understand this force and use it effectively, we will be able to confront the opponent despite its economic, military, and political predominance. If we rely on the utopian visions that our revolution has awakened throughout the Islamic world and beyond, and believe that backers of our revolution are ready to sacrifice for it, victory is within our reach. What adds further hope to our future is that our opponent–despite all its apparent might–has become old and is approaching the end of its line. The existence of crisis in the thought and civilization of the West betrays its senility.

Again, our main problem is the fundamental opposition of the values of our revolution to what is dominant in the world on the one hand, and our lack of practical experience in installing a real religious government on the other. What must we do to solve this problem so that with the help of God we can ensure that this revolution remains immune to serious threats?

The unsophisticated among us may opt for the simplistic option of censorship and preventing the values and thoughts of our opponent from reaching and subverting our people. But is this a viable solution?

The low capacity and truncated vision of some may lead them to attack all that does not fit into their closed minds and match their tastes as being against Islam, the revolution, and the legacy of the revolution's martyrs. Unfortunately, there are camps in our society, which although bereft of proper logic, think of themselves as the pillars of the revolution and Islam, and accuse their opponents of being against Islam and the revolution, as they try to oust their opponents from the political ring at any cost.

But what exactly is the yardstick for judging what is acceptable and what is not? In opposing difficulties and the enemy, what strategy should we adopt? Will our cultural policy be one of censorship and restricting access to all sources we disagree with? Can a policy of isolation from the international community succeed in today's world?

Throughout its glorious history, Islam has never accepted isolation and restricting access as a viable policy. In certain periods this has been imposed on people in the name of Islam, causing irreparable damage, but it has not lasted. Islam has embraced opposing views with open arms. Seminal Muslim thinkers have actively sought the encounter of other views. This openness has imbued Islamic civilization with much intellectual weight.

At the same time restriction is not practical in today's world. Information channels accessible to our people are not limited to government–run sources. Let us assume that we prevent all faulty prose from being published, stop all newspapers or magazines from printing the smallest bit that offends our tastes, or disallow the production of any films that we find defective. Will these thoughts and views that have been officially banned find no other channel for reaching our people?

In judging what is good and bad in the world of ideas, rigid fixations and dogma may replace strong logic and realistic appraisals –much to our detriment. It is naive to think that government–run channels are people's only source of access to international and inter–societal communication.

Today, the global broadcast of mass-communicated electronic images is under no government's control.

How can we prevent dynamic and curious minds from accessing what they desire? How can we build a wall between such minds and the outside world? With the rapid advance of communication technology that is becoming accessible to ever–larger segments of our population, controlling the spread of images will only be more unrealistic and impractical in the future.

Of course this does not mean that our Islamic system should impose no limitations and restrictions on people's access to information. That would be unrealistic as well. No form of governance can exist without imposing some restrictions, and even the most developed liberal democracies are not exempt from this rule.

But there is a difference between a system that relies on restriction as its main strategy and a system that uses restriction occasionally to deal tactically with sensitive and vital matters. Any system is bound to impose some form of restriction when its whole existence and the fundamentals of its rule are endangered. However, on the whole Islam historically has not based its system on restriction and censorship.

The cultural strategy of a dynamic and vibrant Islamic society cannot be isolation. As a progressive religion, Islam shuns building fences around people's consciousness. Instead, our strategy must focus on making our people immune, raising and educating them to resist the cultural onslaught of the West on their own. Only a strategy of immunization represents a viable solution for today and tomorrow.

This requires us to allow various disparate views to engage one another in our society. How is it possible to make the body immune without injecting it with a controlled and weakened virus, so that it can resist the more extensive and threatening invasion of that virus? The way to make the body resistant to viruses is certainly not by preventing any viruses from coming near it. Instead we must see to it that the living organism has the apparatus to resist the virus itself. In society, too, it cannot be any other way.

An active, evolving society must be in contact and communication with different, sometimes opposing,

views to be able to equip itself with a more powerful, attractive, and effective thought than that of the opponent. And if the sources of revolutionary and religious thought really wish to preserve the revolutionary system, they have no other choice but to offer society sophisticated and adaptive thinking.

At the outset of the revolution, the Imam (Khomeini) counseled against shutting out what we found undesirable. And we are proud that our revolution took its first steps on the basis of liberty. This was not an unintended consequence of the revolution, out of our leaders' hands. The principle from the beginning was that others can speak their minds, unless they are engaging in conspiracy. If there were groups who did not want to use this freedom wisely and fairly, abusing and subverting it instead, they were the ones at fault, not the revolution.

Society suffered great harm as a result of their unseemly actions. It was the abusers of liberty who did not uphold the supremacy of thought and rationality as they tried to pollute the atmosphere of openness and use it to impose their autocratic wishes. They did not realize that a government held up by the will and belief of a people and watered by the blood of martyrs and the effort of millions of selfless devotees will stand firm against conspiracy. The limit of legal opposition was conspiracy then and it must be the same today.

The idea of what exactly constitutes conspiracy must be clarified as well. We must look at social problems with a comprehensive and open view. Otherwise any closed-minded and dogmatic person can use the excuse of conspiracy to oust her opponents from the political stage. Our system needs accountability and discipline.

Reckless and superficial but politically charged ideas of certain groups can neither determine society's best interests nor understand conspiracy and its limits. Otherwise, anyone can mount an attack on thoughts different from his own limited tastes with the excuse of defending the interests of the country, the revolution, and religion against conspiracy.

Thus, to solve our fundamental problems, we should build and offer superior thinking and logic, as well as more attractive solutions to society's woes. Only in this way can we give hope to the revolution's devotees, adding to their material and spiritual well being. We must endeavor to build a system so solidly grounded that it can not only resist unraveling at the encounter of other systems, but can display its vigor and superiority. This impetus to self-affirmation has protected and enriched Islamic thought and the essence of religious belief over the ages.

A system like ours, based as it is on Islamic utopian ideology, is bound to restrict some individual liberties. A revolutionary religious system will naturally forbid much that is accessible to people–particularly the youth–in the West. The overflowing urges of the youth are better satisfied in the West, and hedonistic instincts are fulfilled to a greater degree; whereas in an Islamic system, a multitude of

religious rules stand in the way. To make our society stable and strong, we must teach the young a more worthy path than hedonism, such that they gain pleasure out of abstinence.

Utopian visions can keep people, especially the youth, confident and lively. Muslim youths must believe that alongside the limitations and restrictions that our system has imposed, it has given them character, imbuing their lives with a direction in whose shadow they feel pride, greatness and tranquility. Emotional and mental needs must be addressed for people to feel content. If the Islam we offer fails to accomplish this, the foundations of our society will be unstable.

Fulfilling the utopian vision of the revolution's devotees inside and outside Iran is a pressing necessity to ensure our survival. To assert our identity it is necessary to be present in all world forums and to defend Islam and Iran effectively in all international tribunals and conventions. But we cannot ultimately flourish and make our weight felt in the international scene whose rules are set by our opponents–unless we maintain our unique idealism.

Why was it that we had less pressing cultural problems during the eight-year war with Iraq? Because a massive wave of revolutionary youths was at the front lines and people saw themselves as, defenders of the revolution and the country. This active presence filled people with deep pride,. Our youth felt that their lives had assumed new meaning, and that they had achieved spiritual growth with which they could stand against oppressors and tyrants.

Now that the war is over, what must replace it? The only effective solution is preparing the ground for the active involvement of the young generation in all areas where their talents can develop and be put to productive use. If the young generation does not feel active and instrumental in society, it is natural that they feel dejected.

To make society vigorous, thinkers must see in Islam a system of superior logic and ingenious solutions. At the same time, all social forces must be active in the social and political process. Here the greatest mission of intellectuals is to understand the real Islam, the kind that our revolution drew from to succeed.

We live in a world that in many ways is at odds with our Islamic revolution's orientation, and we want to organize our lives on the basis of Islam. It is necessary to find out exactly what sort of Islam we want to base our lives on: Here it is incumbent upon our seminaries and universities to answer this question. It is not as though there is no divergence of opinion on what Islam is. Over the past century, if not all of Islamic history, three separate Islam. To decide what sort of Islam we want, we must stay clear of factional squabbles such that we can chart our future path on the basis of the right sort of Islam.

Traditionally, we have encountered a regressive, a diluted, and a real Islam. Which of these three was our revolution based on, and which one can save our society and bring honor and pride to it? We believe that the basis of our revolution is the real Islam, the same Islam that has its roots in revelation and solid

monotheistic perspectives—an Islam that believes in the inherent dignity of humans and wants enlightened happiness for humanity, a constantly evolving Islam that can find solutions to new puzzles as they emerge. All throughout history, this interpretation of Islam has defended itself against sacrilege and corruption, but it has never been given the opportunity to assert itself in the socio—political sphere.

It is imprudent to assume that since our revolution has succeeded and an Islamic Republic established, the victory of real Islam will be assured automatically. No, we face serious difficulties and dangers. But in the first instance, the devotees of real Islam must equip themselves with rationality, thought, and logic more than ever before. The battle of ideas is far more fateful and determining than political and military conflict. First, we have to see which Islam we have accepted and why. Only then will we muster sufficient moral and intellectual weight to confront our opponents. The experience of our revolution has taught us invaluable lessons that we cannot forget.

From the first days that the Imam (Khomeini) took center stage, he began his religiously inspired struggle against tyranny, dependency, corruption, cultural degradation, and American imperialism. Within the ranks of the educated and senior clergy, there were those who opposed the Imam's method of struggle and his interpretation of Islam. Some were sympathizers of the monarchy; others were driven by profit–seeking and self–serving motives.

Most such people were not traitors but had an interpretation of Islam that did not suit the revolution. There were others who supported the Imam in the initial steps but backed away from supporting him when matters got more serious.

Many of those devoted to the Imam had endured imprisonment and exile to see the revolution through. These were and are good, dedicated people, but subsequently, when the time came to institutionalize the revolution; their view of Islam strayed from the Imam's.

In many cases after the revolution, when the issue of social justice and combating inequality was voiced, some screamed that Islam was in danger. I am not saying that all those who used the slogans of social justice and the fight against inequality were on the right path.

The issue here is the principle of social justice itself, and that there were those who did not even want to bring it up, resisting all practical steps that we wanted to take to ameliorate the problem. Such people could not tolerate the fact that the Imam's Islam wanted social justice, and thus subverted all efforts in this direction. The Imam was compelled to confront this thinking bluntly, stating that on the basis of the Islam he had introduced, achieving social justice was among the primary goals of the revolution.

There were those who felt that the place of women was in the home, arguing that the presence of women in the workplace leads to corruption and moral decay. They were against higher education for women, and opposed women's involvement in social affairs, This was another view that was introduced

under the guise of Islam. At the end of the first elected *Majles* (Parliament) after the revolution, a few influential circles tried to convince the Imam that women should not be allowed to run for seats in the *Majles*.

The Imam confronted this thinking resolutely and `defended women's right to take part in the elections. There were those who claimed that no one other than the clergy should be allowed to take part in politics. They were especially suspicious of university students and academics, labeling them 'deviant' just because they carried intellectual weight. They forbade a large part of society from being involved in their own political destiny. They would try to justify all this in the name of Islam. Once again, the Imam responded swiftly, scolding their regressive, prescriptions.

Some criticized all social and cultural programs to the point of forcing the Imam to outline explicitly the benefits of cultural activities to dispel any doubts. Others were opposed to all music, film, and theater. They were not against only some forms of art, but all artistic expression in general. Some even opposed broadcasting sporting events on television and thought it sinful. The Imam confronted all these restrictive and regressive religious views head—on, claiming that much of what they objected to was actually beneficial to society. In the last years of his prolific life, the Imam put forth the most penetrating critique of religious dogma:

We must endeavor to break the chains of ignorance and superstition to reach the prophet's fresh fountain. Today the most puzzling thing to people is this Islam, and its rescue requires sacrifice; pray that I am myself one of these sacrifices.5

All who truly believe in the revolution and wish to dignify Islam will choose the Islam articulated by the Imam. This should not be taken to mean that others do not have the right to publicly express their views. Everyone is entitled to voice his opinion within the law and the bounds of rationality. However, we must know which interpretation of Islam our revolution is based on. Do the groups that our Imam numerously scolded have the right to impose their extreme views on the people and to portray their opponents as being against Islam and the revolution?

Regressive and dogmatic clerics, those whom the Imam singled out as the greatest danger to the revolution, are not sitting idly by. The enlightened and truly devoted must be mindful of the danger they pose and guard against it.

Alongside the regressive version of Islam, we have the camp that believes in a diluted Islam, a fabricated, inauthentic form of the faith that merely goes through the motions of piety without any real knowledge of Islam or real belief in its teachings. Their Islam has so many foreign, imported elements that it cannot be called Islam at all. Diluted Islam represents one of the most dangerous pores for the West's cultural onslaught. Un–Islamic or anti–Islamic political currents have never enjoyed a popular

base and they have never been viewed as the main danger. But those who have had the appearance of piety and have been active in society with ideas borrowed from the West or others have been able to propagate their views in parts of society.

Opposed to these regressive and diluted views of Islam, we must recognize the real Islam, and the secret of our survival and success is the understanding and implementation of this kind of Islam, in whose shadow we can pass safely through dangers that threaten the existence and health of the revolution and our society. This is the same Islam that the late Imam epitomized, and for which a great mind like Motahharia was martyred. We must discover the target of the Imam's pronouncements, particularly in the last years of his life. A bit of focus will show that the Imam's criticism was directed at those views of Islam that hinder progress and development, paralyzing the search for solutions to difficulties that face our society.

If diluted Islam martyred Motahhari, then regressive Islam has tried to negate the substance of his thought.

The confrontations that have been directed at the likes of Motahhari and Beheshti⁷ in our society are alarming and serious. And we even witnessed how unseemly this current was to Hashemi-Rafsanjani⁸ when he brought up the issue of social justice.

To know the real Islam and to base our society upon it, our greatest source of inspiration is the religious and devoted youth in our seminaries and universities. Aided by the knowledge and piety of eminent clergy, we must breed a new cadre of religious intellectuals who are up-to-date and enlightened, and we must tirelessly march toward understanding the specific vision of Islam that is the basis of our revolution. It is understanding and explaining this Islam that will make us immune to other schools of thought.

- 1. Ruhollah Khomeini, Sahifey-e Noor (The Book of Light), (Tehran: Markaz-e Madarek Anghlab-e Islami, 1990), vol. 21,
- p. 100.
- 2. ibid., p. 47.
- 3. ibid., p. 61.
- 4. ibid., p. 98.
- 5. ibid., p. 41.
- 6. Translator's Note: Murta a Motahhari (1919–1979). Iranian thinker and cleric who was instrumental in reconciling traditional seminaries with universities. His writings made traditional Islamic concepts and the relationship between Iran and Islam accessible to his contemporaries. He was assassinated by armed opponents of the Islamic Republic a few months after the revolution.
- 7. Translator's Note: Muhammad Hosseini–Beheshti (1921–1980). A cleric and leading ideologue of Iran's Islamic revolution who was' assassinated along with scores of other political figures when a bomb exploded in the headquarters of the Islamic Republican Party.
- 8. Translator's Note: Ali-Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani (b. 1933). A cleric and political leader in the Islamic Republic of who has served in a number of senior posts culminating to his tenure as President of the Islamic Republic of Iran from 1989 to

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