

Letter to Ayatollah Khomeini on the conduct and continuation of the war

Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri's *Memoirs*

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[...] Against my will, and considering the present sensitive condition of the country and the repeated referrals of people and administrators from different levels to me [...] I have pondered about reflecting these issues to you.

1. In the current state of affairs, despite the difficulties of the war and pressure from the world powers, there are no problems with our people, [they are] all concerned with the management of the country and the revolution. There is no doubt that the majority of administrators have good intentions. The main problem is in the key decision-making that has brought about the current situation, which [in turn] has put the revolution in grave danger. For instance, there may be no other way than to tolerate the current heart-wrenching conditions at the fronts; however, if two years ago the criticisms by the dear commanders and fighters, who mostly have been martyred, had been heeded, , the course of progress would not have reached the level of impasse it has today. Alas, the self-regard and negligence of high-level administrators have brought us to this point. [...] I have explained the mistakes and delinquencies of the leaders and high-ranking commanders in my private and public talks with the lower-ranking commanders who write to me. However when they say they have directly reminded the leaders of the problems, but the leaders have not paid the proper attention, what one can reply?

And what is the answer when experienced IRGC commanders say that the IRGC is at the point of self-destruction today? The main problem is that the fundamental task of the government is being performed by a limited number of people who are very busy. One hopes that important tasks have been given to the experts and that cronyism and partisanship do not exist. If there existed an authority to investigate the errors and weaknesses which have caused the continuous losses of the past two years and if we valued the lives of the thousands of youths which are being lost cheaply due to negligence, the situation of the war would be better than it is now.

The main backbone of the country's economy, Kharg Island, is regularly under attack. [...] Neither the stubbornness of our opposition to any possible alternative, nor the delinquency with which everyone treats every setback, is helpful to our cause. Instead of scrutinizing the conditions and their causes and making use of the opinions of the witnesses – commanders and soldiers – certain false announcements and imaginary victories are broadcast to the people, which surprises those who are at the fronts. All the mistakes are being hidden behind propaganda and the guilty do not fear the consequences and hold others responsible for their errors, and it is the revolution and the people who share the losses.

2. The political state of the country is no better than the situation at the fronts. Partisanship is affecting the issues of the war, which are the main problems of the country to the point that some ministers are becoming isolated from the prime minister. Ministers complain of not

being aware of the decisions being made by the government and reading about them in the newspapers. The prime minister also claims that the ministers who don't accept him have been imposed on his cabinet. [...] I have given my opinion to both Mr. Khamenei and Mr. Mousavi that the prime minister should not be under pressure when choosing the members of his cabinet, [...] so that the excuse of having a forced cabinet is not available to him.

3. Regarding your recent order establishing three forces divisions within the IRGC, it seems that in the current situation of war and the willingness of many Army personnel to cause trouble and flee, this decision may have undesirable consequences. It might have been possible to cleanse the Army without much exposure using young personnel and proper revolutionary and spiritual education, aside from retaining the military structure of the Army. However, unfortunately all our encouragement and investments were directed to the IRGC and due to our political partisanship and favoritism toward the IRGC, the Army was disparaged. And with your recent order, in addition to the economic problems, the last thread of the Army's hopes regarding the Islamic Republic has been lost. Hence, in the present difficult circumstances, we neither have an appreciative Army nor a strong IRGC. [...] With your current order, only God knows what will become of the competition between the Army and IRGC. The fact that many of our officers, especially pilots, have fled with airplanes and helicopters to Iraq and other places and that none of the Iraqi officers have fled to Iran, is evidence of our discouraged and untrusting officers versus motivated Iraqi officers.

4. Another important problem for the country is in the judiciary system and its disorder and its lack of appeal to more loyal and enlightened people. We are facing a shortage of judges, and even with those that we have in the judiciary, we are witnessing a loss of confidence in the capacity of the system to exact justice, given the increasing incidence of judicial malpractice and even bribery. The difficulties in the prisons are also due to the problems in the judiciary system.

5. Finally, at present, the problem of the war is the most important. I know that the Army and IRGC are not cordial, that neither accepts the leadership of the other, and preaching and advice are only temporarily effective. The war, more than anything else, requires a unified leadership that is accepted by all. [...] Since Mr. Khamenei is fairly aware of the state of the war and the fronts and the Army, what is standing in the way of his taking responsibility for coordinated offensives against the enemy, the same way Bani-Sadr did, and directly monitoring them and leading? By witnessing conditions in person, he might solve the problems too. His leadership powers are better than Mr. Hashemi's. [...]

6. [...] The leaders of the three branches of the government are very busy and are not experts in every subject, and it is not appropriate to give them all the responsibilities. The prophet had ten advisers from different tribes, therefore it is fitting to gradually identify ten experts in different topics of war, the economy, culture and politics, and also choose two people loyal to Islam and the revolution, but with opposing views. [...] And seek their advice on important issues. [...]

[Source: *Hossein Ali Montazeri, Khaterat (Memoirs), Appendix 127, p. 770.*
<http://www.amontazeri.com/Farsi/Khaterat/web/index.htm>]