

Khomeyni Address to Nation

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[Address to the nation by the Ayatollah Khomeyni--live]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful: the Almighty God has promised, with his grace and his [word indistinct], to make the weak among the people triumph over the arrogant, and [words indistinct] to make them leaders.

The fulfillment of the Almighty God's promise is close. I hope that we will witness the triumph of those deemed weak over the arrogant, as they have done so far. So far, all that the nation has indicated has been in the direction of obeying Islam and its commands. We should make Islam known to the world, as it really is, and so that attention is drawn to it. What Muslims offer is something precious, but this should be made known.

I thank all the Iranian people for their participation in the referendum and for having cast their decisive vote, which should be regarded as nearly 100 percent in favor of an Islamic republic. The Iranian people had already given their favorable vote. We did not see any need for a referendum, but it was decided to hold a referendum in order to end certain voiced excuses and mumblings. Now, those who were making excuses have realized that the situation is not as they imagined, and that the nation is with Islam, with the spirituality of Islam. The nation wants the teachings of the blessed Koran to be implemented in Iran. Praise be to God that all sections of the Iranian people throughout the country cast their vote, with enthusiasm and eagerness, with love and dedication, in favor of an Islamic republic and nothing else. Only an Islamic republic can fulfill all the objectives of the Iranian nation. The commands of the Islamic republic override all others.

We say that those who make claims about democracy practise democracy in one form in the West, and another in the East. In the East, the people are facing a monumental dictatorship; the same applies to the West. We say to those who say they respect human rights and to human rights organizations that, over a period of 50 years--while the usurping Pahlavi rule and that of his son imposed themselves upon the nation and robbed the nation of everything it had through killings--our young people languished in jails, many of our young people's legs were sawn off in jail, many of them were still in jail until recently, many of them were suffering under torture until recently, many of them lost all they possessed to the executioners of the former shah.

All through this period, we did not see the supporters of human rights protesting. We saw the U.S. President on the side of the miserable shah, the former oppressive shah. We saw him supporting the former shah, supporting an executioner who threw all our possessions to the winds. But the advocates of human rights did not say anything to the U.S. President. However, now that the executioners of the previous regime have fallen into the hands of the nation, and now that the nation wants to revenge itself upon them, we hear loud cries from those concerned about human rights. I cannot regard them as anything other than puppets of the executioners, puppets of superpowers. They are not working for human rights. If human rights organizations were sincere in claiming to defend human rights, then I would expect them to criticize us for having held the executioners in prison and for not having killed them the very first day they were arrested, for having held them in prison--not the sort of prison that existed in the past, but a prison in which the inmates are not even insulted. They should have protested to us for having put the executioners on trial.

As a matter of fact, there is no reason why a criminal should be tried in the first place. Trying a criminal is something contrary to human rights. Human rights dictate that we should have killed the executioners right from the first day, because they were criminals and it was clear they were criminals. It is the accused whose case should be heard, whose claim should be investigated, not the criminal.

The executioners of the previous regime are criminals, not accused. They are among those who killed the people in the streets, and destroyed our treasury by their treachery. Were those killed in the streets of our various cities not humans? Did they not have rights? Why did the advocates of human rights fail to support those killed in the streets? Why is it that human rights supporters complain to us for killing the criminals? All one need do with criminals is to establish their identity, and once this has been established, they should be killed straight away. Once Masiri's identity had been established, he should have been killed right away. Nevertheless, he was detained for a number of days and tried; his confessions were recorded, and only then was he killed.

Doesn't the human rights organization believe that a criminal should be killed in the interest of human rights? Nevertheless we have put these people in trial, and we are trying them. But we believe that there is no need to try a criminal, and that he should be killed.

I am saddened to see that we still have remnants of Westernization among us, and we are afraid lest something should be said in the Western press about us, or some criticism should be voiced against us. The Westerners are against justice and fairness; they are not in favor of human rights. They are defending the interests of the super-powers in the name of human rights. At any rate, we won in the referendum, praise be to God, and proved that all the things published in the foreign press are wrong. The Iranian nation voted 100 percent in favor of an Islamic republic, praise be to God. From now on, it is the duty of the nation to implement the content of this Islamic republic.

In the Islamic republic, everything that exists in Iran today must be changed. In the Islamic republic, universities must be changed, the dependent universities must be converted into independent universities. Our education must be changed. Our colonialist culture must be converted into an independent culture. Our judiciary must be changed. Our Western judiciary must be changed into an Islamic judiciary. Our economy must be changed. Our dependent economy must be converted into an independent economy. All the things that existed under the satanic regime and were carried out in this weak and dependent country at the behest of foreigners, must be overturned with the establishment of the Islamic republic. The people must reform themselves. Those who oppressed people weaker than themselves must cease subjecting their underlings to oppression. Upper classes should not oppress the lower classes. The poor and the needy should be given their due. All this must be implemented in the Islamic republic, and the nation is duty-bound in the Islamic republic to support governments which serve the nation.

Should there be a government doing something wrong, the nation should punch it in the mouth. If the nation feels there is a government organization trying to subject it to oppression, the nation should complain, and the courts should adjudicate. If the courts fail to do justice, the nation itself should do the job. There is no injustice in an Islamic republic. Bullying does not exist in the Islamic republic. The mighty cannot oppress the weak or exploit the weak and the poor. Islamic principles must be implemented in the country. The weak should be protected. The arrogant should be reduced to weakness and the weak should repent. I don't mean this in this sense [as heard] but all should be brothers in this country, in this world.

I tell all the sections of society that in Islam there are no privileges recognized for one group as distinct from another, Sunni or Shi'a, Arabs or Persians, Turks or non-Turks. Islam recognizes social distinction only for the just, for piety.

Only those with piety enjoy social distinction. Those with the spirit of humanity enjoy social distinction. Social distinction is not governed by wealth and material possessions. All such privileges must be eliminated, and everybody made equal. Every group's rights will be granted to them. (?All ethnic groups) are equal. Religious minorities' rights will be observed and respected. All other groups with different ideologies are all part of the same nation, adherents of the same religion. I hope that the seditionists who go to various parts of the country and incite the people to engage in fratricide will themselves come to their senses. We are all brothers, they should not do such things in these regions. We are all brothers. The Sunnis are our brothers. We should not act as superior to others. We all have equal rights. And the law that is going to be approved by the nation protects the rights of all strata [words indistinct].

I congratulate the nation on this Islamic festival, on their Islamic republic. But we must all observe the Islamic commands. Our bazaar must be an Islamic bazaar. [Words indistinct] our government, and all future governments, must be governed by Islamic principles. Our ministries must be governed by Islamic principles. Government offices must be run on the basis of Islamic principles. [Words indistinct] a satanic state should be converted into a state believing in God's commands. We are not afraid of what might be said about us in the West. [Words indistinct] we should act on the basis of justice. We shall in time make them understand what democracy means. The Western style of democracy is corrupt, and the Eastern style of democracy is equally corrupt. Only Islamic democracy is correct. Given the opportunity, we shall prove to both East and West that what we have is not the democracy they have--neither that in which big capitalists are favored nor that which supports superpowers and in which all the people are subjected to a monumental repression. There is no repression in Islam; there is freedom in Islam for all sections, for men and women, for black and white, for everybody.

The people should fear themselves, not the government. They should fear themselves doing anything wrong. The rule of justice prevents wrongdoing, punishes wrongdoing. We should fear ourselves so that we do not do what is wrong. An Islamic government does not do wrong. There is no longer any SAVAK, or any of its tortures. Nobody can bully our police, bully our nation. No government can bully the nation. In an Islamic state, the government is in the service of the nation. It should be the nation's servant; even if the prime minister acts unjustly, he should be brought to task. And if his crime is proved in court, he should be punished. There is no such thing in Islam as one law for the prime minister and another for someone else. [Words indistinct] Islam honors the humanity of a man [words indistinct].

At any rate, I call upon the whole nation to transform itself; transform the attitudes they have under the satanic regime into Islamic attitudes. In Iran today, we have many needy people, many injured people, many people who have lost all their possessions in the course of recent events. The wealthy should help them. The government should bear in mind their plight. It should build homes for them; it should provide them with a proper living; it should provide government employees with a proper living. I told a group of industrialists who had come to see me a few days ago to go and try to put things right yourselves, to get together and invest capital jointly to build houses for the workers and to provide them with welfare. I told them: If you don't do that they might, God forbid, rebel one day, and if they do, we will no longer be able to stop them. God willing, I promise the workers and other employees and the weak classes that Iran will provide you with jobs, Islam will provide you with prosperity, Islam will build your homes.

Islam is more concerned about the needy than others. I wish success for all Muslims on this festive day, the day of victory for our nation. I hope Islamic nations will unite and cut off the hands of satans from their countries.