

## O P I N I O N

In the account of the Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei of Imam Khomeini, he is depicted as a powerful force, capable of stirring up the boundless ocean of nations and whipping it into a storm.

According to this narrative, Imam Khomeini viewed nations as interconnected oceans; When their anger is stirred up and they boil over, they can break apart the ships of tyrannical leaders and send them under. The Leader, by painting a vivid picture of how Imam Khomeini saw the people, identifies emotion, compassion, and thought as the threads that tie together the Imam and the nation. He states that the Imam, as the father of this nation, holds the reins of this connection: "When the Imam orders the youth and the children of this nation to defend, when he calls for mass mobilization, this roaring sea will rise up; On that day, every job will become one job: military service... On the day the Imam wills it, and in the manner and order he sets out, the entire nation will be mobilized from start to finish. That will be the day of the death of imperialist power and the day that power is buried in this land."

But what was the source of the Imam's power to win over the people and set the ocean of nations against tyranny and global imperialism? What forged the bond of emotion and thought between the Imam and his followers?

In his account, Ayatollah Khamenei points to the martyrdom of Ayatollah Mostafa Khomeini in 1977, noting, "The nation, though potentially revolutionary, had not yet been truly stirred up at the time; Only a mighty storm can shake an ocean — one great martyrdom and, in response, one great patience."

He goes on to explain that the

## Imam of compassion, emotion, and thought

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Founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini waves to the people after he returned from exile in February 1979.

● khamenei.ir

people's rallying around the late Imam was due to his spiritual and heavenly character: "This great heart, this great spirit, this spirit of God, with great patience, lent eternal grandeur to this event. 'The death of Mostafa was a hidden divine kindness'; This is the perspective of a spiritual man, a heavenly man,

a leader who rules over hearts before minds; A leader whose patience, humanity, spirituality, and mysticism win over even the hardest of hearts — something that defies any material formula."

Addressing those still left open-mouthed and astonished by the revolutionary events of that era,

Ayatollah Khamenei identifies Imam Khomeini's patience as the factor that set off the storm in the ocean of the nation, and portrays him as a spiritual, Islamic leader whose influence and endless reliance on God set him apart from all other leaders. In the Leader's telling, the storm in the nation's ocean was the

result of the knowledge people gained about the Imam following the martyrdom of his son. "The father's conduct in the face of this tragedy elevated him tenfold; Even the greatest and most unyielding spirits bowed down before this greater soul, and all declared their faith. He showed he was a leader, a superman, a noble human being, and the event was set in motion."

It might be assumed that this event was the victory of the Islamic Revolution, but it appears that an even greater event "was set in motion," with the Revolution's triumph and subsequent victories springing from it. The event was a golden moment, when the people came to know their Imam, and God, by testing the Imam with a great trial and his passing it, placed the reins of the nation's emotion, compassion, and thought in his hands. In the wake of this great event, "the Iranian nation proved that it loved its leader more than anything or anyone else, more than any motive or orientation; It showed it valued its leader. Our nation's cry rang out so thunderously in the suffocating, foggy, and poisoned atmosphere of the world that even the enemies could not bring themselves to doubt it. Those who could not come to terms with the fact that the greatest revolution of the past half-century — a century of revolutions, movements, surges, and leaps — was being led by a spiritual man, by this Imam and great leader, were forced to bow before the thunderous cry of the Iranian nation. The Iranian nation managed to get this message across — a message the world watched and pondered with disbelief — reaching even the furthest corners of the Western world. The Iranian nation showed it knows its leader, approves of him, loves him with all its being, and that he is dearer to it than anything or anyone else."

*The article first appeared in Persian on Tasnim news agency.*



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## Ayatollah Khomeini's institution-building far-sighted

### Aligned with needs of Revolution, Iraqi-imposed war

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Following the victory of Iran's Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini set up a range of institutions, each with its own distinct purpose. Some of these bodies played a pivotal role and were simply indispensable during the Iran-Iraq War. The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Guard Corps (IRGC), the Construction Jihad, the Basij Force, and the Supreme Defense Council were among the organizations that sprang up under Imam Khomeini's orders prior to the outbreak of hostilities in September 1980.

Institution-building stood out as a crucial aspect of Imam Khomeini's military and defense thinking throughout the war and its aftermath, leaving a lasting mark on the course of events.

According to the renowned Western thinker Joseph Nye, the ability to anticipate crises, gear up for them, and put in place systems to tackle emergencies is a hallmark of a transformative leader. From this vantage point, a wise leader, either before a crisis breaks out or as soon as the first signs crop up, must take the initiative and

set up institutions to confront looming threats, thereby shoring up the necessary preparedness.

In truth, Imam Khomeini's foresight and particular skill in institution-building, tailored to the Revolution's needs, gave rise to revolutionary organizations that helped keep the establishment afloat and powerful for years to come — an achievement widely recognized as one of his greatest strengths.

Moreover, Imam Khomeini's willingness to seek counsel and delegate authority during the war stood out as a hallmark of his wartime leadership. This can be seen in the way he took on board various factors and perspectives during critical junctures of the conflict. Evidence shows that at key moments — such as the entry into Iraqi territory after the liberation of Khorramshahr in May 1982, and the decision to call an end to the war by accepting the cease-fire in July 1988 — Imam Khomeini regarded consultation with experts as the linchpin of his decision-making.

He frequently sought input from specialists on all aspects of the conflict, including diplomatic



Commanders of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) meet with Iran's Commander-in-Chief Imam Khomeini (back-C) during the Iraqi-imposed war (1980-1988).

● IRDC

initiatives, cease-fire acceptance, and decisions within the framework of international organizations.

The sheer scale and technical nature of the war meant that Imam Khomeini handed over

responsibility for certain executive and technical matters to government officials, while he himself mapped out the overall strategy and kept a close eye on its implementation. This included orders such as the creation

of the Supreme Defense Council and the foresight to plan for a successor to the Commander-in-Chief.

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