Leader’s remarks in meeting with members of the Assembly of Experts - 14 /Mar/ 2016

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

You are very welcome respectable gentlemen, [my] dear brethren! First of all, I offer my condolences on the occasion of the days of the martyrdom of Hadhrat Seddiqeh Tahereh (Peace Be Upon Her) to all of you dear brethren, who are disciples of that school. Let met mention one point in this regard: pay attention that in Fatemiyeh days [when the martyrdom of Hadhrat Fatemeh (PBUH) is commemorated], issues that may sow discord should not be raised [in speeches and ceremonies] when virtues of that honorable one are mentioned, [or] when her martyrdom is commemorated. Today, horrendous and evil international policies are seriously aimed at creating divide between Shia and Sunni [Muslims]. At present, there are wars going on in the region; I tell you that none of these wars are ideological wars; [all of them] are political wars and [have been waged] with various political and ethnic and similar motivations and have nothing to do with religion. However, the enemy, namely America, namely the Zionist [regime], namely Britain are trying to turn these conflicts, [and] these differences into religious difference, because as you know, religious difference cannot be stopped easily. We must not help [promote] this goal. Today, on our side, we have people from Sunni brethren, who are fighting along with us and on our side to defend the shrine of the [Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)’s] progeny and are killed, [and] are martyred.

Families of the martyrs of [holy] shrines have come to me among whom were a number of Sunni families. Well, this Sunni brother, who sends his young one to the war front in order to defend the shrine of Hadhrat Zeinab (PBUH) or the shrine of Amir al-Mo’menin [Imam Ali (PBUH)], or the shrine of Seyyed osh-Shohada [Imam Hossein (PBUH)], then comes to meet with me, [and] instead of expressing sorrow and sadness or bringing up grievances or complaining, expresses pride that ‘my boy has been martyred on this path’, should we offend them? Should we do something that would [cause them] to distance from us? These are important points, [and] these are basic points. Today, one of the main priorities for the clerical community is not to allow the step that America is taking with [a lot of] trouble, [and] the Zionists are taking with trouble, we easily take that step for them; pay attention to this. In Sistan and Baluchestan Province, Sunni ulema encouraged people to take part in elections; now, these Takfiri groups are threatening them [and ask them] ‘why you contributed to elections’; [they do this] because they encouraged people [to take part in elections]. Takfiri groups are not just enemy of Shias, [but] they are also enemy of the Islamic establishment, [and] are enemy of whoever that helps the Islamic establishment; these [points] should be taken into account. Of course, I have frequently noted that recounting history, while observing norms, while observing politeness, [and] while observing all important expedient considerations is not a problem; however, [preventing] creation of difference, [and] creation of grudge is among those things to which a lot of attention must be paid today.

This today’s session of yours is the last session of the longest term of the Assembly of Experts. During these years – about nine years as Mr. Yazdi said – this assembly held sessions, took steps, said important things and had various effects.
There were also departed ones; I think – as they have reported to me – about 17 persons of this assembly’s members have passed away during these years. Of course, this new term, which is going to start, is also like this; the world is like this. Some people are at the end of the line and the movement toward the Everlasting World is a constant movement by the entire humanity; and this is the divine power and the divine destiny. We must be careful and ask [God’s] forgiveness for those dear departed ones, who were in this term and endeavored and attended [the assembly’s sessions].

I especially commemorate the late Mr. [Abbas Vaez] Tabasi (may God bestow his forgiveness upon him) and the late Mr. [Abolqasem] Khazali (may God bestow his forgiveness upon him); these two good brethren were among those people who maintained the position of expertness at the Assembly of Experts in the true sense of the word and really passed a good test. The late Mr. Tabasi (may God's mercy be upon him), [is a person] whose records of struggles in the time of suppression [under the former Pahlavi regime], [and] his later service(s) at the Astan Qods [Imam Reza (PBUH)'s Holy Shrine] and [his records] with regard to all issues of the revolution are clear for most of you; however, there are some prominences, which one cannot ignore these prominences; may God's mercy be upon this great man and my dear brother. At the most sensitive junctures, he demonstrated his revolutionary position quite clearly and maintained it and insisted on it and specified it. During the sedition [which broke out in the Iranian calendar year] of [13]88 (2009), the late Mr. Tabasi put aside all considerations and came into the middle of the arena; he put aside [past] friendships and ceremonies and the likes of these; I saw this state in him on many occasions; [he was] an outspoken, faithful, [and] firm person. These are things, which remain [as parts of] the personality of individuals and in the life history of people; [and] these are also saved in the divine account.

The life of this faithful and honorable man did not change during this period of responsibility; he passed away at the same house, which before the [victory of the Islamic] Revolution, I had gone to time and time again; [he passed away] at the same house and with the same furniture. At a time when we did not know how to sit on a settee, he had settee at his house; the same settee [that dates back to] 40 years, [or] 45 years ago is still at his house and he used the same [furniture]. He did not develop his life, [and] did not get inclined toward aristocratic lifestyle. Well, these [conditions] affect people, [and] although a lot of propaganda was going on against him, you saw how the people of [the city of] Mashhad saw this person off [to his grave]. The funeral of the late Mr. Tabasi and the prayers on him were like the biggest demonstrations that had been taken place in Mashhad, which I saw; that magnanimous court [was] full of people and all [of them were] people of Mashhad – and it was not a [high] time for pilgrimage that one could say pilgrims were there; no, it was the people of Mashhad – they came and showed their gratitude; [and] showed appreciation. May God's mercy be on this dear departed one of us.

The late Mr. Khazali (may God bestow his forgiveness upon him) passed a different and very difficult test; he stood by his words, [and] stood by the revolution. [Even] when his relatives and family members were involved, he [stood] with full candor [and] with full courage. Now, he has told me things time and time, which are recorded in my heart and in my writings, but he has also said a lot of things in public, other people have heard. [This] man stood by the revolution. These [actions] are what impart value to humans, [and] impart meaning to revolutionary movement of humans. May God's mercy be on these [men]. I hope the Almighty God would treat them with His forgiveness, [and] with his mercy. [As is said in the famous prayer:] "O lord! I have such a high hope in Your mercy that as if I am standing in front of You and my rightful trust in You is covering me; so, You have issued the command that You deserve and have covered me in Your amnesty and forgiveness." I hope, God willing, the Almighty God would include these [two men] in these article of the Sha'baniyeh prayer.
This year's elections were very meaningful and important elections. Despite [the fact that] all these steps had been taken against these elections, activities were made in order to cast doubt on these questions, [and] to reduce the value of elections, a population of 34 million [people] took part in these two elections; that is, in fact, about 70 million ballots were cast into ballot boxes by the Iranian people. This is very valuable, [and] this is very important; people really stood out [in these elections]. A 62 percent [turnout] of the population that can vote is a high percentage [if] it is compared with most countries; not with some countries, [but] with most countries. As they have reported to me, [even] in America during these past 10 years, the figure for people's participation in different elections, whether Congress elections or presidential elections, has never reached 40 percent. This popular presence is very meaningful; people showed their trust in the Islamic establishment in the true sense of the word and proved [that trust] in practice. This was one of the important points [about these elections].

Well, of course, in all elections some people are elected, [and] some people are not elected; [and this] has various reasons. Here, I deem it necessary to thank those people who were present in this nine-year term and endeavored and are not [elected to be] in the next term. Of course, there are some of our dignitaries for whom being elected or not

elected will not harm their personality in any way. There are some [dignitaries] whose presence will benefit the Assembly of Experts, not that they benefit from being at the Assembly of Experts. The likes of Mr. [Mohammad] Yazdi or Mr. [Mohammad Taqi] Mesbah [Yazdi] are [among those] people, who when they are present at the Assembly of Experts, they increase the weight of the assembly. [But] absence of these [people] from the Assembly of Experts will do them no harm. Yes, the absence of these [dignitaries] is a loss for the Assembly of Experts. The prominent personality of persons depends on their spiritualties, their spiritual assets, [and] their spiritual capital. I hope that the Almighty God would make those [members] who are present in this new term and were not there before, and the totality of the Assembly of Experts, God willing, successful.

Elections in our country – including these elections – have [certain] characteristics, which I explain a number of characteristics that I think are important. One [characteristic] is that people have freedom of action to take part in these elections and in [other] elections of our country. In some countries [taking part in elections] is mandatory; even in Western countries – both European and non-European – there is some force; that is, not taking part in elections would be costly for them; in our country not taking part in elections has no cost; people take part [in elections] freely, take part with motivation, [and] take part with willingness; they have an idea [and] move behind that idea. This is very valuable.
The second point, which has been present in most our elections and was clearly present in these elections was competitiveness of elections. [Some people] tried to say that elections are not competitive, but it was against the reality and elections were competitive. Various factions [and] various individuals with different signs, with different names, [and] with different slogans took part [in elections] and made their voice heard; the IRIB [state TV] was made available to candidates for [the Assembly of] Experts; candidates for the Islamic Consultative Assembly campaigned in cities and did whatever they could. Therefore, elections were totally competitive and what has been gained is the product of a full-fledged competition.

Another characteristic, which is important and remarkable and we must really thank God [for it] was the security and tranquility [that governed the] atmosphere of elections, even in those places where there are motivations for discord, like those cases where there are [different] ethnic groups, there is difference [of opinion] between two cities, [and] there is rivalry between two cities; we have such cases all across the country; [but] nowhere any bitter incident occurred. Now, in big cities and the likes of them, which is clear, [but] the same was true at all corners of the country. [Any] incident that would sour the elections atmosphere and, God forbid, deal harm to people's lives did not take place. Today, just look at the environment around us; in our east, in our west, in our north, [and] in our south countries are afflicted with insecurity. Not [only] they cannot hold peaceful and healthy elections, [but] they also don't have healthy and peaceful life; [a person] who leaves his house, does not know whether he gets back to his house or not. The state of insecurity in countries around us is almost like this. In our country, thank God, elections so grand, [and] with such a massive turnout take place; in Tehran, people [voted] from eight o'clock in the morning to two hours after the midnight; they reported to me that in some election constituencies in Tehran, people came, cast their votes and left [the constituency] not [simply] up to the midnight [but] until two hours after the midnight; [and all this happened] in complete peace, [and] in total security. This is a very important thing; this is a reserve for the country, [and] is a great divine bounty for a country; we must appreciate this. We must really thank all those who could provide us with this security – from Ministry of Interior to law enforcement to the [Islamic Revolution Guards] Corps, to the Basij and all others who were effective in this regard.

Another characteristic of these elections, like the rest of our elections, was wholesomeness and trust; I mean, elections were held in a healthy manner; [and this was] just the opposite of what our enemies kept publicizing during these years; and this propaganda was intensified in time of elections that "Mr. they betray [people's vote]; [because] they name a given person, [but] bring another given person's votes out [of ballot boxes];" you have heard such things; a group have incessantly said this outside [the country] and another group has retold it inside and repeated the same remarks inside the country. Nonetheless, thank God, [these] elections were healthy and elections [in Iran] have always been healthy. This proved incredibility of claims of those and actions of those who once considered an election like that [held in the Iranian year 13]88 (2009) unreliable and caused that harmful and horrendous sedition

for the country; because they alleged that the election was an unhealthy votevalue; no, [that] election was healthy; today [elections] were healthy, and [elections held] in previous terms were healthy, and [the election] held in the year [13]88 was healthy, and [the election] held in the year [13]84 (2005) was healthy; [in all those terms] elections were healthy. Never such a thing [as cheating in elections has taken place]. Yes, it is possible that at a corner, [and] in a ballot box, ten, twenty, [or] a hundred ballots may have been manipulated; either out of neglect, or on purpose, [but] no organized move, which would exist to change the result of elections, has existed in our country and does not exist and we hope, God willing, would never exist after this.

Another point, which was again made clear in these elections and showed itself prominently, was totally honorable behavior of those who were not elected. If those persons who were not elected had started to protest and fight and raise grievances and complain and talk through [various] platforms, the situation would not remain calm and unrest would naturally follow. Well, Mr. Yazdi (may God increase his life) has himself noted at the beginning of your current session, and had also said before and expressed joy, expressed satisfaction, [and] congratulated those who were elected; these [moves] are very important; these are very great; these are values, [and] these values must be appreciated; [this was] unlike the dishonest behavior of those who acted [after election] in the year [13]88 (2009), and since they were not elected, they started a fight, drew people into the streets, triggered [street] clashes, inflicted [a high] cost on the country, emboldened the enemy, [and] stirred the enemy's greed; these things were done. The Almighty God put off that sedition, otherwise, that sedition was not a small sedition that these [people] started. Well, this is also another characteristic [of elections in Iran].

Out of those who were actively present in [providing] security of the elections, I did not name the Ministry of Intelligence, and I apologize to them; I mean, their presence was strongly, [and] seriously an effective presence in creating security and preventing some incidents that could have happened.
What I must say in the roundup of this part [of my remarks] is that in these elections, people proved their trust in the Islamic establishment and [their] compliance with the Islamic establishment and showed that they obey the Islamic Republic, accept the laws of the Islamic Republic, [and] behave and act in accordance with these laws; this is very valuable; this is quite the opposite of what our enemies are pursuing; they want to create bipolarization between the government and establishment, on the one hand, and the people, on the other hand; instead of saying it or talking [about it], people entered the arena and showed that no, this is not the case. Of course, [they had] already [taken part in] that such and such demonstration on Bahman 22 (February 11) with that grandeur, with that zeal and [high] intellect; people are really like this. Therefore, fortunately, the enemy's effort to discredit elections did not bear fruit and elections were held with full credit.

There is a point here and it is that some people – one must say in unwanted and unknowing compliance with the enemy – raise some questions about the Guardian Council; I am really indignant with such people. The Guardian Council did its job with seriousness, with a lot of effort, and with endeavor. If you were in the Guardian Council's place, you would not do otherwise. The Guardian Council had to see into 12,000 cases in a matter of 20 days – as Mr. [Mahmoud Hashemi] Shahroudi pointed out now. Well, this is a problem with the law; if this problem with the law is resolved, this [subsequent] problem which emanates from it will be [also] resolved. Why we must blame the Guardian Council for a problem [that exists] in [our] law? They talk about qualification and disqualification; I am surprised that some people say this. Well, you are all erudite [and] scholars; can a person be confirmed [for a post] without making sure about his qualification for that post? Can you endorse this without making sure that he has legal conditions to do this? [And if you do] would you have any answer to God? You cannot [qualify such a person]. If you were in the Guardian Council's place, you would not be able [to do this]. If the Guardian Council could not make sure [about qualifications], it has to say 'I could not make sure'. When it cannot make sure, naturally that person is rejected. Well, this is not a fault with the Guardian Council. If you want the Guardian Council to have enough time to make sure [about qualifications], you must amend the law; the law must be amended – I have already said this frequently; now some people are considering this, perhaps God willing they would be able [to amend the law]; of course, I have delineated general policies for elections and sent it to the Expediency Council; there, they discussed them; now [if] a correct step is taken on their basis, it would be of no objection – but with this law that

exists today, the situation is like this; the Guardian Council has no choice; it cannot endorse somebody when it cannot make sure about his qualifications; it has to make sure.

You say that the law has specified these four sources [to determine qualifications of candidates]; very well – of course, even this is in doubt – [but] assume that these sources have been mentioned for [obtaining] information. If you, who are responsible, earned the knowledge through some means and realized that this person is not qualified, can you endorse him? [No,] you cannot endorse [that person]; [because if you do] you would have no answer for God. Why the Guardian Council is attacked so much?
Of course, some people who are disqualified by the Guardian Council resent this; this resentment is understandable, [and] is acceptable. [Even] I may resent it if in a case they tell me "you are not qualified," but do we have to raise Cain when we resent something? If one feels resentment, [and] if there is a legal way, they should resort to that legal way. I am surprised that some people start writing in newspapers and here and there and do such things against the Guardian Council that 'why you disqualified us? We were qualified'. Very well, [assume that] you are qualified; if the Guardian Council has made a mistake, you must refer to them and they, according to the law, must fulfill the same duty that they have; if not, the Guardian Council cannot be undermined. Everybody pay attention! The Guardian Council is among those main centers, which the Arrogance has wanted to undermine since the outset of the revolution. One of a number of important centers, which from the outset of the revolution the goal of the evil propaganda machine of Zionists and Americans and the Arrogance has been to undermine it is the Guardian Council. We must not help [this process] and undermine the Guardian Council as a result of this [disqualification]. Yes, we may have grievances or there might be a problem; well, we must express that problem; [but] we must not undermine the Guardian Council; we must not undermine this basic legal center. Mudslinging against the Guardian Council is really an un-Islamic, irreligious, illegal and un-revolutionary thing [to do.]

Well, people did great; people did what they were expected. Now, it is our turn; both the turn of the Assembly of Experts to fulfill its duties, and the turn of the Islamic Consultative Assembly to fulfill its duties; and the turn of the esteemed administration to fulfill its duties; we have duties [to fulfill]. People came into the arena and determined their representatives. In my opinion, the Assembly of Experts is the most important place which must pay attention to its duties. If I wanted to summarize it in a single word that single word would be that the Assembly of Experts must remain revolutionary; it must think revolutionarily and act revolutionarily; this is the gist of it. Many things can be said to expound this issue; one is that you must take God into consideration when choosing the next leader. The possibility that this term, which will just begin, would have to pass this test, is not a low possibility; when the leader is going to be chosen, they must put aside all considerations and ceremonial behavior; must [only] take God into consideration, take their duties into account, [and] take the country's needs into account; the leader must be chosen on this basis; the most important duty [of the Assembly of Experts] in my opinion is this; [so,] they must be careful. In case of any oversight at this stage and in fulfilling this big duty, the fundament of the work will become problematic; this is the most important issue, which must be taken into account.

Of course, apart from this duty, the Assembly of Experts has other duties as well; as these gentlemen pointed out, the Assembly of Experts is comprised of dignitaries and ulema and righteous personalities in provinces; they can be effective, can listen to what people say and bring it up here; the Assembly of Experts must turn into a medium between people's demands and esteemed executive or judiciary officials; this is one of the things [that the Assembly of Experts can do]. Or they can explain to people the facts, [and] important issues in view of their expert position and their real personalitygun; [they can do this] either in Friday prayers, or in [other places]. This point, which Mr. Yazdi said at the end of his remarks is clear; our main duty is to explain; we must explain. This explaining can be done in various forms; [however,] that form [of explaining] in which sedition may come about, [and] fighting may come about, that form is not desirable. [But] that form, which would enlighten people, [and] would remind officials of solutions, that form is very desirable; this is also of no objection. [Members of the Assembly of Experts] must maintain their legal status. Taking positions [on various issues] is good. Of course, I said that taking position is possible in two ways; it must not be done in a way that may lead to corruption and generate corruption, but expressing the realities in a way that would enlighten people, enlighten officials, and make officials thankful [is

desirable]. Sometimes one says something, which although it is critical, officials thank them for it; it has frequently happened for me that officials say ‘this point that you said has facilitated our work and we can do our job’; they may even thank you. This also [suffices] about this issue. Therefore, as for the Assembly of Experts, my opinion is that thinking on the basis of personal expediencies must be discouraged; ceremonial behavior must be put aside; pure truth and what is one’s duty, for which one has to be accountable before the Almighty God, that must be taken into consideration; we must pay attention to Almighty’s questioning.

I have also said this about the Islamic Consultative Assembly. Through long years in various [terms of] Majlis (the Iranian parliament) and various administrations, I have always encouraged the Majlis to cooperate with the administration and help the administration; right now, I believe that the Majlis must help the administration and pave the way for the execution [of laws], because execution is not an easy task, [and] execution is a difficult task. Of course, legislation is an important task, but execution means moving on difficult train and cutting through obstacles and crossing obstacles; this is not an easy task, [and] everybody must help them. However, the meaning of this is not that the Majlis must ignore its legal duties; no, the legal duties of the Majlis must be totally fulfilled. Those things that are clear in the law, those things that are duty of the Majlis in the law – mostly in the Constitution and [also] in ordinary law – it is clear what they are; these things must be fully observed and they must not be neglected, but they must be bent on helping the administration and collaborate and cooperate with the administration; these [two things] are not incompatible [with each other].

[There is] also a word of caution to administration officials. Fortunately, our esteemed president is present here; of course, I give him necessary notices that occur to my mind [both] in private sessions, [and] in state sessions; here is also a good opportunity. The administration must take into account the priorities of the country; we have priorities. Of course, the needs are numerous; the field of the country’s needs is a vast field; I mean, it is perhaps uncountable, but according to the rational rule, priorities, urgencies, or more deep-rooted issues must be taken into account [first]. In my opinion, three issues are more important than all in terms of priority, in terms of being deep-rooted, and [in terms of] helping resolution of other problems. One [issue] is the issue of the Economy of Resistance. In the absence of the Economy of Resistance the country would not grow, [and] its economic problems would not be solved, but its afflictions will increase day by day, if we do not enter the Economy of Resistance into force. I have requested my dear brethren in the administration to form a headquarters for the Economy of Resistance; [and] consider a command room for it. After all, this is a war; it is an economic war; now, there are no artillery and bullet and guns involved, but there are other tools, which are more dangerous than artillery and gun.

It is a war, [and therefore] it needs a headquarters, [and every] headquarters also needs a commander. I have offered a proposal, they have accepted it, [and] are taking steps; however, such steps must be tangible, they must be seen. [With regard to] state activities – assume a given deal, which is done at a given place – it must be clear where can it be placed within the Economy of Resistance; I have cautioned our dear [executive] officials about this that when you are buying a given thing or are dealing a given thing at a given place, very well, [it must be clear that] in the arena of the Economy of Resistance, where does this deal fit in this huge table? This must become clear. I mean, the criterion for all our economic works [and] economic activities must be the huge and all-out plan of the Economy of Resistance. And I am not the only one to talk about the Economy of Resistance; this plan has been drawn up through collective thinking and collective wisdom; then, without any exception – from proponents to opponents – have endorsed this plan and have said that the Economy of Resistance is the sole way to save the country. So, this is one of the top three priorities.

The second priority is the issue of scientific spurt. We must not allow the scientific spurt to stop. If the country pays attention to science and pushes ahead itpossible, it will take the lead [among other countries]; in the true sense of the word: science is the king. If we want power, if we want dignity, [and] if we want to become a reference source for [other] countries and governments, instead of them being a reference source for us, we must bolster science; and this is possible and this is practical. I brought up the issue of science and transcending the existing boundaries of science and [promoting] scientific innovation about fourteen [or] fifteen years ago; some people said it was not possible;

some [even] appeared on television screen [and] said it was not possible. Today, you see it has been possible; everybody admits that it was possible; the pace of the country's [scientific] progress was many times faster than the average pace of scientific progress in the world; of course, since we are way behind, this pace of progress must continue for years so that we reach that frontline. However, [this pace] was [previously] higher and is now slowed down; I have also warned about this slowdown [but] some people objected. [It was] today or yesterday when I read in the news that the minister of science [research, and technology] has said that the pace of the [country's] scientific progress has slowed down; you see! I said this perhaps six [or] seven months before this in my remarks. Some people did not like it and objected [to my remarks], but now the minister of science is saying that the pace of [scientific] progress has slowed down. We must not allow it to decrease [further]; scientific progress must be pursued with full seriousness. If we pursue scientific progress, then knowledge-based economy – in which investment is low [but] the output and produce is very high – will come under our control.
The third [priority] is cultural immunization. Now, I will briefly discuss cultural immunization [here and] later I will explain more; my remarks will become somehow extended, but try to tolerate. In cultural terms, we must immunize the country, the nation and the youth; [achieving] this [goal] needs planning. We must first accept this goal and believe in it. After we believed in it, then we must go and make plan for this job. This is not a job we could do easily; [this goal] cannot be also achieved through a few speeches and writing books; [achieving] this [goal] needs cultural immunization, [and] needs planning.

The product of these steps that I said, [if] we take them, would be progress of the country. In the first place, if the country takes into consideration these three priorities – there are later steps which must be taken, [but] these three priorities in the first place – it will progress. What I mean by progress, is not outward progress, but is real progress. Outward progress is that we bring apparent prosperity to economy, import a [certain] quantity of goods and add to glamour [of our market]; this would be outward progress, [but] this is no good, [because] this may to some extent make people happy in the short run, but it will be finally to detriment of the country. Progress must be real, must be profound, and based on strong domestic pillars and columns. This would be progress; [and] this would be real progress. I heard yesterday that this esteemed commander of the IRGC (the Islamic Republic Guards Corps) has been talking on television about these missiles and the likes of these, [and] has said that if they erect a wall all around our country, so that, nothing could enter and nothing could get out [of the country], we would face no problem for making these missiles; this is [real] progress. You must move in a way that if they impose sanctions [on our country] and exert pressure, your progress would not come to a halt [but] that enemy would feel that it needs to come forward. If we want this real progress to take place, we must maintain our revolutionary characteristics, must maintain our Jihad-like movement, [and] must maintain our dignity and national identity, do not be digested, and do not be digested in the dangerous cultural and economic digestive tract of the world; if we observe these [points], this [existing situation] would be corrected.

Before the elections, I raised the issue of infiltration. Gentlemen! This infiltration is an important issue. infiltration is an important issue, [and] when I say this, it is not because a possibility occurs to my mind, which they may infiltrate [into the country]; no, I am aware of many things; I am informed of many incidents that are taking place in the country, which most ordinary people or even many officials are not informed of. I am talking with information that the plan for infiltration into the country is a serious plan by the Arrogance, [and] is a serious plan by Americans; they are trying to infiltrate. Make no mistake! This infiltration is not for the purpose of inciting a coup d'état; no, they know that in Iran, in the Islamic Republic, [and] with the structure that the Islamic Republic has, coup d'état has no meaning. In some places, sometimes they infiltrate into a given armed force in order to stage a coup d'état, [and by doing this] they topple somebody and bring somebody else [in his place]; no, this infiltration is not aimed at coup d'état. This infiltration is for two other purposes. One of the targets of this infiltration is officials, [and] the second target is people. Officials are target of this infiltration; for what? What is the goal? the goal is to change and alter calculations of officials; that is, [to make] an official of the Islamic Republic reach the conclusion that he must cut a given relationship, [and] establish another given relationship; infiltration is aimed at changing these calculations in the mind of officials. Then, when the result is that the mind of officials and the will of officials come under control of the enemy, that enemy no more needs to come and directly interfere; no [it is not needed because] the country's

official makes the same decision that it wants. When the calculation of this humble one changes, I make the decision that it [the enemy] wants; I do the same thing [for the enemy] that it wants free of cost; sometimes I do this job without knowing it myself – that is, most of the time [I do it] without knowing it myself. [Therefore,] they try to change the calculations of officials. So, officials are the first target [of infiltration].

People are the second target. [The enemy believes that] people's beliefs must change; belief in Islam, belief in the revolution, belief in the political Islam, belief in [the issue] that apart from personal affairs, Islam has also public duties, has also [a system of] government, has also society building, [and] has also civilization building; [after which] belief in negating these [issues must take their place]. These [beliefs] must be erased from people's minds, [and] their opposite should be planted in people's minds.
[Enemies want] to change [people's] belief in independence. Some, of course, act naively; we see that sometimes in some print media, the independence of the country is clearly called a démodé and obsolete issue and say that today the independence of countries is not important anymore. What does this mean? It means that on the geographical map of the world there exists a power, [and] that power makes [the final] decision and all [others] act upon it – it is like central heating [system] – at one place something is produced, [and] the rest just consume it. They are promoting this [idea]; this is [the real meaning of] infiltration. Of course, this is what being done.

One of those things, which infiltration targets among people's beliefs is that [they must] forget about treacheries of the West. Gentlemen! We have been harmed by the West. In global propaganda, they put stress on why in the Islamic Republic some people – sometimes they name me in particular – are against the West, [and] why [they] are against America. We must not forget what the West has done to us. I do not support severance of relations with the West – now, I will explain this – [and] everybody knows this. I was president for eight years, [and] I have met, conferred and talked to these [Western] countries and with these [Western] presidents. It is the same right now; [even] now, [an item] on the schedule of Mr. president's [foreign] guests is to meet with me. In [our] conversations, we do not throw insult at each other, [but] we talk and reach understanding. I am not against having relations with the West, [but] the problem is that we must know with whom we are interacting and we must know who our opposite side is.

The West, [and] Western countries have started their activities against our country since the middle of the Qajar era. The weakness of the Qajar kings prompted them to continuously take concessions [from them], to continuously put pressure, to continuously tighten the noose around us, and to stop our advances. Then they reached the conclusion that they must bring [to the throne] one of their own, which they did; Reza Khan was one of their own. Now, some people even cast doubt on this and [say] Reza Khan was not brought by the British; [this is] such a clear issue, to which they themselves have confessed, have repeated, the British themselves have said, [and] officials of the tyrannical government [of former Shah] have repeatedly said, but these [people] are denying it. The truth of the issue is that they brought Reza Khan, [and] later when they felt that he may not be under their control as they wanted, they removed him and put his son [on the throne]. Later, when once again a movement started within the country under the title of the National Movement, they suppressed it and created [the coup d'état of] Mordad 28 (August 19, 1953). After the Mordad 28, they created the hellish Savak apparatus. Western countries did [all] these, [and] the British did [all] these; after the British [left], it was turn for Americans. They destroyed agriculture of the country, stopped scientific progress of the country, stole active talents and took them away or stopped them; [and they] fostered corruption and hedonism and addiction and drinking liquor among the young class; these are the things that the West has done in our country. I am not saying that we were not to blame, but the management of this job and planning of this job was in their hand and they did [all this]. Our fault was that we did not seek a remedy, [and] did not try to resist. If we do not resist today, it will be same bowl different soup, [and] this will be repeated again.

Then, the Islamic Revolution came about; since the first day that the revolution took place, the West started opposing us. They not only opposed [us, but] started to confront [us]. They helped [former Iraqi dictator] Saddam [Hussein], they helped counter-revolutionary [elements] in border regions of the country; both gave them money and

weapon, and provided them with political and intellectual assistance. It was them who spread rumors, embarked on mudslinging, and showed animosity toward the revolution and the revolutionary system and the character of the late Imam [Khomeini] (may God's mercy be upon him) and revolutionary officials. During the [imposed] war [with Iraq] they helped Saddam as much as they could. Bombardment of our cities was done by Saddam, but with their support; if it were not for them, Saddam could not have done that. They gave Saddam chemical [weapons], they gave [him] missile, they gave Mirage [fighter jets], they prepared his war plans, these war theaters were designed by them, [and] aerial photos of the movements of our soldiers were given to Iraq and to Saddam by Americans; they treated us like this. Later [when] the war was over, they imposed sanctions on us. We were not opposed [and hostile] toward them; we built a structure and said we are loyal to this structure; since we built this structure and [this structure] is independent of them and does not obey them, these [Western countries] started hostility against us. What are we supposed to do?

I see that some of our brethren sometimes say we must have relations with the entire world; well yes, we must have relations with the entire world – of course, minus America and the Zionist regime; I have no problem [with this]. Firstly, the entire world is not just Europe and not just the West; about four years before this and in this very city of Tehran, didn't they hold a conference, which had been attended by more than 130 or 140 countries? About forty or more heads of government and heads of state took part [in it]; they came here from everywhere and took part in the Non-Aligned Movement meeting. I have no problem with these [countries]; the entire world is not just Europe; the world is a big place. Today, powers are spread and divided all across the world; the east of the world – that is, the region of Asia – today is the center of a huge power. We have relations with these [countries]; I have no objection. We do not have a problem with Europe either; it was Europeans who caused problems with us. I told one of the European presidents who had come here recently that Europe must get itself rid of compliance with America in its policies.

Europeans complied with America's policy; it imposed sanctions on us, [and] these [European countries] followed suit; it started propaganda against us, [and] these [Europeans] followed suit. Well, what are we supposed to do? In various issues, it was Europeans who started the hostility. Over the case of Mykonos restaurant, they accused our then president and wanted to take him to the court; they mentioned his name as the accused at court! Well, what are we supposed to do with these [countries]? Go and implore to them? Go and say 'Mr. please treat us better than this?' We have done nothing to them; it is them who are hostile [to us]. If we do not stand in the face of our enemies' hostility with courage and with power, they will gobble us up, [and] will devour us. When I say "we" I mean the country, [and] I mean the nation; otherwise my person and the likes of me are not important; [they will devour] the country. We are responsible before the country, are responsible before the nation, [and] are responsible before the history; we must not allow [this to happen]. Well, therefore, this is how they have been behaving us.

Now they have started [again] and have made plans for infiltration; [they are testing] all kinds of ways – I calculated myself [and] saw perhaps about ten important ways – that they have found for infiltration into the country and are acting; they are acting right now. One [way for infiltration] is the scientific way; through [establishing] relation with universities, relation with scientists, relation with academics, [and] relation with student(s) – [by holding] apparently scientific conferences, [but] actually for infiltration – they send security agents here; this [is] one of these ways. [Another] one of these ways is cultural and artistic ways. They appoint and send a direct agent of [their] security services as an artist for, assume, [taking part] in a music festival, and of course, the Ministry of Intelligence fortunately found out about this [and] blocked it in early stages. That is, under the excuse of presence in a festival of art – for example a music festival – they choose somebody who is one hundred percent [a] political and security [figure]; [and] send [him] here as [a person] of art. Well, why they send [them]? Economic infiltration is one of the other [ways]. They have different kinds of ways for infiltration; we must be careful, [and] must be watchful.

Well, the correct way is for us to strengthen ourselves from within and become rich. The world will respect a country, which is both rich and strong; [the world] will have to respect [such a country]. If the country of the Islamic Iran is strong and rich, even those people who are currently bullying, even they will come and stand in line behind

our gates and curry favor with us. Of course, this has not happened up to now; all these comings and goings which are taking place right now, have not had any positive meaning for us yet; now, they may have [a positive meaning] in the future – I don't know – but up to the present time, these comings and goings that have taken place [have had] no effect. I told this again to one of these senior officials, who had come here a while ago – Dr. Rouhani was also present – [and] I said that [the effect of these exchanges] must be evident on the ground; on the paper, it has no use if you sit and negotiate [and] reach understanding over some things, which may not be realized later and you may make them conditional on an agreement at a given place, it must be evident on the ground that what is happening, [and] what is being done; this has not been the case so far. Of course, I hope, God willing, with the diligence that [these] gentlemen have, this goal would be realized. The 37-year experience of the Islamic Republic shows that we must empower ourselves, [and must] strengthen [ourselves]; [we] must become strong from intellectual viewpoint, become strong from political viewpoint, become strong from economic viewpoint, become strong from cultural viewpoint, [and] become strong from scientific viewpoint. When we become strong, naturally, we will also become dignified; today, the dignity of a nation in the world depends on these issues.

I hope, God willing, the Almighty God would make all of you successful. Of course, I thank state officials, who are making efforts; I see that various organs are making efforts and endeavoring. God willing, they would pursue the correct path, the direct path, [and] the correct thing to do with diligence, and the Almighty God, God willing, would help.

Peace be unto you and so may the mercy of Allah and His blessings