The Leader’s Remarks in Meeting with Thousands of Laborers on the Occasion of Laborers’ Week - 28 /Apr/ 2016

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

(Arabic prayer)

Blessed be on you dear ones the Labor Day! For me, every year, this meeting that I have here with a group of laborers is a pleasant meeting; there are [many] things to say and the higher and more superior of all of them is to thank and show gratitude to the country’s labor society. Today, I also offer my gratitude to all of you and to the entire labor community of the country and I ask Almighty God from the bottom of my heart to help us be able to fulfill our duty with regard to the labor community; we have difficult duties, [and] we have heavy duties.

First of all, it is the [lunar] month of Rajab; we are between the auspicious birthday anniversary of Amir al-Mo’menin [Imam Ali] (PBUH) and Ordainment of the Honorable Prophet [Mohammad] (PBUH); [Rajab] is the month of recourse [to Infallible Imams (Peace Be Upon Them)], is the month of prayer, [and] the month of remembering [God frequently]. This honorable verse [of the Quran] which this dear reciter of us recited here, [says:] “O you who believe! Remember Allah with much remembrance, and exalt Him morning and afternoon; it is He who confers blessing upon you, and His angels [ask Him to do so].” [Therefore, the Quran says:] you remember God, and [in return] Almighty God confers blessing upon you, [and] salutes you; both the sacred Divine Being Himself and His angels salute you, the faithful. And know that remembrance of God, and having God in one’s mind is a guide, is a solution [to problems], [and] is [a good] helper, [because] it can enable us to overcome problems; we have many problems and it is the powerful hand and the ability of us, humans, which must resolve these problems, but God gives us this power [and] this ability. Remembering God helps us to be able to break deadlocks and open [new] ways.

Today, I have written down a few sentences and points to tell you. One discussion [I will offer here] is about the general concept of labor [and] the expanded concept of labor; [and] one discussion is about the labor community in the common sense [of the word]. As for the first discussion, which is [about] the expanded concept of labor, any person, who is doing a job in the society, is a laborer in this sense; production jobs, services jobs, managerial jobs, [and] scientific jobs, these are all [different forms of] labor. A manager is also a laborer in his managerial job; a university professor, a seminary teacher, a [university] student, a seminary student, [and] all those who do these jobs, [I mean] religious jobs, [and] publicity jobs, are all laborers in this sense.

Well, labor in this sense has a blessing, and this blessing exists in nothing else. Labor, in this extended sense that I said, is constructive; both constructive for the person himself, and constructive for the society, and constructive for others; therefore, it is a value. Joblessness, laziness, passing time idly and without a purpose, [as well as] wasting the strength of youth, the intellectual power, [and] the physical power [are all] cause for blame, [and] are against value; this is the logic of Islam. Any person at any place, who is doing a job, is [actually] creating a value. If [this job] is accompanied with divine intention, then it is [also tantamount to] worship [of God] and entails [spiritual] reward.

Well, as for this meaning of labor, the general recommendation is that we must expand [this form of] labor; [we must] recommend everybody to work at any place they are, [in order to] boost the quality of [their] work, [and] do the job in the best possible manner. Assume that if a student does not study well, he has not done his job properly; just in the same way that if a teacher does not allocate [enough] time to teaching, does not prepare himself [for the class], does not study, [and] does not spend time [on teaching], he would not have done his job properly; if a manager, who has been assigned to a post – for example a minister, for

example a director, for example a Majlis deputy – does not devote himself to this job, he would not have done the job properly. If we assume responsibility for management [of a place] but do not dedicate ourselves, our time, [and] our forces to the job for which we have accepted responsibility and [instead] focus on other jobs, [then] that job has not been done properly. This is why my recommendation to state managers, [and] government officials – both in the executive branch, and in the judiciary branch, and in the legislative branch, and in various [other] institutions – has always been that if you accept a responsibility, pursue it with all your power. It should not be like that I would accept a responsibility [and] then spend part of my time on that responsibility and spend the rest [of my time] on personal affairs and other jobs; no, [in this case] that job has not been done properly. Therefore, these are general recommendations that I have [to give you] with regard to labor in its general sense; [and] I have said a lot [about this issue]; [and] have said many things in this regard; [therefore,] I do not want to repeat [them here.]

My major discussion, [and] my main discussion is about the labor community; labor in its specific sense, that is, productive labor, service labor, [as well as] industrial or agricultural labor; this is the main topic of today's discussion.

Well, firstly, I consider it my duty to say a few words about virtues of the labor community in our own country; I have said [this] one hundred times, but [even] if I said it one hundred more times, it would not be too much. Our labor community is a community loyal to the country and loyal to the [Islamic] establishment; I say this because I have been closely in contact with labor issues during these [past] 37 or 38 years. The labor community demonstrated loyalty in [the course of the Islamic] Revolution, [and] showed its presence [in all issues related to the revolution]; [and] was present in very important and determining development [that unraveled] in early [years of the] revolution.

In early [years of the] revolution leftists of that time, [and] Marxists of that time, all of whom later became proxy and mercenary of the American arrogance and so forth, were trying inside the country to turn the general movement of the Iranian nation into the same closed and frozen shapes, which they called "labor revolutions," and take the control out of the hands of people, the hands of religion, and the hands of Islam, and give it to a [certain] group under the [false] title of labor government and as labor revolution; these steps were [being taken] in early revolution. I myself went into a factory along this very old road of Karaj, took part [in their gathering], [and] met with laborers there. [Once in there,] I saw up-close non-labor elements, who had gone there in order to turn it into an origin for a movement to pit the country's laborers – first the laborers in Tehran, then as a function, [the laborers across] the country – against [the late] Imam [Khomeini] and the revolution and people. I went there – [I] went [there both] by day, and by night – [and] I saw how the faithful laborer(s), [and] Muslim and Muslim-born laborer(s) showed insight and awareness in the face of the enemy's plots; and our laborers demonstrated this insight; that [development] was in [early years of] the revolution, [and] this [development] took place during early revolution's incidents; then it was the issue of the Imposed War [the eight-year war imposed by Iraq on Iran], then there were various political issues and different political currents in this country; in all these [developments] our laborers demonstrated their loyalty to the [Islamic] establishment; not only loyalty in words, [but] they entered the arena with their body, [and] with their physical body and made their presence known and made an impression; this is a reality, [and] it has been like this up to the present day.

Livelihood problems of workers do exist – and the esteemed minister [of labor and social affairs] mentioned some of them; well, efforts are being made and I hope Almighty God would make him and all officials successful to be able to, God willing, put into action these issues they referred to; [because] what has been done so far, will be accepted [and] blessed by God; [and] what has not been done [I hope] they would be able to do [in the future]; we must work – there are problems, but despite [these problems] the labor community did not pay attention to the message of counterrevolutionary [elements]; they wanted all the people to stand against the [Islamic] establishment, the labor community stand [against the establishment], [and] the academic community stand [against the establishment], [but] the labor community did not stand [against the establishment], but threw its weight behind the establishment and defended [it]. This is the virtue of the labor community.

First of all, I bend down in supplication to thank Almighty God – because this is the power of God, [and

people's] hearts are in His control – [and] secondly, I thank the labor community from the bottom of my heart; you did well, [and] are [still] doing well with regard to the issues of the revolution and the issues of the Islamic establishment; this is the first point

However, [now we must talk] about the role of laborers and the issue of labor as well as labor and workers' enterprises in the Economy of Resistance, and this is an important issue. The Economy of Resistance is not just a word, but when I said [it must be implemented through] "practical steps and action," it meant that all clauses in the policies of the Economy of Resistance must be implemented genuinely and in reality. That is, for every one [of those clauses], these very brethren, [and] responsible officials, who are thank God, interested [in this issue], sit down and make plan and follow up on that plan step by step; the issue of labor plays a role in [the implementation of] the Economy of Resistance.

Well, what a laborer must do to have a share in [implementing the policies of] the Economy of Resistance? Everybody has a role [to play]; laborer has a role, employer has a role, administration has a role, [and] various officials, all of them, have a role. The role of laborer, in the first place, is to feel responsibility; that is, a laborer must feel responsible in the work that has been assigned to him – all of us must [also] feel responsible – and he must do the work that has been trusted to him in a responsible manner [and] must boost [its] quality. All laborers must think about this, [and] be determined to boost the quality of the work; this creates blessing both for him [and] for the society. There was a shoemaker in the Grand Bazaar of [northeastern Iranian city of] Mashhad, who was famous [for the fact] that when he made shoes, the leather top of that shoe and the sole of that shoe would be torn away [in the course of time], but the sewing of the shoe would remain intact; I mean, this is how a strong job is done. Let's do something that our sewing, that work which has been trusted to us, would be done correctly and with quality and with strength; this is the duty of the laborer. Well, this is easier said [than done], [but] how it can be [really] done? [The fact] that Almighty God said through Prophet [Mohammad] (PBUH) that "God bless that man, who works and does it with strength," – I have quoted this hadith perhaps tens of times so far – [it means that] God's blessing be on that person who does something and does it with strength, [and] does the job strongly. Well, this has requisites [to be realized].

What must we do to enable the laborer to boost the quality of [his] work? Some of these requisites are on the administration, part of it is on [state] managers, one part is on people, [and yet] another part is on laborer himself. One of the steps that must be taken in order for the laborer to be able to increase the quality of work is to boost [their] skill. [Take] this technical [and] vocational [training], which he [the minister] pointed out [as an example]; for years, any minister of education [or] any minister of labor who has taken office, I have laid emphasis on this issue of technical [and] vocational [training]; this [issue] must be taken seriously, [because] this is a basic job [to do]. Laborer's skill must be elevated; a simple laborer cannot continue by merely relying on his own experience; well, of course, experience is also effective, but training is essential. [Increasing laborers'] vocational skill is on officials; these technical [and] vocational [training centers are effective] and various kinds of other measures can be taken to boost skill of laborer(s); employer is also effective [in this regard], [and] the administration is also effective.

One issue is the issue of job security for laborers; if the laborer's mind is occupied [with the idea] that whether he will be [working] at this workshop tomorrow or not, he would not be inclined to work; [therefore,] job security must be created; doing this has [its own] ways, [and] this is again among responsibilities of various state officials and managers and employers and other [people]; [and] it is not simply related to the Ministry of Labor; [but] it is [also] related to various sectors; [and] they must do something that job security would exist. Shutdown of workshops is among major scourges; among calamities of [any] laborer one is that this workshop [where they work may] be shut down. There are two types of shutdown: one shutdown is because an employer's facilities are not sufficient for the work. For example, he is short of money or does not have raw materials or his machinery are dilapidated and cannot [renovate them]; well, this [situation] leads to certain duties for those people who control raw materials, control liquidity, [and] are in charge of manufacturing and converting machinery; it is their duty and must help this employer. Banks are responsible, organs [involved in] imports and exports are responsible, industrial and technology sectors are responsible, knowledge-based companies and totality of these currents

are responsible. This is one type of workshop shutdown; here, the employer is not to blame that his workshop is shut down.

However, there are factors that cause shutdown [of workshops], [and] these factors can be done away with; this is difficult [to do] but possible. [Officials] must search and find these factors and do away with them; this is one of the important and major jobs for our organs and our managers. This is one type of shutdown.

One [different] type of shutdown [of workshops] is a result of abuse. A given person has bought a plant – for example [it] has been transferred [to him] through state organs or has bought it one way or another – then he sees that it is more to his benefit to use this plot of land, [and] take advantage of its area [for another purpose], [and] this workshop will cause him loss; [therefore,] he shuts down the workshop under an excuse. We have such cases as well; I have reports [that prove this]. These [cases] must be also dealt with; [and] these [cases] must be dealt with seriously. Perhaps, I have said this one more time in this very labor gathering; [a given person] takes the loan [from banks] – for example, assume, for importing raw materials or for production at the workshop – then spends this loan on construction at a given point whose income is many times higher. These [cases] should be dealt with; [and these cases] must be followed up; our judicial organ is responsible, the administration is responsible, various organs are responsible, [and] intelligence organs are responsible [for following up on such cases]. The problem is not that a person wants to get rich and is using a way [to do this]; we are not against this or that person getting rich; well, let them get rich, but why this getting rich should take place by treading down and trampling on the labor community and the less fortunate people? This must be prevented.

See, here, organs are linked to one another like a chain; banks, the country's banking system, the system concerned with imports and exports, [and] the system concerned with production and industry, these are all interrelated; [therefore,] every one of them can be synergistic toward the other, or can obstruct [its work]; the large-scale management of the country must try to prevent [all kinds of] obstructionism. Everybody [must] be synergistic in order for the work to be done.

One of those things, which cause the labor movement to be a successful movement, is to promote the product of the Iranian laborer's work. I will explain this later. I have many things to say about promotion of the product of [the Iranian laborer's] work, and I will say a few sentences [in this regard] later. One of those things which are necessary for the success of [any] laborer in doing a suitable work is healthiness of the work environment; [another] one of the things that needed is increasing share of wages in production cost. This can be planned in a way that it would do no harm to the employer; additional and surplus costs must be reduced in order to boost share of the laborer's wage; if this is done, the laborer would be encouraged. There are correct methods [for doing this]; [and] some [countries] in the world have experienced these [methods]. Fortunately, our officials really want to serve [their people]. We can find these methods by taking advantage of the power of faith and enthusiasm and interest that exist [among officials]; we can work in these fields.

Well, another part is the approach to employer. Since many years ago, I have frequently repeated that employer and laborer complement each other, [and are] not opposite to each other. The basis of the Marxist thought and Marxist dialectics was conflict and opposition, [but] the basis of the Islamic thought and Islamic dialectics is accompaniment and collaboration and cooperation and being like a couple and getting along [with each other]. Employer and laborer are two members [of labor community], who can help each other; they are not two opposites and two enemies; [but] they are two colleagues and each one of them has its own rights. After all, employer is the one who could take this capital elsewhere and, for example, deposit it at a given bank and take advantage of its interest without any concern; perhaps, it would be more beneficial to him than the revenue of labor; [but] he has not done this, [and] has entered the labor arena; this is a very good thing. If this [investment] is based on a divine intention, Almighty God will reward [such employer] with Heaven for this work; I knew someone, a faithful man who lived a simple life; [of course,] he was rich, but lived a simple life; he once told me that 'time and again they tell me have you gone mad to invest your money in these production machinery with this – as they said – [high] risk and with this risk that it entails? Go deposit this money in bank and get its interest, [and] take advantage of it. [But] I said, no, I must use this money for the progress of the country and production'. Very well, this is a very valuable thing [to do].

One of the rights that exists here is sincere cooperation by laborer with employer; you must sincerely

cooperate with each other.

One of employer's rights is that the administration and relevant executive bodies must facilitate the work for employer; just as I said before; assume that [if] he does not have liquidity, [the administration must] provide it for him; [if] he does not have raw materials, [if] his workshop or machinery are dilapidated, and the likes of these, [executive organs must] help [employer] so he can be able to procure these [raw materials or machinery]. An assistance, which can be given to employer is to provide [him] with [suitable] grounds for exports. Of course, the main ground for export is provided by the owner of the commodity – [that is] employer – but state organs are facilitators, which can help, [and] provide [necessary] ground. Here, our Foreign Ministry can play a role; [and] various ministries can play a role. An assistance that the administration can give employer is to support employer in the face of foreign customer. Sometimes, our exporter exports a commodity, [but] in that foreign country, they start to finagle, [and] make it difficult for him; here, it is a responsibility for the administration to stand fast, resist, help [employer], [and] does not allow his right in that given country to be ignored because one person – or their government or businessperson – wants to misuse [the situation]; [our administration] should not allow [this to happen]. These are cases in which employer can be assisted; these are his rights.

One of the steps that must be taken is to enforce necessary supervision on the health and quality of export commodities. Some people defame the country by exporting unhealthy commodities; when this commodity goes into the foreign export market and its unhealthiness is made clear, this would be a blow to the country's reputation; not only [to the country's] reputation, [but also] a blow to exports of the country as well. Supervision should be enforced on healthiness [of export goods]. These are steps, which must be taken.

Well, now let's focus on domestic production. I have a lot of respect for domestic production. Domestic production must be considered as a sacred thing. Supporting domestic production must be considered as a duty; [and] everybody must consider themselves obligated to support domestic production. One of the ways [to do this] is that when a commodity has domestic counterpart, it must not absolutely be imported from outside [the country]; I have said this frequently – now I will later explain the issue of smuggling; the issue of smuggling is on its own an important issue – [such a commodity] must not be officially imported. There are ways [to do this]; increasing tariffs or preventing imports where there is domestic counterpart. [Of course,] some excuses are given [to justify imports] – I know those excuses, [and] I have heard them; now I will mention them as well – [but] promotion of the domestic production must be a [fixed] principle. I have been informed that in Tehran – now perhaps it is also like this in [other] cities – some stores have become committed to sell nothing, but domestic products; [and] they have announced this on boards; [they] have taken its photo and brought it to me and I saw [those photos]. They have erected a board, a big board, [announcing] that in this store only domestic product is sold. Well done! Good for this zealous person, [and] this reformist person! Anything that exists in this store is domestic production.

The opposite point is those stores, which when one enters, the more you look, there is only foreign production. Unfortunately, some of these stores, which are big stores as well, are related to governmental organs! Why they do this? This must be considered [as an] ugly [thing to do]. You want to make domestic laborer jobless, [but make] foreign laborer productive and well-off just to show off! They [bring] commodities under foreign trademarks, [and] a bunch of rich people – those upstart nouveau riche people, whose number in the country is, unfortunately, not low – go for foreign trademarks; [and] as they themselves say, foreign brands. I really hate this word "brand" as well. The sale of foreign commodities and consumption of foreign commodities must be considered as against value in the society, unless where a domestic counterpart does not exist. Where there is no domestic counterpart, well yes, there is no problem; we have not erected a fence around ourselves after all; we have contacts with the world, have interaction, we buy, [and] we sell. There may be some cases in which domestic production is not economical at all – we have cases like this as well – [and in these cases, imports] are no problem. [However,] where we have domestic production and want to have [domestic production] and our laborer is doing that work and is creating added value, [if] we put aside this domestic production there, [and] bring in its lookalike from outside [the country] at a price that is sometimes a number of times higher [than the domestic counterpart] and [just] because it carries a foreign trademark, [and] carries the trademark of that given famous plant from that

given European country, [and] consume it, this must be considered as against value.

[Entry of] imported goods [into the country], as I said before, must be rationally blocked. I do not advocate going to extremes in such cases, [but] I advocate wisdom and foresight in such cases. I don't say [close] the gates; no, [but] be watchful; see what must be imported, [then] import it, and [see] what must not be imported, [then] don't import it. I don't know what this case of importing American automobiles is, which is now in the gossip and some people talk about it. American cars were not used by Americans themselves; this was reflected in the American press and I saw it; they said their [fuel] consumption is too high [and] they are [also too] heavy. For example, assume that we would use [the product] of that given American automobile manufacturing company, which is headed for bankruptcy; and [imagine] that [we would use cars made in] America! These [measures] must be seriously stood against. [But] who must stand [against them]? Officials themselves [and] esteemed ministers themselves [must stand against such measures]. I know that there are people who pressure from behind – [because] they have profit, they have interest, [and therefore] they put pressure [on officials] – [but] they [officials] must stand against these pressures, [and] do not give in [to them]. I don't know this [report] which says the worth of cosmetics imported into the country amount to a few billion dollars is correct or not? I have not examined this, [and] I don't think that you have done a lot of inquiry on this either; if this is true, it is very bad. [Imagine importing] cosmetics [amounting to] a few billion [dollars]! And that [is happening] in our country, which now all these obstacles and problems are created for it; [and these imports are undertaken] so that a given rich, upstart, and nouveau riche family wants to have these [cosmetics]. I have heard that some of these [imported cosmetics] are unhealthy. [Officials] must stand against these [imports], resist and do not allow it.

One issue is the issue of smuggling. When I frequently talk about this issue of imports with state officials in different administrations, they say 'if we raise tariffs too high or [totally] block imports, the same commodity will [enter the country] through smuggling'. Do you think this is a good reason? Well, smuggling must be seriously blocked. We have not been very serious in fighting smuggling so far; in fighting smuggling, we must act seriously. What I mean by smuggling is not that poor courier in Baluchestan, who goes to the other side [of the border] and carries something on his back and brings it [to] this side; these [cases] amount to nothing, [and] these are not important; it will cause no problem [if these cases] are not fought against. I mean major organized [cases of] smuggling; [should we allow] tens of containers or hundreds of containers of various goods be smuggled into the country? Well, we must go and counter these [major smuggling groups]; we are a government, we have power, [and] we can [do this]; [we must] deal with these [major smugglers] in a serious manner. After they are dealt with seriously a couple of times, [smuggling] will either stop, or at least, will greatly decrease. Smuggling is a big scourge for the country; smuggling is much worse than imports by administration and through customs [because]: first of all, the healthiness of the [smuggled] commodity is not known; secondly, it generates no revenue for the government; [and] thirdly, it has the same problem as imports, which is causing stagnation in domestic production market. These [issues] are not small damage; [therefore,] smuggling must be seriously countered. [all state] organs must take [the issue of] countering smuggling very seriously; [therefore, we] must assign the most powerful of our men to this task; and this is possible; I personally believe that this is possible; [by doing this] it will either come to a halt, or if it is not blocked totally, [at least,] an important part of it will decrease. This is a very fundamental issue.

Another issue, which is very important and I have shared this with a number of concerned ministers – including agriculture ministers, and industrial ministers and some other state officials – frequently in the past [is that] sometimes a commodity can be produced inside the country, [but] some people who pocket hefty profits through its imports move to prevent this domestic production; if possible by giving bribe – [for example, they tell an official] 'sir, shut down this factory or don't build it and take this money' – [and] if [that official] does not accept, [they try to achieve their goal] by [posing] threats or [even committing] crimes. Now, I don't want to mention the name of [such] commodities; I know of commodities, which can be produced inside [the country], but they are imported because a [certain] group is profited by their imports and [its members] do not allow [those commodities] to be produced inside [the country]. An innovative person, who has [enough] capital, wants to produce a given article [of commodity] which is highly consumed

in the country; [such profiteer people] go to him and say, 'Sir! Don't produce this! Take 10 billion or 30 billion [tomans as bribe and] don't produce [this commodity]'; [in this case] either that person accepts [their offer] and relieves himself [of such pressure], or if he does not give in, they put pressure on him and cause him all kinds and sorts of problems, put legal obstacles on his way, or at last, commit a crime [against him], deal a blow to him and make him change his mind. These are important matters, [and] these are security matters, these are not simple matters, [and therefore,] such matters cannot be taken lightly. Smuggling is like this; the [most lethal] poison for domestic production is smuggling.

Another issue is the issue of advanced technology. Sometimes I say 'why you import that given article and that given commodity while it is produced domestically', [and] they say 'the technology used in domestic production is outdated; today, the world has changed, new [ways of doing] work have come about, [and] new technologies have been introduced, [as a result of] which we have no choice, but to import from outside [the country]. I have an answer for this claim. Of course, I am not [absolutely] against importation; I am not at all against importation, especially importing technology; I myself have been a president in this country, have been in touch with executive issues and know [how things work]; there is no problem; sometimes [importation] is necessary, but as much as is needed and sufficient. Whenever they run out of argumentation, they say technology [used for] domestic production is obsolete; well, we have all these active minds in the country; that mind that can make a missile, the missile travels for 2,000 kilometers and hits the target with a margin of error of less than 10 meters, is this a small matter? I [just] wanted to bring an example; now, missile was mentioned and young people became excited. I say that brain, which can produce such a missile, and our enemies own up to importance of this work, is this brain not able to bring down [fuel] consumption of a car, which for example, consumes 13 liters [of fuel] per 100 kilometers to five liters per 100 kilometers? Is it not able to do this? Is this brain incapable of doing this job? Why we don't take advantage of [our] youths? Why you do not take advantage of these creative minds? Why you do not ask them for help?

I have been constantly saying for a number of years that "cooperation between industry and university" [is necessary]; the result of cooperation between industry and university will show itself here. Industry helps university so that university would present and create new methods for it; both this [side, which is industry] is benefited [by this cooperation] and that [side] will be benefited. Connect industry to university, connect [industry] to the group of elites [in our country], just in the same way that now, fortunately, many things have been done in the field of knowledge-based companies and we see that the Iranian youth can work. Here, in this Hosseiniyeh, they held an exhibition for me, [and] I came [here] and visited [that exhibition]; a group of young boys – high school boys – had gathered here, [and] they had worked. I came and said 'what is it that you do'? One of them said 'I have produced this', [and] the other one said 'I have produced this'; [just] a high school youngster! Well, our mind is like this, [and] our human capital is this; why we should not take advantage of this human capital and go for foreign automobile because it has advanced technology? Well, let's create this advanced technology inside the country. I have many examples, which I do not want to say and cannot be said [here], [because] some of these [examples] are confidential; if you know in what places and in what fields our youths have done what great things, you would be really surprised; we have many [examples] of this sort and my information in this field is enormous; [so let's] take advantage of these [talented youth]. It can't be an excuse for imports that we [say] we have outdated technology.

Well, these are my views. I am optimistic toward laborers and toward employers and toward managers and toward state officials – toward all of these [people]; I am not pessimistic toward anybody. However, there are snags in some places; seek where this snag is, why there is a snag and where the problem is. You are using a few large bore tubes to constantly pour water into this big pool, [but] it is never filled from above; well, [in this case] look and see where the crack is, [and see] where is the crack that exists in this pool from where water is being wasted and [does not allow] the pool to be filled; officials should search and find such things.

My dear ones! The country can go ahead. [The fact] that I say the Islamic civilization time and again and say time and again that Iran can stand on the apex of the Islamic civilization is not [mere] slogan and ranting. This comes from looking at the realities of the country. We can; we can make our economy progress, make

our industry progress, make our agriculture progress and create self-sufficiency in those sectors where self-sufficiency is needed; [therefore,] officials must make effort [to achieve this goal]. As I said at the beginning, anybody who is responsible [to do a job] must fulfill that responsibility in the best possible manner and make the necessary effort [to that effect].

Of course, we have enemy and that enemy is showing its animosity. We are not moving on a paved road; [but] obstacles are being constantly created in front of us. Who is creating these obstacles? Our enemies and on top of our enemies [are] America and Zionism. [they] sabotage [our efforts], pull tricks, [and] they want us not to recognize their trick; sometimes they complain from afar that 'why you are so pessimistic toward us?' Well, we see things for which we must be pessimistic; we cannot close our eyes. At present, there is disruption in banking transactions of [our] country, this is being said by all officials. Communications and transactions depend on bank exchanges, now [these exchanges] are taking place slowly and with difficulty; why? They say big banks of the world are not willing [to work with Iranian banks]. Well, why they are not willing? Are they crazy? Bank has been established for the purpose of creating interaction. Why that given famous and big bank of the world should not want to have transaction with 80-million-strong market of a country with all this wealth? There is an obstacle; who is [creating] this obstacle? America. More or less, I have said one hundred times that America cannot be trusted; now [the meaning of what I said] is becoming totally clear.

They write on paper that banks can transact with Iran – of course this is on paper and has no value – but in practice, they strike such a fear in the hearts of banks, so that they won't get anywhere close to Iran; [this is] Iranophobia. They say that 'Iran is a terrorist country and we may, for example, impose sanctions on Iran due to terrorist ways of [this] country'; well what does this mean? This is a message to banks that 'be warned; sanctions may be imposed on Iran [at any time]; so, don't go ahead. They write on paper: 'banks, go and transact [with Iran]', [and even] issue circular [to this effect], but in practice, they do something that banks would not dare to come forward, [and] foreign investor would not dare to come and invest [in Iran]; they are practically doing it. Now they themselves are worse than all terrorists; they themselves have helped notorious terrorists, [and] according to our information, are still helping [them]; then they call Iran terrorist! The opposite side – Mr. American – says the reason why investors and capitalists do not invest in Iran is domestic situation in Iran; what is wrong with domestic situation in Iran? Where is more secure than Iran in this region? Is America itself more secure than here? America, where according to their own statistics, several people are killed every day through assassination, is more secure than here? European countries with these popular protests, with these labor problems, [and] with these economic problems are more secure than here? [Iran] is a secure country, [and] is a united country.

To the dismay of enemies, Iran's internal conditions are very good conditions. When the American official says that the sanctions regime against Iran has not been dismantled, what does it mean? It means that foreign investor [must] be afraid [of investing in Iran] and does not get close [to the country]; these [American officials] are spreading Iranophobia. They are clearly scaring people of Iran so that nobody would get close [to the country]; this is our enemy. Well, this is [the true face of our] enemy; for every activity that we do, we must take the presence of this enemy into account.

We have had this enemy for 37 or 38 years and [despite the enemy's efforts] we have progressed. I tell you [that] if this enmity stays for one hundred more years, to their dismay, we will continue to progress for one hundred more years. America is the enemy, whether we say it to its face, or we don't say it to its face; whether this humble one say in my speech that America is the enemy, or I don't say it. They ask, "why you keep saying 'enemy, enemy';" well, suppose that I don't say enemy, will [this cause their] enmity [to] come to an end? [America] is the enemy; [America] is the enemy of the essence of this public popular movement and of the essence of the revolution and of the essence of the [Islamic] establishment. Once America had the last say on everything here in this country; today, it does not even have an embassy [in Iran]; because an Islamic establishment is in power; well, [America] is the enemy of the Islamic establishment and wants the same old situation to be in place. They say 'open the windows'. His highness! [US President Barack Obama] had read a poem [written] by an Iranian poet in his [Persian] new year felicitation [message] which [said:] "open the windows." [In response] I said, "yes, [he means] open the windows, so that we, who you had expelled

through the door, would come in [through the windows]'; 'open the windows so that we would be able to enter [your country] with ease'!
Officials [must] pay attention – both administration officials and the executive branch [must] pay attention, and the Islamic Consultative Assembly [must] pay attention, and judicial officials [must] pay attention, and revolutionary institutions and all the people [must pay attention] – [that] we are oppressed, but strong; just like our master, Amir al-Mo'menin [Imam Ali] (PBUH). Amir al-Mo'menin (PBUH) was the most oppressed, but [also] the strongest [of all]. If we know our value, [and] know our power, [and] take advantage of this power in the best and most human and most Islamic way, [then] we will overcome all these obstacles. Yes, our way is not paved, but we are able to move on rugged terrain as well; today, fortunately, [our path] is not even rugged; in early [years after victory] of the revolution, our path was rugged. Today, officials [must] pay attention, [and] people [also] pay attention that we [must] rely on our own power.
A few days later– that is, two days from now – there will be elections in a number of cities; consider elections as important; take part in elections; do not leave elections on their own; [because] elections are important. I have frequently said and told our dear people – both in these elections, which were held in [the Iranian month of] Esfand [February 26], and before that in [various] elections for the Majlis [Iranian parliament] and presidential elections – that take part in elections; participation in elections is [a] determining [factor]. Some people don't pay attention [to this issue]; when you don't take part in elections, [and] do not transfer these feelings, this willingness, this pull, [and] this identity to the ballot box, we will face difficulty; [so,] take part in elections. The importance of the second round of elections is no less than the first round; just in the same way that I said there [in my speech before the first round] that everybody must take part in elections, here, it is also necessary for everybody to take part. Also ask Almighty God for [his] assistance, [and] Almighty God would, God willing assist all of you.

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