

## Muharram: The Triumph of Blood Over the Sword

*Imam Khomeini issued this declaration from Neauphle-le-Chateau one week before the beginning of Muharram, the month in which the Iranian people, emulating Imam Husayn (whose martyrdom took place on the tenth day of the month) advanced their confrontation with the Shah's regime to a point of no return. After Muharram, it was clear that the regime could not survive. Source: copy of the declaration circulated in North America by the Muslim Students' Association (Persian-Speaking Group).*

WITH THE APPROACH OF MUHARRAM, we are about to begin the month of epic heroism and self-sacrifice—the month in which blood triumphed over the sword, the month in which truth condemned falsehood for all eternity and branded the mark of disgrace upon the forehead of all oppressors and satanic governments; the month that has taught successive generations throughout history the path of victory over the bayonet; the month that proves the superpowers may be defeated by the word of truth; the month in which the leader of the Muslims taught us how to struggle against all the tyrants of history, showed us how the clenched fists of those who seek freedom, desire independence, and proclaim the truth may triumph over tanks, machine guns, and the armies of Satan, how the word of truth may obliterate falsehood.

The leader of the Muslims taught us that if a tyrant rules despotically over the Muslims in any age, we must rise up against him and denounce him, however unequal our forces may be, and that if we see the very existence of Islam in danger, we must sacrifice ourselves and be prepared to shed our blood.

Now the regime of the Shah is ruling tyrannically over our oppressed people today. He continues to rule in defiance of the law and the wishes of the people, who have risen up against him throughout Iran, and he threatens the higher interests of the Muslims and the dictates of Islam with imminent destruction for the sake of his own satanic rule and his parasitic masters. It is the duty of the entire nation that has now risen in revolt to pursue

and broaden its struggle against the Shah with all its strength and to bring down his harmful, disastrous regime.

The military government is usurpatory and contrary to both the law of the land and the *shari'a*. It is the duty of everyone to oppose it, to refrain from aiding it in any way, to refuse to pay taxes or render any other assistance to this oppressive regime of transgressors, and it is the duty of all oil company officials and workers to prevent the export of oil, this vital resource.

Do those workers and officials know that the bullets that pierce the breasts of our precious youths, that drown our men, our women, our infants in blood, are paid for with the money earned by the oil that their exhausting labor produces? Do they know that the major part of the oil used by Israel, that obstinate enemy of Islam and usurper of the rights of Muslims, is provided by the Shah? If the usurpatory government wishes to continue this act of treason by bringing pressure to bear on the workers, the question of oil may be settled once and for all.

It is the duty of those well informed about the state of the country to draw up lists of the ministers serving in this usurpatory government, or the traitors and officers who are ordering crimes and massacres throughout the country, so that the people will know what to do with them at the appropriate time.

Let the government and senior army commanders know that if they do not cease supporting the criminal Shah, that traitor to Islam and our Islamic land, they will be requited for their deeds in the near future.

Now, with the month of Muharram here like a divine sword in the hands of the soldiers of Islam, our great religious leaders and respected preachers, and all the followers of the Lord of the Martyrs (peace and blessings be upon him), they must make the maximum use of it. Trusting in the power of God, they must tear out the remaining roots of this tree of oppression and treachery, for the month of Muharram is the month in which the forces of Yazid and the stratagems of Satan are defeated.

Let assemblies for the commemoration of the Lord of the Oppressed, the Leader of the Free—assemblies in which intelligence triumphs over ignorance, justice over injustice, loyalty over treachery, and Islamic government over government of the *taghut*—let these assemblies be organized as magnificently and

as frequently as possible. Let the bloodstained banners of 'Ashura be raised wherever possible, as a sign of the coming day when the oppressed shall avenge himself on his oppressor.

Respected preachers, dear speakers! Attend even more than before to your duty of exposing the crimes of the regime, so that you may hold your heads high in the presence of God Almighty and the Lord of the Age (may God hasten his renewed manifestation). The students and scholars at the religious teaching institutions who are leaving these days for the villages and provincial towns in order to enlighten their inhabitants must inform the deprived peasantry of the atrocities committed by the Shah and his slaughters of defenseless people. They must point out to them that contrary to the poisonous propaganda of the Shah and his hangers-on, an Islamic state is not the protector of the capitalists and big landlords. Those meaningless words are intended only to divert them from the path of the truth. Let them be assured that Islam stands on the side of the weak, the peasants, and the needy. Assure them that in a government based on truth, they will be protected in the best way possible.

Dear young people at the centers of religious learning, the universities, the schools and teachers' training colleges! Respected journalists! Deprived workers and peasants! Militant and enlightened bazaar merchants and tradesmen! And all other classes of the population, from the proud nomadic tribes to the deprived dwellers in slums and tents! Advance together, with a single voice and a single purpose, to the sacred aim of Islam—the abolition of the cruel Pahlavi dynasty, the destruction of the abominable monarchical regime, and the establishment of an Islamic republic based on the progressive dictates of Islam! Victory is yours, nation arisen in revolt!

There is no need to remind you that mourning assemblies must be fully independent, and not depend on permission by the police or that subversive body called the security organization. Dear people, organize your gatherings without referring to the authorities, and if you are prevented from holding them, gather in public squares, in thoroughfares and streets, and proclaim the sufferings endured by Islam and the Muslims and the treacherous acts of the Shah's regime.

The history of Iran is witnessing today the most sensitive days that Islam and our dear Muslims have experienced. Today, great nation, you have come to a fork in the road: one way leads to eternal dignity and splendor, and the other (God forbid), to perpetual humiliation and degradation.

There is no excuse for any class of people in the nation to remain inactive today; silence and apathy mean suicide, or even aid to the tyrannical regime. To abandon the straightforward path of the nation and Islam would be treason to Islam and the nation, and support for the enemies of Islam and the nation. The traitors who imagine that they can defeat this Islamic movement and save the Shah by keeping silent, or in some cases even moving to support his tyrannical regime, are mistaken. For now it is too late, and the Shah is on his way out; no one can save the Shah by selling himself. Even if he were to be saved, he would not remain loyal to those who saved him, as we can all see.

I extend a hand of affection and devotion to the noble people of Iran, who, with power they derive from Islam, have given a heavy punch in the mouth to the Shah and his supporters. The martyrs Iran has offered, for the sake of justice and divine aims, I regard as an eternal source of pride. I offer my congratulations to the mothers and fathers of those youths who have given their lives for the cause of Islam and freedom. I envy those dear, noble youths who have sacrificed themselves for the sake of the Friend.

The echo of the great Iranian Revolution is reverberating throughout the Islamic world as well as other countries, and it is a source of pride to them, too. Noble nation, you have alerted the noble young people of other Islamic nations, and we may hope that your powerful hand will raise up the proud banner of Islam in all regions. This is my petition to God, the Exalted.

May peace be upon you, and also the mercy and blessings of God.