

Kalim Siddiqui

The Islamic Revolution: achievements, obstacles and goals

[Paper presented at a seminar of the same name organized by the Muslim Institute in London on March 1, 1980, to mark the first anniversary of the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Two other papers were also presented at this seminar, by Dr Ali Afrouz and Dr Abdur Rahim Ali. Dr Siddiqui refers to these presentations in this paper. The papers presented at this seminar, and one by Iqbal Asaria presented at an internal seminar of the Muslim Institute, were later published as Kalim Siddiqui et al, The Islamic Revolution: Achievements, Obstacles and Goals, London: The Open Press, 1980. This paper was reprinted in Zafar Bangash (ed), In Pursuit of the Power of Islam: Major Writings of Kalim Siddiqui (London and Toronto: The Open Press, 1996). This version is based on the 1996 printing.]

Recently I had the good fortune of spending two weeks in Iran. I was one of the three hundred guests from all parts of the *Ummah*, who were invited to Iran to join the celebrations of the start of the year 1400 of the *hijri* calendar, and of the first anniversary of the Islamic Revolution. In the party there was also a journalist from Poland. I asked him what he thought of the Islamic Revolution and he shot back that it is not a class revolution. This was his complaint about the Islamic Revolution. It is therefore necessary for us to try to set the Islamic Revolution apart from all other revolutions. We have to understand exactly what is involved in an Islamic revolution. So, for most of this afternoon, I shall be trying to define an Islamic revolution. I shall also attempt to identify and describe the elements that have gone to make the Islamic Revolution.

First we must disabuse our minds of the common usage of the word 'revolution'. It is used in terms of a palace revolution, a *coup d'état*, a consumer revolution, a transistor revolution, a technological revolution, a revolution of rising expectations, and so on. It is a loosely

used term. I don't think I need to argue before this audience that the Islamic Revolution is not of this type of revolution. Nor can it be contained within the definition of a revolt or a rebellion against an existing order or against a tyranny. The French Revolution, to which our brother Dr Ali Afrouz referred, was against the tyranny, the lavishness, the extravagance of the monarchy in France. It was confined to the bourgeoisie. It was not a revolution in the sense that the Islamic Revolution is a revolution. The two major events of this century that have earned the title of 'revolution' are the two Marxist revolutions, one in Russia in 1917 and the other in China in 1949. The fundamental difference between these two events and the Islamic Revolution is this: in both these cases the ideology that brought about the revolutions had been hatched and put together in western Europe. Marxism was not, and still is not, indigenous to the people of the Russian Empire or the people of China. Lenin, leading the Bolshevik faction of the Communist Party, captured power in Russia not by defeating the Russian army and not by defeating the Russian establishment. Both the Russian army and Tsarist Russia had already been defeated and weakened in the First World War. All that Lenin had to do was to take over power in a country where no power existed and there was a chaotic situation. Similarly, China had been weakened by the Second World War and the Komintang did not exercise effective control beyond the precincts of Peking. Mao had to produce another version of Marxism in order to apply it to China. We must also remember that the classical Marxist model of conditions necessary for revolution did not exist either in Russia or in China. In both places the conditions were created by the local leadership, in the case of Russia by Lenin and in the case of China by Mao. In other words, Marxism had to be 'nationalized' to suit these two countries in order to bring about the so-called revolutions. And in order to make the revolutions acceptable to the peoples of these two countries, millions of them had to be exterminated and a degree of oppression had to be exercised which was unknown to history before.

Contrast with this the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Here the Revolution has been brought about by the people as a whole. Here the value-system which threw the people into a revolutionary situation is Islam, which had been in Iran for almost 1,400 years. In other words, the other revolutions were importing an alien ideology and forcing it down the throats of the local population. In Iran the local value-system, Islam, which had been held by the people for 1,400 years, was asserting

itself against the powers that existed. Imperial Iran at this point was at its most majestic and equipped with a very modern army. It was backed by the largest superpower ever to emerge on the face of the earth. The other thing which is very important is that the world climate in which the Islamic Revolution has occurred is totally different. The world climate is for the moment determined by the universal, global, imperialist system. The imperialist system is an integrated system. It is a capitalist system, it is an exploitative system, and it is a system which has a global unity. In other words, all the other regimes in the world today are hand-in-glove with the international, imperial powers. Backing them up are the rich in the rich countries in alliance with the rich in the poor countries. This is the line-up of the world imperialist system. It is in this background that one part of the *Ummah*, in Iran, rose in a revolution against the internal tyranny which was supported by a global tyranny. This is an important point which I hope you will bear in mind.

I would now like to present to you, very briefly, what I call the two civilizations argument. Islam as a religion of personal piety had always been and always will be attractive to a very large number of people. But Islam is also a civilization which began with the *hijrah* of the Prophet (peace be upon him), from Makkah to Madinah. What was established in Madinah by the Prophet was a civilization. But the civilization of Islam could not be a subservient civilization, a fringe civilization, an activity to be carried out by those committed to it in a corner of their own homes, away from the main struggle of history. As the *Seerah* of the Prophet shows, Islam became the dominant civilization. Islam became the dominant civilization of the Arabian peninsula in the lifetime of the Prophet. Soon afterwards Islam emerged to defeat the then world powers, the Persian Empire and the Byzantine Empire, and to establish the most far-flung civilization of history. This Islamic civilization remained the dominant civilization of the world for more than a thousand years. Before the Islamic civilization there had been local civilizations, like the ancient Chinese civilization, the Indian civilization, the Egyptian civilization. There had also been the much-celebrated Greek civilization. Perhaps the Greek civilization can claim to have tried, through the conquests of Alexander, to become a global civilization, but the only civilization to attain the global dimension was the Islamic civilization. No civilization before Islam

had lasted for very long; the Islamic civilization, once established, remained dominant, dynamic, growing for more than a thousand years.

Within the last two to three hundred years, the Islamic civilization had been weakened. It was, if you like, on the downturn in history. On the upturn in history at the same time was a European civilization. This too was a dynamic civilization. It was also a brash, ruthless, selfish, and a dehumanizing civilization. It was a civilization which had negative values. But, unfortunately, because the western civilization had emerged from Europe, and Europe had been a predominantly Christian continent, the Muslim thinkers were misled into thinking that this was a Christian civilization. In fact what had happened was that, before the western civilization left Europe on its world-plundering mission, Europe had undergone the Reformation, the Renaissance and the so-called Enlightenment. Christianity had been nationalized, torn into shreds and made into separate Churches with different primates for each. It had been harnessed, muzzled, and put aside. So religion was playing no part in Europe at this time. The western civilization and its growth were free of the value-system of Christianity.

In the meantime, western Europe had also undergone another kind of revolution, known as the Industrial Revolution, a revolution in the mode of production of goods and services. The combination of colonialism and the mercantilist tradition gave Europe enormous resources and the power to take the western man on his global plundering mission.

The Muslim thinkers, having made the initial mistake of regarding the western civilization as a Christian civilization, also thought: after all, isn't Christianity an unfinished form of Islam? Wasn't Jesus (peace be upon him) a Prophet of Islam? Aren't these Christians our half-brothers anyway? This persuaded them to regard the western civilization as a deviant form of Islamic civilization, to think that they could somehow accept the western civilization, learn its language, learn its culture, learn its sciences and philosophies. In other words, to become more British than the British, more European than the Europeans. In this way they thought that somehow they would be able to contain the western civilization, somehow they would be able to 'Islamize' it. This bug of Islamization has not yet left the Muslim mind. While we were trying to come to terms with the western civilization, what was the western civilization doing with us? The western

civilization had set about projecting our culture as abominable. Our way of life and culture were abused. We were dominated. They tried to eradicate our languages, our learning, our sciences, our philosophies and our way of life. Using their political power and political dominance, they tried to destroy our societies and tried to permanently colonize us through a colonizing elite that they created in our countries. Today, I think that they realize and we realize, and we realize that they realize, and they know that we realize, that there are only two civilizations competing for the attention of mankind. These two civilizations are the western civilization and the Islamic civilization. The struggle therefore is not about a revolution in Iran. The struggle is for a global civilization which both Islam and the western civilization are trying to achieve. Had this not been so, I am quite sure that Uncle Sam and others would be quite happy if we lived in our corner of the world according to the rites of Islam.

In my view, the Islamic Revolution in Iran is the first defeat of the western civilization at the hands of Islam and this you can see in the reaction of the western civilization to the triumph of the Islamic Revolution in Iran. It is the first step of Islam and all Muslims towards the re-establishment of Islam in its role as a major civilization, and ultimately the world civilization. Islam has taken this step, the first step in its long march back to the stage of history, in the most unlikely place—Iran. In Iran the west's dominance was at its most imperial, total, and complete. I said Iran was an unlikely place for this revolution, not because Islam was not there, but because we outside Iran did not realize the strength of the Islamic movement in Iran. Iran was also the most fully dominated Muslim society. Perhaps no other society, except perhaps Saudi Arabia now, has been so completely dominated and controlled than was Iran under the Shah. In my submission to you then, the Islamic Revolution must be viewed in this global context. In the context of competing for the eventual hegemony of the world. This is what Brother Ali Afrouz referred to as the struggle between the *haq* and *baatil*. The struggle has never really stopped. But in a sense, in its new phase, it has only just begun. It is now entering the phase in which we too begin to score a few points. Until now all the scoring was done by them on their own side, because we were trying to play according to their rules of the game. And if you play somebody else's game, the other side always wins. The line-up in this struggle is a formidable one. On the side of Islam we have a thousand million Muslims divided into

forty or more nation-States and with minorities in all parts of the world. We have got rid of one Shah but there are about thirty-nine/forty others still sitting on their chairs. We have a most powerful motivation based on our experience in history. We have a strong memory and an equally strong expectation of a great future. We have a mission, but not a mission by ourselves. It is a mission which has been given to us by Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*. It is a mission which is the very example of the Prophet (peace be upon him). And it emanates from the world view that our mission is to establish good and prohibit evil on God's earth. Lined up against us are the western civilization, and the imperialist system. In this duel we are the people who are lying on the floor and trying to get up, they are the bad guys standing on top of us, trying to stop us from getting up. Therefore, ours has to be the greater effort because we are getting up from a down situation and they are standing up and have got to be pulled down.

This is the situation that confronts us. We are not going to get out of this situation in one jump. It is essential that we appreciate the difficulties that lie ahead. Our civilization has suffered 300 years of interruption. During these centuries we were not in the driving seat of history. Our history was made for us by a colonial-imperial system. We were simply victims of history. After this interruption, whenever we create a model society, when a new model society of Islam comes into being, then in historical terms and in statistical terms the first model we create is going to be a primitive model. In other words, the first model we create may not be a total success. The situation is somewhat like that of an individual who suffers from polio and then recovers. The victim of polio has, in the meantime, completely forgotten how to walk. He has to learn to walk all over again. Our civilization is in that kind of situation. And, therefore, those of our brothers who want Iran to suddenly become the very model of Islamic behaviour in every respect, I want them to understand that our model is only the first model. This is only the experimental model and functionally it is going to be a great deal less efficient than the other models that exist in the world today. Perhaps the economic system, perhaps the social system, perhaps the system of social security, perhaps all the other systems that we are going to set up in Iran and other countries, are going to be less efficient than the non-Islamic systems that are existing in the world today. For a period of time the new Islamic systems have to be less efficient because of the time it takes to build up the experience in running the systems

and bringing them up to their optimum performance. So, during the time that we are building up the systems to bring them to their optimum performance, we are going to have a less efficient system. Our detractors, and some from among ourselves, are going to point an accusing finger saying, 'this is not as good as in England... or in France... or in Germany... or in the United States... or in the Soviet Union... or in China', or anywhere else. What is most important is that we identify ourselves with this model totally irrespective of its level of performance. This we must do because we now have a reality to which we can relate our ideals, to which we can relate our history, to which we can relate the aspirations of ourselves as individuals, to which we can relate the development of the *Ummah* as a whole. Iran is that model, Iran is that reality for which the *Ummah* has waited for a very long time. The proof that Iran is that new reality is to be found in three ways: in the internal make-up of the Islamic movement in Iran, in the world view of the movement, and in the reaction of the opposing civilization.

I wish now to turn to examine each of these. First, the internal make-up of the movement in Iran. It is, as you know, deeply rooted in the Islamic Shi'i tradition. This tradition has regarded all political authority as illegitimate, particularly the monarchical, the royal authority. In their particular belief in the absence of the Imam all authority is illegitimate by definition. And this led the Shi'i *ulama* to insist on the constitutional reforms that were known as the Constitutional Revolution in the early part of the century (1906-11). The basic attempt was not to legitimize the system but to minimize the degree of illegitimacy of the political system. Legitimacy being impossible in the absence of the twelfth Imam, the attempt was to find constitutional means of keeping the degree of illegitimacy within acceptable limits. This was the situation in Shi'i political thought. By contrast the Sunni political thought for the greater part of history, in its classical formulation as put forward by al-Mawardi, was that the existing political order should not be disputed or challenged as long as the Sultan performed the Friday prayer and implemented a basic minimum of the *shari'ah* regulations. Among the Shi'a there is also the ardent desire to be martyred in the cause of Islam. The lofty ideal of martyrdom is not peculiar to the Shi'i school of thought, it is for all Muslims. All of us want to be martyred in the path of Allah. The Shi'i consciousness is deeply influenced by their emphasis on Karbala and on the defiance of the introduction of monarchy into Islam in the very

early stages. The struggle of Imam Husain and his martyrdom at Karbala and the repetition of this in its ritual form year after year, has kept up an enormous groundswell of feeling among the Muslims, and has played a very great part in the Islamic Revolution in Iran. This has given the Shi'a that extra sharp edge which the Sunni political behaviour has been lacking. One of the slogans of the Islamic Revolution has been 'every day is Ashura, every place is Karbala'.

The third dimension in the make-up of the Revolution has been the argument which started among the Shi'a about 200 years ago. The argument centred on the question as to how far the Shi'i *ulama* could go in *ijtihad*. There were those among the *ulama* who took the view that there was no more *ijtihad* to be done. The doors of *ijtihad* were closed. This, incidentally, was also the Sunni position. But the Shi'i *ulama* moved away from this *akhbari* position and accepted the *usuli* position. The *usulis* in the eighteenth century won the argument that it was possible for the *ulama* to reach the stage of *ijtihad*, and that more than one *mujtahid* could emerge at any one time. This position divided the *Ummah* as a whole into *mujtahids* and those who were not *mujtahids*. That is, if one was not a *mujtahid* then he must follow a *mujtahid*. This is known as the doctrine of *taqleed*. The result was that a number of *mujtahids*, known as *marja'-i taqleed*, emerged and came to exercise enormous influence on the minds of the people of Iran and the Shi'a everywhere. This enabled the *mujtahids* to organize successful revolts against the rulers of Iran as well as against foreign domination from Russia in the first place, then from Britain, and finally from the United States. But the *mujtahids* were to some extent inhibited by the doctrine of the inherent illegitimacy of political authority in the absence of the Imam. The *usuli* position did not consider the possibility of the emergence of one of the *mujtahids* as the *mujtahid* of the *mujtahids*, as the Imam himself. And this confusion was there when Imam Khomeini returned to Tehran from Paris during the Revolution. For a time he was called *Na'ib-i Imam*. It was only gradually that the word *na'ib* was dropped and he became Imam Khomeini. Of course, the title of Imam does not mean that he is the twelfth Imam. It simply means that he is the leader of the *Ummah* at this moment. In other words, this is a new doctrine something akin to 'first among equals'. He is not better than other *mujtahids*. He is one of the *mujtahids*. But people who follow other *mujtahids* also follow him. That is, while they can follow other *mujtahids* in religious matters they can also follow Imam Khomeini as

the political leader of the Islamic State, of the Revolution, indeed of the *Ummah* today. So, the Revolution has in a sense taken the Shi'i political thought further. An actual practical difficulty has created a situation where it is possible for one of the *mujtahids* to become Imam of the *Ummah*. And this, of course, is a great advance on the earlier position of the Shi'i political thought.

Now I turn to Imam Khomeini's method in bringing about the Revolution. I think the first cornerstone of his method was total opposition to the Shah and the Pahlavi dynasty. He consistently called it 'illegal'. He simply used one word: 'illegal'. He treated it as such throughout and never wavered from that position. The second cornerstone was his relentless exposure of the regime as a puppet of the United States and, very importantly, of Israel. The role of Israel in Iran was very deep, second only to that of the US. So the United States and Israel between them were the effective rulers of Iran. The third point Ayatullah Khomeini made, again without wavering, was that no constitutional reform would make the Shah acceptable. Finally, Ayatullah Khomeini totally rejected the National Front approach, the reformist approach, as unacceptable. The National Front was prepared to do a deal with the Pahlavi dynasty. They thought that the dynasty was not removable, that progress could only be made by accepting the Pahlavi dynasty, at least for a period of time and carrying on with the Shah still on the throne. So, they said, let him reign but not rule. But the Ayatullah Khomeini rejected this approach and insisted that he could neither reign nor rule. He must get out.

This was the internal make-up of the movement that brought about the Revolution in Iran. The movement has also developed a world view of its own and it is this world view of which you and I must be deeply aware. The centre-piece of this world view is that the Muslim *Ummah* is a single unity, there are no divisions in this *Ummah* at all. One of the very popular slogans we heard, while in Tehran recently, was *'La Shi'a la Sunniah—thoura thoura Islamiyah'* (No Shi'a, no Sunni—only Islam). This is a new refrain on the other popular slogan *'La Sharqia, la Gharbia—thoura, thoura, Islamiyah'* (Neither east, nor west—only Islam). So the unity of the *Ummah* is the centre-piece of the world view that the Islamic Revolution, led by Imam Khomeini, presents to us. Imam Khomeini, in one of his first interviews when he arrived in Paris, was asked about the Shi'i origin of the Revolution. He was very candid. He simply said that the issues that have traditionally divided the Shi'a

and the Sunni are no longer relevant. We are all Muslims. This is an Islamic Revolution. We are all brothers together in Islam. And he and every man, woman and child in Iran today is totally committed to this unity of the Muslim *Ummah*. He has not just lectured to the Sunnis alone to join the Shi'a. When the Shi'as were going to *Hajj*, he issued a fatwa addressed to the Shi'a. He said to the Shi'a of Iran and the Shi'a of the world: when you go to the *Haram*, when you go to *Hajj*, do as the Sunnis do; even if they do it wrong, you must follow them. There cannot be a clearer example of his faith in the unity of the *Ummah*. Let me give you one more example. When we were in Iran we were taken to Qum. In our party was a certain Maulana Mufti Mahmud of Pakistan. Some of you might have heard of him. This mufti did not go inside the mosque to pray *dhuhr*. He stayed outside in the courtyard because he wanted to avoid praying behind a Shi'a. Inside the mosque the Shi'i *ulama* asked a Sunni *alim* to lead the prayer!

Two days later we went to Mashhad, another holy place of the Shi'a. There a person none other than Mian Tufail Muhammad, who is now Amir of Jama'at-e Islami of Pakistan, successor to Maulana Maudoodi, led Sunnis in prayer separate from the main congregation led by a Shi'a. Let me tell you that most Sunnis who were present were totally sickened at this behaviour.

The second dimension in this world view of Imam Khomeini, after the unity of the *Ummah*, is the unity of imperialism. I have spent a good deal of time and I shall leave this alone, except to say that the Islamic Revolution regards the world divided into two: the oppressors and the oppressed. The Islamic Revolution is totally committed on the side of the oppressed peoples of the world.

The third dimension of the world view that follows from the above is that the west will do everything possible to destroy the Islamic Revolution in Iran and prevent anything like it happening anywhere else.

I would add just one other thing which Dr Abdur Rahim Ali has already mentioned. And that is the role of Dr Ali Shari'ati. Dr Ali Shari'ati, a sociologist, a profound student of Marxism, wrote many tracts refuting Marxism. His refutation of Marxism leaves very little to be desired from the Muslims. He lectured extensively throughout Iran and among Iranian people living abroad. He was primarily responsible for bringing the western educated youth of Iran into the Islamic

movement. This helped to create the Islamic movement as a unified movement of the western educated and the traditional *ulama* in Iran. This combination made the triumph of the Islamic Revolution inevitable.

I have said enough, now to try and define the Islamic Revolution:

The Islamic Revolution is that state of a society in which, one, all the Muslims of an area become mobilized to the point where their collective will and effort becomes irresistible and undefeatable; two, the Muslim society acquires a leadership which is positively committed to the civilizational goals of Islam and has no class or other interests of its own; three, the energies thus released are capable of restructuring the society at all levels internally; and four, the social order acquires the confidence and the ability to deal with the external world on its own terms.

This definition of an Islamic Revolution is derived from a study of the Islamic Revolution in Iran. But this definition also provides the framework in which to proceed to assess the Revolution of the past year in Iran. The first part of the definition is that all the Muslims of an area become mobilized to the point where their collective will and effort becomes irresistible and undefeatable—this, in Iran, is so obviously true that it hardly needs any further elaboration from me. You have seen this on television, you have read it in your newspapers. Even our detractors are quite clear on this. They are not trying to say that the Muslims of Iran are divided over Islam. As a recent eyewitness myself, on the first anniversary of the Islamic Revolution, we were taken to the Behisht-e Zahra cemetery which is about 15 kilometres from Tehran. In this cemetery are buried most of the *shuhada* of the Revolution. The first rally of the anniversary could have been held in another open place, in another park, in a city square, but it was not. It was held in the cemetery where the *shuhada* could also participate. *Shahadah* is not just dying. *Shahadah* is also being a witness. There they were, thousands of *shuhada* underground, and there we were, overground, the dead and the living participating in this great anniversary of the great Revolution, as one people. Judging by the number of people who went there, one thought there was no-one left inside Tehran. There were at least two million people. And I did not see a single sister without the chador. The total mobilization of the people to this degree is something which has to

be seen to be believed and people of western education, western culture, western political science, which thrives on dividing the people, will not believe it until they see it. And because they don't want to believe it, they oppose it.

The second part of my definition, that the Muslim society acquires a leadership positively committed to the civilizational goals of Islam and with no class or other sectional interests of its own—this, once again, is so obviously true that it needs no further elaboration.

The third part of my definition states that the energies thus released are capable of restructuring the society internally at all levels. This is about the future because the work of restructuring the society internally has barely begun. This is the next phase into which the Revolution must move. The feudal system, the capitalist system, they still exist. The bureaucracy built up under the Shah still exists. The army, though successfully neutralized by the people, still exists. While in Iran, I had more than one person tell me that there had been recent rumours of plots among army officers against the Revolution and a number of them had been arrested and rightly shot. A number of centres of reaction still exist within Iran, fanned, of course, by the western news media. These are the issues of the internal restructuring of Iranian society that face the Revolution, and the next phase of the Revolution will be judged by its performance along these lines. If the Revolution ends up by simply making the capitalist system more efficient than it was before, then it will have achieved nothing. What the Revolution has to do is to change the social, economic, and political structure of the society totally. All the social relationships in methods of production, exchange, distribution and consumption will have to be changed.

I have given you the background to the almost overwhelming concern with constitutionalism in Iran. Since the Revolution there have been two referenda over constitution-making and the election of a President. My only fear is that there is too much democracy in the new Constitution. Quite frankly, I am not a democrat. And wherever there is democracy, I tend to smell trouble. I know from my own brush with theory and from a study of the development and origin of democracy in the western world that in the democratic process the dominant classes retain their power base in the society. No revolution is possible through a democratic process. The new President, according to the *Tehran Times*, and it is not a very reliable source, was complaining of a

'government within a government'. Mr Bani-Sadr was referring to revolutionary students holding the embassy of the United States. The restructuring of a society involves a continuation of the revolutionary process and revolutionary action at many levels of the society. I fear that if the Revolutionary Council is dissolved after the election, perhaps the new *majlis* may or may not have the zeal, the determination and the revolutionary energy to carry out the fundamental reforms. Every country has a government, but every country does not have a Revolution. I believe that there must be a perpetual Islamic Revolution. The country cannot do without an ongoing revolution until the whole of the system has been transformed. By having the revolution going at the same time as the government, the Islamic Revolution will ensure that it will be a stable system. It will be a system in which even if there are areas of temporary failure by the government, these will be made up by the revolutionary arm of the society. But if there is only one arm and for some reason it does not work, then there is a total failure of the system. The revolutionary energy of the people of Iran is, I believe, a positive force and ought to be retained and worked into the restructuring process.

The fourth point in my definition of the Islamic Revolution—the social order acquires the confidence and the ability to deal with the external world on its own terms—has also been demonstrated by the success of the Revolution itself. I have already shown you that the regime in Iran was not a local regime; it was a colonial regime backed by foreign powers, and the success of the Revolution has shown that the Islamic movement in Iran is able to deal with the environment on its own terms. The handling of foreign relations by the revolutionary Government is another example. I well remember, after the Soviet Union had, for its own reasons, used its veto to block the US-sponsored resolution in the Security Council applying sanctions against Iran, some people thought that the Revolutionary Council was playing the game of the Russians. Nothing could be more removed from the truth. These are the attempts that are being made to confuse us. The Soviet Union, which is also our enemy, goes to the Security Council and uses the veto, so-called, to save Iran and a Soviet diplomat makes a statement that they will help Iran against American sanctions. But Imam Khomeini gives Russia a ticking-off. He said: 'Who do you think you are? You think you can help us. We will live on our own resources. We do not need any help from the Soviet Union or anybody else. Iran is an

independent country and Iran will remain independent. If we have to fight sanctions we will fight ourselves. We don't need any help from the Soviet Union.'

Finally, the Islamic Revolution has exposed the governments of all the countries around Iran for what they are: totally alienated from their own roots, from their own people, from their own value-system, from their own history, devoid of legitimacy and depending for survival on external support. For Muslims outside Iran, the choices are strictly limited. This Revolution has given us hope where there was no hope. This Revolution has restored confidence in us. We too can do what others thought we could not do. And it has given us respectability in a world dominated by our detractors. For once we have a success story to tell, we have a reality with which we can identify ourselves. We can point at something and say: 'Look, this is what we can do and this is something that nobody else can do.' But we have to remember that the Revolution in Iran, the model now in its infancy, must succeed. It has got to be developed or else the *Ummah* as a whole will be the poorer. Should this Revolution fail, our history will again go into a tailspin. It is not the duty of the people in Iran alone, but it is the duty of Muslims everywhere to do everything they possibly can to support the revolution in Iran and to make sure that this historical opportunity does not slip out of our hands.