

NEITHER
Iran, the
EAST
Soviet Union,
NOR
and the
WEST
United States

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Trends in the Foreign Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 1979-1988

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The 1979 revolution in Iran opened a new chapter in the conduct of Iranian foreign policy. With the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) the nation's foreign policy changed from a basically pro-Western stance to one summed up by the slogan "neither East nor West" (*nah sharq, nah gharb*).¹ Yet, this slogan, which was introduced to Iranian society by the new Islamic leadership, has not had the same meaning for the different factions that have taken their turn in ruling the country. Rather, the foreign policy of the IRI since the 1979 revolution has embodied a series of inconsistent goals that, depending on the ruling faction of the day, have reflected differing interpretations of the slogan.

Although the Islamic leadership that took over after the collapse of the imperial regime was made up of different factions, all of them had come to accept Ayatollah Khomeini's version of an Islamic state, which was based on the notion of the "rule of the jurispudent" (*velayat-e faqih*). These groups, who in fact had little in common in their worldviews, together made up the new ruling Islamic elite. They included, first, the Islamic "liberals," or the secular Islamic activists who had been involved in the nationalist opposition to the Shah's regime, and, second, the clerics, who tended to view the Islamic state as a more theocratic entity.

The foreign policy of the IRI may be divided into three periods:

1. The period of the "liberals," February 1979-June 1981, when the so-

called liberal faction of the new Islamic elite was in charge of IRI foreign policy. This period may be further subdivided into the Provisional Government period (February–November 1979), when Mehdi Bazargan and his allies were in charge of IRI foreign policy, and the presidency of Abol Hasan Bani-Sadr (January 1980–June 1981), whose departure marked the end of liberal rule.

2. The period 1981–84, when an isolationist trend dominated the IRI's foreign policy. This period saw a process of consolidation, competition, and the polarization of two ruling *maktabi* (committed and doctrinaire) factions, mainly over domestic issues. At this time the "neither East nor West" policy was implemented according to a strict isolationist interpretation.

3. The period of pragmatists, 1984–89, which has witnessed the coming to power of a reformist faction with a pragmatic approach to foreign policy. This faction has operated under a new set of rules and has adopted a more open-door approach to foreign powers.

This chapter will initially analyze Khomeini's view on foreign policy. Then it will discuss IRI foreign policy-making in the three periods and will conclude by addressing certain important questions about the future path of IRI foreign policy.

Khomeini's Views on Foreign Policy

With regard to the superpowers, Khomeini said, "We must settle our accounts with great and superpowers, and show them that we can take on the whole world ideologically, despite all the painful problems that face us,"² and he declared, "We will not agree to be dominated by America or by the Soviet Union. . . . The superpowers wish to dominate human beings."³ In Khomeini's theory, a state ruled by an Islamic jurist-prudent (*faqih*) was the means by which a just society could be established. Iran had become the first true modern Islamic state, but the "Islamic Revolution" could not be limited to that country alone. Khomeini's foreign policy doctrine, based on the slogan "neither East nor West," should be understood within the context of his trans-Iranian goals. Not only must the IRI remain independent of the superpowers, but it must seek to promote just Islamic societies in other regions.

In elaborating Iran's foreign policy in 1980, Khomeini said, "We say we want to export our revolution to all Islamic countries as well as to the oppressed countries. . . . We want all nations and governments to sever the control of superpowers over their resources. Export of our revolution means that all nations grow aware and save themselves."⁴ Thus, his foreign policy formula for

the IRI had two interconnected dimensions: first, its independence vis-à-vis the great powers, and second, the promotion of Islamic movements in other areas, or what became known outside of Iran as its attempt to export the "Islamic Revolution." Not surprisingly, this outlook has alarmed several other nations. To Khomeini's views on the foreign policy of the IRI must be added the factor of Israel and South Africa. These two states, according to him, permit no compromise as far as an Islamic state is concerned.

Khomeini's views are often echoed by the IRI's media and its top leaders. Ayatollah Mohammad Hosain Beheshti wrote in 1980, "Islam recognizes no borders. . . . The foreign policy of the IRI, therefore, cannot be based on isolation. Our policy must tell us what to do beyond the borders and what relations to have with the people beyond these borders."⁵ And the daily *Jomhuri-ye Islami* stated in 1985, "In the view of the Islamic Republic of Iran, there is no difference between Eastern and Western colonialism. The dominating powers, as we pointed out before, despite all their differences and rivalries are coherent and share the same direction in one thing: that is, combating the Islamic and independence-seeking movements."⁶

It is not clear which countries fall in the categories of East and West. One would think that the Islamic leaders were referring to the Eastern and Western blocs, or the Soviet Union's East European socialist allies and America's allies, the West European capitalist democracies and Japan. But in practice, although acting hostilely toward the United States and, to a lesser extent, the Soviet Union, the IRI has tried to maintain, as much as possible, normal relations with the allies of the superpowers.

The meaning of exporting the "Islamic Revolution" is also unclear. Does it merely mean, as Khomeini implied, that the IRI should set an example so that other countries will become aware of their situation as colonies of East and West? Or does it mean the active promotion of Islamic movements, as happened when the IRI supported the attempted coup in Bahrain in January 1980, IRI supporters bombed Kuwait in December 1983, the Islamic Revolutionary Guards (*pasdaran-e enghelab-e islami*; hereafter, the Guards) were sent to Lebanon, and the IRI became involved in the hostage situation in Lebanon? Even the country's constitution is ambiguous on this subject. This document, which outlines the main governing laws of Iran, also sets the general foreign policy objectives of the Islamic state. Article 154 says, "While refraining from all interference in domestic affairs of other nations, the Islamic Republic shall support any struggle of deprived people against the oppressing classes anywhere on the face of the earth."⁷ This, of course, is a paradox: IRI must refrain from interfering in the domestic affairs of other countries and, at the same time, support movements in other countries to overthrow their governments.

Foreign Policy—Making in the Islamic Republic of Iran

The Period of the Liberals (February 1979–June 1981)

The affairs of the new Islamic state, following the success of the revolution, were entrusted to Mehdi Bazargan and his allies. The Provisional Government was in fact a coalition between the Islamic liberal Freedom Movement and the secular National Front, which participated as a junior partner and whose leader, Karim Sanjabi, was the foreign minister of the Provisional Government during the first few months. Yet the Freedom Movement and its leader, Bazargan (who had formed his government on the basis of a mandate from Khomeini), clearly enjoyed hegemony in the cabinet—and indeed, the National Front elements soon left it.

The Provisional Government had its own interpretation of “neither East nor West.” According to this interpretation, the IRI should remain an independent political entity (as Khomeini wished), but should be more receptive to the West in order to check the influence and threat of the East. The following recollection of an American policymaker about the views of Ibrahim Yazdi (the Provisional Government’s foreign minister after Sanjabi) on this subject helps explain the Provisional Government’s perception of foreign policy:

In foreign affairs, Yazdi outlined a policy of strict nonalignment which he compared to the U.S. isolation of the past. They would not seek stability through a military buildup. He stressed the deep popular resentment and hatred toward the United States for its unconditional support of the shah since 1953, but he felt that friendly future relations were possible if Americans stopped interfering in Iranian affairs. He said Iran had “no better memories” of the Russians than of the Americans . . . [but] “at least Americans believe in God.”⁸

People like Yazdi and Bazargan were among those whom the U.S. policy-makers chose to call the moderates of the new Islamic leadership. And it was this group that American officials thought would replace the imperial regime.

There is an abundance of evidence regarding the Provisional Government’s pro-West tendencies in the *Documents from the Nest of Spies (Asnad-e Laneh-ye Jassasi*; hereafter Documents), selected from the papers seized from the U.S. embassy after the takeover by the Muslim Students Following the Imam’s Line (SFL) in November 1979.⁹ The Documents acknowledge the U.S. embassy personnel’s awareness of a difference of opinion between Khomeini and the Provisional Government on the issue of relations with the United States.

The embassy reported on 31 May 1979: “reco [the Provisional Government] and Khomeini differ on value of U.S. ties. Khomeini’s open anti-Americanism has sparked increase in anti-American activity.”¹⁰ This was at a time when the embassy observed that both Ibrahim Yazdi and Abbas Amir-Entezam (the Provisional Government’s spokesperson) had publicly expressed their government’s wish to continue contacts with the West and had hoped that relations with the United States would “soon take a turn for the better.”¹¹ The last U.S. ambassador to Tehran, William Sullivan, suggested to his superiors that both Bazargan and Entezam displayed much distrust of the Soviets and desired to maintain close relations with the United States.¹²

Signs of the Provisional Government’s positive attitude toward America, but within the context of “neither East nor West,” can also be seen in its approach to the United States toward the end of its period of rule. The meeting between Bazargan and Zbigniew Brzezinski in Algiers on 1 November 1979, one of the factors contributing to the downfall of the Provisional Government, further explains the foreign policy objectives of the liberals. The IRI delegation to Algeria that took part in the meeting with Brzezinski included Bazargan, Yazdi, and Mostafa Chamran (the defense minister). According to Brzezinski, the issue of the Shah and his return to Iran, although publicly stressed by Iran, was not a major concern, indicating that Bazargan’s main objective was a strategic one. Brzezinski reported that the overall relationship between the two countries was discussed.

The Provisional Government did not last long after the Algiers meeting. Following the admission of the Shah to the United States and the takeover of the U.S. embassy in Tehran on 4 November 1979, the Bazargan government collapsed, with both domestic and foreign policy factors contributing to its downfall. Domestically, many paralegal institutions had been created by the new Islamic elite after the revolution. These institutions, which existed alongside and parallel to the old imperial ones, were autonomous and independent from the Provisional Government. It may be that a kind of dual power was in place, with the Provisional Government controlling the old state apparatus. The paralegal institutions (such as the Guards and the security committees, or *kommiteh*) were a rallying ground for those in the ruling elite who opposed Bazargan and his policies. The clergy-dominated Islamic Republic Party (IRP) was the manifestation of this group, and powerful personalities such as Ayatollah Beheshti, Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Ali Khamene’i, Javad Bahonar, and Hasan Ayat were among its leaders. The IRP opposed the Provisional Government’s interpretation of “neither East nor West” and any reconstruction of relations with the United States. It may be that the IRP was shrewdly playing along with the mass anti-Americanism then rampant and Khomeini’s distrust of the United

States. In any event, the differences between the Provisional Government and the IRR ranged from economic to foreign affairs issues, and it was two of the latter that played a direct role in the Provisional Government's demise: the Shah's admission into the United States and the Brzezinski-Bazargan meeting in Algiers. A recently published book in Iran on the foreign policy of the IRI reflects the views of the group that opposed the Provisional Government. *Reviewing the IRI Foreign Policy* states: "Then the foreign policy of Iran reached a point where the prime minister of the Provisional Government met with Carter's National Security Advisor [Brzezinski] and in order to justify his action, suggested: 'We must reconstruct our foreign policy which has been damaged during the revolution by apologizing to the United States for the slogan "Down with America."'"¹³

The collapse of the Provisional Government was followed in a few months by the presidency of Bani-Sadr, although he had already clashed with Khomeini over foreign policy. During the period between the fall of Bazargan's government and the presidential election in December 1979, the Revolutionary Council was directing the affairs of the state and had chosen Bani-Sadr to take charge of the foreign ministry. When, in December 1979, the subject of the American hostages came before the U.N. Security Council, Bani-Sadr suggested that Iran participate. This ran counter to the publicly stated position of Khomeini, who absolutely rejected it and sent a message to Bani-Sadr threatening him with dismissal. Subsequently Bani-Sadr resigned from his post.¹⁴

During Bani-Sadr's administration (January 1979–June 1981) three major foreign policy issues preoccupied his government: the Iran-Iraq war, the U.S. embassy hostages, and the Afghan war. On the first issue, the IRI faced the difficult situation of fighting Iraq while under strong U.S. and international pressure to release the American hostages. The Islamic elite believed that both superpowers were involved in the war despite their public claims of neutrality, and Bani-Sadr devoted much energy to Iran's war efforts. On the hostage issue, the IRI was in a direct confrontation with the United States. The American efforts to isolate the IRI internationally in order to secure the release of the hostages were successful, and this frustrated Bani-Sadr's initiatives in foreign policy. On the Afghan issue, the IRI was in an indirect confrontation with the Soviet Union, whose military occupation of Afghanistan gave rise to friction between the two countries. Thus at a time of isolation from the West, a possible opening to the East was closed off by the Afghan war. No matter how Bani-Sadr interpreted "neither East nor West," objective conditions left him little room to maneuver, and his administration remained relatively isolated on the international scene.

Bani-Sadr's foreign policy objectives remained basically the same as those

of the Provisional Government except that he was perhaps more suspicious of the United States. He favored close relations with Western European countries, which he hoped would join with Iran to resist U.S. hegemony.¹⁵

Bani-Sadr's preoccupation with the American hostages, which soon became the indicator of who was in charge of foreign policy, was the most time-consuming aspect of his administration. His plans for centralizing government and ending the dual power, for economic growth and stabilization, and for reforming the armed forces went hand in hand with the need to normalize Iran's foreign relations. But the hostage situation restrained his actions. He blamed the hostage-taking for Iran's economic isolation, feared more direct U.S. retaliatory action against Iran, was displeased with the IRI's autonomy, and needed the billions of dollars in frozen Iranian assets in American banks. But his efforts to secure the release of the hostages and take command of foreign policy were resisted by his opponents in the IRR, with Khomeini's help. Bani-Sadr wanted the fate of the hostages to be decided by the Revolutionary Council, but on 23 February 1980, Khomeini undercut his position and decided that the Majles, whose election was set for March 1980, should rule on the issue, a decision that put off resolution of the situation indefinitely. On 6 March the IRI deified Bani-Sadr and refused to hand over the hostages to the Revolutionary Council.

After the Majles elections in March and May 1980, Bani-Sadr found himself in a weakened position because his opponents had gained a strong majority. From this point on his situation worsened. The Majles rejected all his choices for prime minister and he was forced to accept Mohammad Ali Raja'i, a rival and IRR member, for the post. Next came the question of cabinet ministers: Bani-Sadr thought that competence and experience should be the criteria for choosing them, but Raja'i insisted on their ideological devotion to the system. Raja'i proposed a cabinet of twenty-one members in September 1980, and Bani-Sadr rejected seven of them, including the foreign minister. In the end, he rejected at least six candidates for the foreign ministry and the post remained vacant throughout his administration.¹⁶

After the hostage crisis was resolved, Bani-Sadr moved to end Iran's isolation in the international community, and high-ranking IRI delegations were sent abroad. But these efforts were limited by his opponents, who had their own agenda on foreign as well as domestic issues. This opposition, which went under the unofficial title of *maktabi*, centered around the clergy-dominated IRR.

As noted earlier, the *maktabis* had formed their own paralegal governing organs to function alongside the old imperial structures, which were controlled by the liberals. The IRI members were in close association with the *maktabis*, and after the takeover of the U.S. embassy, they selectively used the documents

they found to expose the pro-West tendencies of the liberals. Hence, after the collapse of the Provisional Government, documents were published connecting top members of the Freedom Movement (such as Amir-Entezam, Yazdi, and Bazargan) to foreign powers. Bani-Sadr's connections to foreigners were exposed only after his dismissal, and such connections on the part of clerics like Beheshti were not aired. Thus, during the hostage crisis the maktabis unofficially played an important role in the foreign policy of the IRI by using popular anti-American feeling against the liberals. The maktabis eventually won the struggle and managed to oust the liberals and take control of the state apparatus as a whole. Following the June 1981 crisis, Bani-Sadr was ousted from power, and severe repressive measures were taken against the opposition.

The Maktabi Period (1981-84)

From 1981 to 1984, the IRI underwent a deep internal crisis that included repression of the opposition. The maktabis were strongly influenced by the *sfrl*—a reality that manifested itself in Iran's foreign policy. The maktabis, naturally, had their own interpretation of "neither East nor West," and it was very narrow: the IRI adopted a strict isolationist foreign policy; hence this period may also be called the isolationist period. A high-ranking IRI leader, Ayatollah Mohammad Hosain Ali Montazeri, expressed the sentiments of this period very well. In a speech delivered to a group of theology students, he said that the IRI should not be fooled by either the West or the East because the West had helped establish and maintain Israel and the East had massacred the clergy in Afghanistan.¹⁷

The causes of the IRI's isolation from the West were both historical and contemporary. The major historical factor was the United States' support of the Shah's dictatorship, including the U.S.-planned coup of 1953; its active part in implementing the Shah's land reform program; its training and support for the Shah's military and security forces; and its support of the imperial regime during the revolutionary struggle of 1978-79. Moreover, the IRI constantly feared intervention in Iran from the United States. Other factors that helped promote the isolationist trend were (1) the IRI's attempts to export Islamic revolution, which were perceived by the West as efforts to undermine the stability of pro-West governments in the region; (2) the role of some Western powers, especially France, in supplying the Iraqi war effort and providing sanctuary for exiled IRI opposition figures; (3) the anti-Americanism of some IRI foreign policy-makers; and (4) the Reagan administration's emphasis on restoring America's prestige abroad and combating terrorism with force. These factors, as well as the fact that the liberals had become notorious for their pro-

West tendencies, kept the IRI from undertaking any rapprochement with the West.

The causes of the IRI's isolation from the East were somewhat different. To begin with, the Soviet Union certainly did not share the same historical background as the United States as far as Iran was concerned. Any direct Soviet involvement in Iranian affairs had ended with the aborted 1946 Azerbaijan venture. The Soviets' interests were manifested indirectly either through the Tudeh Party or through diplomatic means. Although some strong anti-Soviet elements within the ruling elite could point to instances of Soviet damage to Iranian national interests, they were not thought to be comparable to those of the United States. Other causes for the isolation of the IRI from the East were (1) the Soviet Union's military support to Iraq; (2) the Soviet military occupation of Afghanistan; (3) the activities of the Tudeh Party of Iran; and (4) the hostility toward the Soviet Union felt by some circles within the ruling elite. The Soviet Union considered both Iran and Iraq to have anti-imperialist tendencies and therefore took a neutral position toward the war. Nevertheless, this did not prevent it from fulfilling its military obligations toward Iraq, which proved to be a major impediment to close relations with the IRI.

The Afghan war was an even more contentious issue. The occupation of Afghanistan by an atheist state and the Afghan mujahedin's resistance were reason enough to involve the IRI in the struggle, undeterred by the fact that the United States was also deeply involved. Iran's support for some mujahedin factions and its demand that the Soviet Union evacuate Afghanistan remained major problems between the two states.

The activities of the Tudeh became another source of tension after the party was attacked and disbanded by the government in 1982-83. The confessions of the Tudeh leaders after their arrests further aggravated Iran-Soviet relations, especially when party members implied in their statements that they had been spying for the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, it must be noted that Iran-Soviet relations never reached the same level of antagonism as did relations between Iran and the United States. The Soviet Union always kept its embassy in Tehran open and fully operational, and the level of trade between the two countries was significant and continued to grow up to the time of the Tudeh arrests. After the arrests and the confessions of 1983, however, the volume of trade was reduced by 50 percent and fell to its lowest point.¹⁸ This is how Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri, minister of state, summarized Iran-Soviet relations in 1982-83: "The East initially thought that the Islamic revolution would turn to them after it had cut its ties with America. They only understood the 'nor West' portion of the Iranian people's slogan 'Neither East nor West.' The existence of such mercenaries as the Tudeh supported their belief. But as time passed, they began to realize that

this revolution will not compromise with the East while it is fighting the West."¹⁹

The decision to attack the Tudeh was part of a larger plan apparently made in 1980. According to this fifteen-point plan, the opposition political parties were ranged into three categories, which the IRI would attempt to dismantle consecutively. The Tudeh's name fell in the third category, which meant that its turn would come after the more dangerous organizations were destroyed. Hence the assault on the Tudeh was not surprising and had little to do with the IRI's foreign relations.²⁰ The timing of the attack on the Tudeh was apparently associated with the defection, in 1982, of Vladimir Kuzichkin, a senior diplomat in the Soviet embassy in Tehran. The operation was run by British intelligence, which subsequently debriefed Kuzichkin. It seems that Kuzichkin knew the names of a number of Soviet agents in Iran, and according to the *New York Times*, this information was passed to the IRI through the CIA.²¹ The fact that the Tudeh came under attack after this event shows that the IRI leadership must have sensed an immediate threat from Tudeh penetration of the government and moved quickly to contain the damage.

Another important component of the IRI's isolationist policy was the notion of exporting Islamic revolution. The advocates of isolationism believed that their Islamic Revolution could be maintained only through its expansion in the Moslem world, if not the world in general. Of course, the notion was not new. The policy had been part of Khomeini's worldview and was promoted by the maktabis during the liberal period. The only difference now was that the maktabis were in full control of the Islamic state. Neither was the idea of exporting their revolution a uniquely Iranian policy. Other revolutions had passed through a similar stage—for example, the French and Russian revolutions. The IRI supporters' activities in the region directed at this end included attempts made on objectives in Kuwait that led to the car bombing at the U.S. embassy; the efforts to overthrow the government of Bahrain and the renewal of Iranian claims on that island; the annual clashes with the Saudi regime during the hajj ceremonies; and IRI support for the Hizbollah (party of god) of Lebanon, which led to the car bombing of U.S. military installations and gradually gave the Hizbollah a dominant role in Lebanese affairs.²²

The maktabis included a range of people who basically opposed the liberals' conduct of foreign and domestic affairs. Their main organizational base was the IRI, through which they controlled the parastatal structures noted earlier. But the unity of the maktabis was both temporary and fragile, and survived only as long as the liberals posed a threat. As soon as the liberal factor was removed, a process of polarization in domestic and foreign affairs began to take shape in the maktabi ranks.

The isolationist wing of the maktabis was basically in charge of foreign affairs from mid-1981 to 1984. The advocates of this policy were the IRI and such personalities as Mir-Hosain Musavi, Ali Akbar Mohtashami, Hadi Ghaffari, and Hojjat al-Islam Mohammad Musavi Khoeiniha.

The Pragmatist Period (1984–89)

By 1984, a new trend, and therefore a new interpretation of "neither East nor West," had begun to take shape. A more pragmatic approach to the conduct of IRI foreign relations was adopted by a faction within the ruling elite. Only beginning in this period, it was later consolidated and continues to dominate IRI foreign policy to the present day. Pragmatism represented a reaction to the isolationist policy of the preceding years. Although no one event in 1984 can be singled out as the turning point, Khomeini's speech on 28 October 1984 to a group of IRI foreign representatives signaled the legitimization of the new trend: "The superpowers and the United States thought that Iran . . . would be forced into isolation. That did not happen and Iran's relations with foreigners increased. Now, they argue that relations with governments are of no use and our relations should be established with the nations. . . . This is contrary to wisdom and *shari'a*. We must have relations with all the governments."²³

Clearly Khomeini was turning against isolationism. The seeds of the trend had been planted during previous years, but only now had it enough strength to claim Khomeini's support, and personalities such as Ali Akbar Velayati, the foreign minister, and Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the Speaker of the Majles, had become its advocates. Conflict over the new interpretation could be detected in August 1984 in Majles discussions. The elections of the second Majles ended in June of that year and subsequently the cabinet stood for a new vote of confidence. During this process, Velayati came under limited but sharp attacks from some Majles members for his handling of IRI foreign policy. Mortaza Razavi, a member from Tabriz, criticized his loose interpretation of exporting revolution and his ministry's new approach to the West (in this case, the visit of West Germany's foreign minister to Tehran). Another member, Hadi Ghaffari, objected to Velayati's open-door policy and the fact that the Majles was not kept involved in shaping IRI foreign policy.²⁴ And a statement was distributed in the Majles strongly criticizing the government's foreign policy and comparing it to that of pro-Western governments.²⁵

To put the development of the new trend in perspective, one should note the negative effects of the isolationist policy on the conduct of the Iran-Iraq war. After the victory of the battle for Khorramshahr (the only major city occupied by Iraq), which signaled the expulsion of Iraqi forces from Iranian territory

(1982), the IRI leadership made the decision to advance into Iraq and overthrow the Ba'ath regime. The principal question was whether the IRI could, with its limited economic and military resources, continue the war and at the same time confront both the West and the East. The isolationists' answer was positive, but the advocates of the new trend thought otherwise. To this must be added the growing economic difficulties faced by the IRI. Therefore, an objective need for revising the IRI's foreign policy was a strong factor in forcing a new interpretation of "neither East nor West." The IRI had to break out of its isolation in order to overcome its internal economic difficulties and to continue the war. The situation called for a pragmatic approach to foreign policy.

The first signs of the reinterpretation in regard to the East were the steps taken to try, once again, to normalize relations with the Soviet Union. By April 1985, the anti-Soviet propaganda had been toned down and negotiations started to reopen Tass offices in Tehran with an increased Soviet diplomatic staff.²⁶ The IRI also indicated its acceptance of the Soviet position that the Judeh affair was a purely internal matter, thus removing a major source of tension in Iran-Soviet relations. Ratsanjani summed up the relationship between the two countries in 1985 as follows: "The relations with the Soviet Union have improved a little. . . . some problems are being removed. . . . we are informed that Soviet arms supplies to Iraq have been reduced somewhat. . . . We shall try to cooperate more in trade and industrial fields."²⁷ Ratsanjani insisted, however, that reaching an agreement over Afghanistan was not possible.

Economically, the chilly relations of preceding years began to change, though at a slow pace. The Soviet Union agreed to open its market to some Iranian goods, to send back the experts needed to finish industrial projects in Iran, and to accommodate other IRI economic demands. For its part, the IRI sent economic delegations to the Soviet Union and other East European countries.²⁸

The new approach toward the West first became apparent in August 1984, when Velayati was criticized by Majles deputies for his attempts to move closer to the Western European countries. But the primary manifestation of the new trend was the "Irangate" affair. On the Iranian side, Irangate represented the approaching the West in general, and the United States in particular, in the hope of receiving assistance for the IRI's war efforts and its economic crisis. As early as 1985 pamphlets proposing the need for closer relations with the United States were distributed among the highest levels of IRI leadership; one official said the pamphlets argued that a closer relationship would help Iran break free from its cultural and economic poverty. Interestingly, the pamphlets were written by those who had supported taking the U.S. hostages.²⁹ The short-term objective of the Irangate contacts seems to have been to get badly needed weaponry in order to continue the war with Iraq. The Iranian military had been trained and

supplied by the United States before the revolution, and its dependency on the Americans was a reality the IRI policymakers could not ignore. The long-term objective seems to have been to open a dialogue with the United States, which it was hoped would lead to closer relations between the two countries. One of the pamphlets stated, "We must go to those who had the most cultural and economic relations with us before the revolution." The IRI's attempts to help solve the TWA hijacking in 1985 also was part of the new pattern.

The revised approach was the result of a process of polarization within the maktabi ranks and the gradual emergence of two factions within the ruling elite. Ratsanjani described the factions in 1986 as (1) those in support of nationalization of most industries and (2) those in support of the private sector.³⁰ Although he described them only in economic terms, from 1986 onward, the factional differences began to surface in a large range of issues. They had to do mainly with domestic problems rather than foreign policy, because the latter was heavily influenced by the war factor, on which Khomeini had taken a firm position: Iran must devote all resources and sacrifice other interests to advance the war effort. Since the Iran-Iraq war was instrumental in determining foreign policy, open debates and disagreements were rare and foreign policy usually escaped the factional infighting.

The two factions, which can be called statist-reformist (pro-state) and conservative (pro-private sector), entered a decisive period of struggle in 1987 and 1988. Before this period they had competed for Khomeini's support, but now it became evident that he was taking the side of the statist faction. The abolition of the IRI, Khomeini's religious decrees (*fatwas*), and the recent parliamentary elections have all testified to this fact.³¹ What had started as the polarization of the maktabis ended with the domination of the statist within the state apparatus. Yet it is important to note that the statist's control of foreign policy preceded their eventual control of the state. As mentioned before, the rapprochement with the West and the East between 1984 and 1986 was a clear sign of shifting policy. Therefore, though the internal consolidation of the statist was not complete until 1987-88, they had dominated the IRI's foreign policy as early as 1984.

Personalities such as Ayatollah Azari Qomi, President Ali Khamene'i, and the majority of clerics in the Guardian Council (*shora-ye negaliban*) belong to the conservative faction. But the statist faction, as we shall see below, has had a more complex structure. Personalities like Ratsanjani and Velayati have joined such isolationist advocates and "radical" personalities as Musavi, Khomeiniha, Ghaffari, and Ali Akbar Mofattahi in forming the statist faction. Hence it has actually been a fragile coalition formed around current issues. It is composed of the advocates of the isolationist policy, who form the "radical"

wing, and those who embraced the new pragmatic line in 1984. Between 1984 and the first half of 1988 domestic issues were of more importance and, because of the war, foreign policy was less a source of confrontation. Thus the two groups have formed the two wings of a coalition and established a united front against the conservative faction. The pragmatic wing was in charge of foreign policy and advocated a rapprochement toward both the West and the East while it united with the radicals in confronting the conservatives.³²

The rapprochement could not have been achieved without Khomeini's consent and support. The Irangate affair was a good example of this. Today it has become clear that those who planned the general policy outline of Irangate believed they could count on Khomeini's support, and in fact they received it. When the Irangate policy came under heavy attack from the conservative faction, Khomeini intervened directly and silenced the voices of criticism.³³ Hence the faction that had proposed the venture was able to survive the political storm that followed it and was even able to eliminate the rival radical Hashemi group that had exposed the Iran-United States contacts.³⁴

The pragmatists, like the other factions, have their own, less ideological interpretation of "neither East nor West," which they do not hesitate to exercise both in foreign and domestic policy disputes. With Khomeini's backing, the pragmatists managed to turn the Irangate affair to their own advantage. Thus, though Irangate turned out to be a nightmare for American policymakers, the pragmatists used it to get some badly needed military hardware, to eliminate the radical Hashemi group, and to reassure the Iranian public that it was only the United States, and not the IR, that sought rapprochement by delivering weapons, cake, and a Bible. The worsening relations with the United States that followed Irangate were basically the result of a shift in American foreign policy, not a major shift in the IR's position. Attesting to the shift in U.S. policy were the reflagging of Kuwaiti tankers, the deployment of the U.S. armada in the Persian Gulf, the naval battles between the IR and the United States, and the shelling of Iranian oil facilities in the Persian Gulf. One American scholar characterized the shift in American policy as follows: "Crude anti-Sovietism and blindness to the real forces shaping Iran's foreign policy have moreover allowed us to be manipulated by others against our interest. In the Iran-Contra affair, we were exploited by Israelis and Iranian leaders alike."³⁵

A look at the foreign policy of the IR between 1986 and 1988 reveals that unlike the United States the major emphasis was on rapprochement with the West, not confrontation. Iran's limited response to U.S. harassment in the Persian Gulf, although partly caused by the few options open to IR policymakers, also had strong roots in the new rapprochement policy. Further evidence

were the steps taken to normalize relations with Britain and France, and the IR's increasing willingness to solve the hostage dilemma in Lebanon.

The same policy may also be seen in relation to the East, with the difference that perhaps because of the new Soviet leadership, the East has been much more receptive. The Soviet media in 1987 contained numerous reports on the changing attitude in Iran. On 20 March 1987, *Pravda* cited media coverage in Iran about the need to expand economic relations between the two countries. *Pravda* also quoted Mohammad Javad Larjani (the IR's deputy foreign minister and a pragmatist) as suggesting that the IR and the Soviet Union "take common stands against the intrigues of American imperialism in the region. Second, we're neighbours, and this opens up good prospects for trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural exchanges. Relations between us are beginning to develop once again. . . . the existing obstacles are temporary in nature. Sooner or later they will disappear, while the bonds of good-neighbourliness with the Soviet Union will remain."³⁶

On 9 August 1987, *L'vestia* reported that "talks on the expansion of Soviet-Iranian trade ties are now under way."³⁷ The expansion included a gas pipeline, rail transport, a new rail route in Central Asia, and possibly a new oil pipeline from Iran through the Soviet Union to the Black Sea. And finally, on 5 December 1987, *Pravda* quoted the IR ambassador to Moscow as saying, "We value highly our ties with the Soviet Union and would like to develop them."³⁸ When the Soviet involvement in Afghanistan reached an end, an additional obstacle to Iran-Soviet rapprochement had been removed.

A challenging test for the rapprochement policy toward the East developed in early 1988, when an unruly mob attacked the Soviet embassy in Tehran. Apparently the attack was prompted by the disclosure that the missiles that were hitting Tehran during the final phase of "the war of the cities" were Soviet-made and had recently been supplied to Iraq. Yet the pragmatists' grip on power was so strong they managed to contain and control public rage. Rafsanjani publicly accepted the Soviet explanation that the missiles were actually short range and that Iraq had managed to alter their capabilities with the help of some Western countries. Following this explanation, the anti-Soviet rage abated, and it appears that by 1988 the IR's relations with the East were improving rapidly.

With the end of the Iran-Iraq war, new prospects have opened in the foreign policy of the IR. The war was always a major obstacle to rapprochement with West and East. It was an even stronger factor in Iran-United States relations, since America openly sided with Iraq in the Persian Gulf confrontations of 1987 and 1988. With the war over and the era of Iran's reconstruction approaching, the pragmatists are showing even stronger signs of seeking rap-

prochement with the West. For example, the daily *Ertela'at* (which is published under the supervision of Khomeini's son, Ahmad Khomeini, and edited by Mohammad Doa'i, a Majles deputy and member of Khomeini's staff) recently wrote that the reestablishment of relations with the United States is necessary, adding, "Now the time has come for the lack of logical and correct relations between Iran and America to be removed."³⁹

The IRI's foreign policy and the interpretation of the fundamental foreign policy slogan "neither East nor West" have gone through three major shifts since the establishment of the Islamic Republic. The slogan had a more pro-Western bias during the liberal period and stood for isolationism during the maktabi period. Today, during the reformist period, especially under Rafsanjani's pragmatic guidance, the slogan seems to advocate rapprochement with both the West and the East. But the policy is already threatening to break up the reformist coalition that has taken shape around domestic issues. This is to suggest that the more radical elements in the reformist faction or the former isolationists may no longer remain united in face of the new situation. Before the end of the Iran-Iraq war, objective limitations were imposed upon the rapprochement policy. Now that these limitations are disappearing, the policy may become a major national issue. Disagreements within the reformist faction are already surfacing. The resignation of the Musavi cabinet in September 1988, on the ground that many of its members would not receive confirmation from the Majles, as well as Khomeini's refusal to accept the resignation were signs of short-term future changes.⁴⁰ There have also been reports that Musavi wrote a secret letter to Khamene'i giving as the main reason for his resignation the failure to consult him on the peace process. He is said to have complained that decisions on foreign policy had been made without his knowledge.⁴¹

Conclusions

The foreign policy of the IRI under the slogan "neither East nor West" has played an important role for the ruling elite, both domestically and internationally. Domestically, it has helped present an alternative to the pro-Western policies of the imperial regime. It has also helped the IRI disarm its opposition by projecting to the Iranian people a politically independent and "anti-imperialist" image. Being able to project such an independent image of the state has been an important issue in domestic Iranian politics since the 1979 revolution. Internationally, the slogan has presented the IRI as a nonaligned government that not only consistently resists the domination of the two world blocs but also challenges their interests, both in the region and worldwide. Yet, as discussed above, the IRI's foreign policy has had three distinguishable phases,

each of which has claimed allegiance to Khomeini's interpretation of "neither East nor West."

Answering the following questions can help us understand the dynamism of IRI foreign policy and its probable future path: What is the relationship between the trends in IRI foreign policy and Khomeini's views? How is the IRI's foreign policy likely to be affected by domestic economic conditions in Iran and the ideology of the IRI? And which direction will Iranian foreign policy take in the immediate future? To answer the first question, the factions that have taken their turn in running the Iranian state had Khomeini's backing and sought their legitimacy in his support. All the other legitimizing factors (such as the people's vote or the Majles) were secondary to Khomeini's authority, which stood above the IRI's constitutional limits. Khomeini's authority could indeed break the constitutional barriers of the IRI if the situation called for it as has been demonstrated throughout the existence of the IRI. It is quite possible that changes in IRI foreign policy in fact reflected changes in Khomeini's view. Of course, this does not mean that one man—Khomeini—decided the fate of a nation independently of the objective circumstances. What it does mean is that the trend that received Khomeini's support and consequently maintained the initiative also commanded the state.

Certainly the practicality of a faction's policy has had a direct effect on this complex process. Thus, in November 1979 the Provisional Government simply lost Khomeini's support while its rival faction managed to gain his backing for the hostage-taking policy. The importance of this point can be seen by examining the process by which various trends have managed to dominate foreign policy decision making. Khomeini was the ultimate authority and the factions sought his approval for their legitimacy, but the factions shaped Khomeini's view and in turn were affected by the outcome of his decision. The validity of this notion can be realized by comparing Khomeini's view with that of the various phases. Khomeini's initial interpretation of "neither East nor West" seems to have been closer to the isolationist trend.⁴² This included the American hostage issue, the "Great Satan" image of the United States, and the anti-Sovietism of 1982-84. Yet, as is becoming evident, the trend toward rapprochement is changing IRI foreign policy to one of normal (if not good) relations with both the West and the East.

To answer the second question—how foreign policy will be affected by domestic economic conditions and IRI ideology—two factors must be noted. First, the IRI has been built upon Islamic tradition, which is generally seen as guaranteeing the right to private property. Indeed, none of the Iranian leaders has ever denied this principle. An Islamic state that does not radically break with this tradition is unlikely to break with the capitalist economic system. It

seems likely, then, that a capitalist IRI in the long run will remain within the world capitalist system. One scholar has suggested, "During the two and a half years that have elapsed since the revolution, despite all the rhetoric, very little has been done to fundamentally alter the dependent capitalist economic structure inherited from the old regime."⁴³

These factors should guarantee the IRI's ties with the West and provide a strong anticommunist element in IRI foreign policy. Ibrahim Yazidi's statement that "at least Americans believe in God" was not an empty phrase. Similar beliefs were echoed by Rafsanjani when he said: "We do not have ill feelings that he [Reagan] has sent a Bible. He is, after all, a Christian and believes in the Bible and knows that, as Moslems, we accept Jesus and the Bible in principle. He, therefore, found a common denominator between himself and us."⁴⁴ Therefore, though the IRI leadership may want to create an independent (*khodkafa'i-e eqtesadi*), this may not become a reality. And how a dependent economy will affect the political independence of the IRI only time will tell.

In answering the third question, concerning the future direction of Iran's foreign policy, one must consider the factor that will affect the country's short-term future more than any other—namely, its postwar reconstruction. With the Iran-Iraq war at an end, the reconstruction policies of the immediate future are becoming an important foreign policy issue. It is evident that Iran by itself cannot repair the damage to its economy, which is estimated to have run in the hundreds of billions of dollars; the country will need all the help it can find. At the time of the cease-fire, the Islamic leaders realized this fact very clearly, and there soon began talk of collaboration with both the West and the East and even of allowing investments by multinational corporations.

Nevertheless, although the need for cooperation with the outside world will moderate IRI foreign relations, it will also widen the gap between those who wish to conduct the reconstruction with outside involvement and those who wish to do the job by relying on Iran's very limited domestic resources. In this context, factional tension intensified in 1988–89. In a September 1988 speech Khamene'i, a conservative, complained that the same people who wanted the IRI to confront the Iraqi army with Molotov cocktails now were saying that reconstruction must be achieved by relying only on Iran's domestic resources.⁴⁵ At the opposite end of the spectrum, Mousavi warned about the dangers of dependency on the multinationals, and added, "If we become careless and build up a debt of a few tens of billions of dollars in a few years, then America does not have to fear our political and Islamic slogans since it will have all the levers for the control of our revolution."⁴⁶ As of 1989, the pragmatists occupy the center of the spectrum, and their task is either to find a common denominator

between the two extremes or to side with one of them against the other. Domestically they sided with the isolationists up to the summer of 1988. But on reconstruction they have tended to lean toward the conservatives. Up to late 1988, Khomeini gave his support to the pragmatists. But his remarks on reconstruction in October of that year showed a hard-line approach. In a later message to the people he rejected cooperation with the "criminal Soviet Union" and the "world-devouring United States," and added, "As long as I live, I will not allow the real direction of our policies to change."⁴⁷ It is not clear how much of this was rhetoric and how much was real, however, for Khomeini sided with the pragmatists on most issues.

Epilogue

The Satanic Verses

The crisis over Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* in early 1989 suddenly gave a new direction to the foreign policy of the IRI. After violent demonstrations in Pakistan and India denouncing Rushdie, Khomeini in February 1989 issued a decree calling for Rushdie's death. A few days later, on 22 February, Khomeini openly attacked those liberals who tried to mislead the revolution.⁴⁸ Following these events some twelve West European governments reduced their diplomatic missions in Tehran to express their objections to Khomeini's actions.

If nothing else, the Salman Rushdie crisis showed, once again, Khomeini's essential and decisive role in the decision-making processes of the IRI. But why did he decide to take such an extreme action? Did not this mean a complete reversal of the rapprochement policy and thus a strong setback for the pragmatists? What factors, other than the book itself, effected such a sudden shift of policy, and how strategic was this policy reversal?

Khomeini's initial angry reaction to *The Satanic Verses* and his death decree for Rushdie may have been more of an emotional outburst than a pre-planned move against the pragmatists. A similar outburst had occurred a few weeks earlier. In that case Khomeini had asked for the severe punishment of five radio officials who were responsible for a disrespectful program regarding the daughter of the Prophet Mohammad. A woman interviewed on the program had suggested that her role model was a Japanese television personality and not the prophet's daughter, Fatima. In his angry response, Khomeini called for the death of those responsible if it was intentional and heavy punishment if it was not. A few days later he forgave all of them.

Whether the outburst against Rushdie was deliberate or spontaneous, the

outcome was advantageous to the radical-statists and their isolationist policy. In terms of the IRI's relations with the West, it looked as if whatever the pragmatists had planned during the last few years was destroyed overnight. All the preparations for normalization with the West were swept aside by the Rushdie storm. On the other hand, not surprisingly, the crisis resulted in closer relations with the East.

Despite the turn of events in the IRI's foreign policy and Khomeini's apparent tough anti-Western rhetoric, one must note that domestically the power base of the advocates of the pragmatic approach was hardly touched. Khomeini may have discarded, for the time being, the pragmatic approach, but he did not move against the pragmatists in any other form. This left them in a strong position.

The most obvious feature of the early 1989 developments was Khomeini's vacillation: It was he who supported the rapprochement efforts of the pragmatists. It was he who accepted peace with Iraq and shocked the radical-statists. And in early 1989 it was he who changed direction again and seemed to be supporting the isolationists. Yet this history of vacillation between loyal IRI factions also suggested that the latest shift in government policy might not be long term either. The death decree, although damaging to the IRI's relations with the West, might very well have helped the state satisfy supporters who were both fanatical and disappointed with the war's outcome and the rapprochement policy.

There is a point in revolutionary movements when the leaders whose lives have been devoted to the revolution may stand in its way; they may, at times, start to damage the system they want to save. Mao Zedong had reached such a stage toward the end of his life. Brezhnev's prolonged illness allowed his aides to manipulate his authority. It is entirely possible that Khomeini reached such a point as well. Because of his authority and his special position in the IRI ruling elite, Khomeini's vacillation between different policies left Iran with no firm long-term policies while he was alive.

The Post-Khomeini Period

In the aftermath of Khomeini's death on 3 June 1989, there have been strong signs that the pragmatists have resumed their drive for the implementation of their program. To begin with, Khamene'i was selected to replace Khomeini as faqih. This move was a political compromise between the factions more than anything else. That Khamene'i was a political choice is clear, for he does not have the religious authority required to be Khomeini's replacement. Khamene'i and the conservatives have no great differences with the pragmatists

over foreign policy, but they are in opposition to the radicals on almost every issue.

The IRI constitution was modified in a referendum held on 28 July 1989, the same day as the presidential election. The most important element of change was the concentration of power in the office of the president and the elimination of the prime minister's post (the radicals' power base). Rafsanjani won the presidency by an overwhelming majority. In the Majles, the powerful position of the head of the foreign affairs subcommittee was taken away from Sadeq Khakhaei, a radical, and given to Said Raja'i-Khorasani, a pragmatist and former IRI ambassador to the United Nations.

Regarding the Soviet bloc, relations have already improved dramatically. The multimillion-dollar agreements signed between the IRI and the USSR would have been inconceivable only two years ago. Regarding the West, Rafsanjani did not waste much time and sent out friendly signals only five days after Khomeini's death. In an interview with foreign reporters in Tehran he talked about the IRI's desire to have normal relations with the West if domination was not part of the deal.⁴⁹ As of August 1989, the domination of the pragmatists appears to be strong.

Notes

1. What Iranians actually say is *nah sharqi, nah gharbi*, literally "neither Eastern nor Western."
2. R. K. Ramazani, "Khomeyni's Islam in Iran's Foreign Policy," in *Islam in Foreign Policy*, ed. Akbed Dawisha (London: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 21.
3. *Ibid.*, 17.
4. *Jomhuri-ye Islami*, 21 Oct. 1980.
5. *Iran Press Digest*, 26 May 1987 (hereafter *IPD*).
6. *Jomhuri-ye Islami*, 5 Feb. 1985.
7. *The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran* (Tehran: Islamic Propagation Organization, n.d.), 70.
8. Gary Sick, *All Fall Down: America's Tragic Encounter with Iran* (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), 168-69.
9. The Muslim Students Following the Imam's Line (SFL) were responsible for the takeover of the U.S. embassy in Tehran in 1979. They were under the political guidance of Habibollah Payman, the leader of the Muslim Combatants, and Hojjat al-Islam Mursavi Khochinia, a member of the IRI Central Committee. The SFL were able to confiscate hundreds of documents following the embassy takeover. Although they were only a few hundred in number, by their use as a political tool, the documents played an important role in Iranian politics. For more, see Mohsen M. Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1988), 274-76; *IPD*, 14 Jan. 1986.
10. *Documents of the Nest of Spikes (Asnad-e-laneh-ye jasuri)* (N.p.: Muslim Students Following the Imam's Line, n.d.), 15:59.
11. *Ibid.*, 34:138.
12. *Ibid.*, 18:25.
13. Quoted in *Iran Almanac and Book of Facts* (Tehran: Echo of Iran, 1987), 83.

14. *Ibid.*, 84.
15. Shaul Bakhash, *The Reign of the Ayatollahs* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), 98.
16. *Ibid.*, 108.
17. *Kayhan* (Teheran), 1 Jan. 1983.
18. *IPD*, 16 July 1985. Some Soviet embassy personnel were also asked to leave Iran.
19. *Kayhan* (Teheran), 3 May 1983.
20. For the document regarding the plan to attack the opposition, see Kar (the publication of the Organization of Iranian People's Fedai Guerrillas), 26 May 1981.
21. *New York Times*, 20 Nov. 1986.
22. R. K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1988), 32-54.
23. *Kayhan* (Teheran), 29 Oct. 1984.
24. *Ettela'at* (Teheran), 23 Aug. 1984.
25. *IPD*, 18 Sept. 1984.
26. *Ibid.*, 23 Apr. 1985.
27. *Ibid.*, 12 Feb. 1985.
28. *Ibid.*, 18 Feb. 1986.
29. This point was made by Asgarizadeh, who was a member of the SRI, in *Kayhan* (Teheran) 28 Dec. 1986. See *Aqazi*, nos. 3-4 (Winter-Spring 1986-87): 19.
30. For an analysis of factionalism in the IRI, see Shahrrooagh Akhavi, "Elite Factionalism in the Islamic Republic of Iran," *Middle East Journal* 2 (Spring 1987): 181-201.
31. Khomeini's decrees, in his capacity as both a *marja' e taqlid* (source of emulation) and the Supreme Religious Leader (*vall-ye faqih*), made two important points. First, the state may regulate the activities of the private sector, and second, the state (that is, *velayat-e faqih*) has the ultimate power compared to the traditional Islamic laws (*shari'a*).
32. Ahmad Ashraf, in a recent interview, has categorized the factions the same way, under slightly different names. He calls them the conservative/traditionalists, the pragmatic/moderates, and the radicals. See *Middle East Report*, no. 156 (January-February 1989): 13.
33. *Kayhan* (Teheran), 22 Nov. 1986. Rafsanjani suggests that Khomeini knew about the affair by saying: "Of course, that day, we could arrest them [the MeFarlane group], put them on trial and have them shot as spies. But such action did not fit into our plan. Therefore after a consultation in presence of the Imam, we decided to let the gentlemen leave in good health." See *Kayhan Hava'i*, 24 Dec. 1986.
34. The Hashemi group was the core of an organ named Liberation Movement Support Center. The head of the group was Mehdi Hashemi, who was a distant relative of Ayatollah Montazeri and a close childhood friend of his son Mohammad. The group is credited with exposing the MeFarlane mission to Tehran (1986). Subsequently, Hashemi and his accomplices were arrested, on different charges, and Mehdi was executed. For more on this group and its history, see "On Mehdi Hashemi and His Group," *Iran Press Digest*, no. 43 (November 1986).
35. Nikki R. Keddie, "Iranian Imbroglis: Who's Irrational?" *World Policy Journal* 5 (Winter 1987-88): 31.
36. *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, 22 Apr. 1987.
37. *Ibid.*, 9 Sept. 1987.
38. *Ibid.*, 26 Jan. 1988.
39. *Iran Times*, 26 Aug. 1988.
40. *Kayhan Hava'i*, 14 Sept. 1988.
41. This was reported in *Le Monde*, 15 Oct. 1988. See *Iran Times*, 21 Oct. 1988. Musavi has denied writing this letter.
42. See nn. 1 and 2.

43. M. H. Pestaran, "The System of Dependent Capitalism in Pre- and Post-Revolution Iran," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (November 1982): 14.
44. *IPD*, 3 Feb. 1987.
45. *Iran Times*, 9 Sept. 1988.
46. *Kayhan Hava'i*, 5 Oct. 1988.
47. *New York Times*, 5 Oct. 1988.
48. *Iran Times*, 24 Feb. 1989.
49. *Ibid.*, 16 July 1989.