

The Right Side of History

 KHAMENEI.IR

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Words of Wisdom

Each day that passes by for the Islamic Republic of Iran... the value of the sacrifice that the martyrs have made becomes more manifested than before. With their blood, they consolidated the foundations of this magnificent and glorious structure and turned the newly-grown sapling into a robust tree with strong roots. The door is open to striving on various arenas and the peak of jihad (selfless endeavor) is martyrdom.

From Martyr Imam Khamenei's speech on Sept. 27, 2018



Word for Word

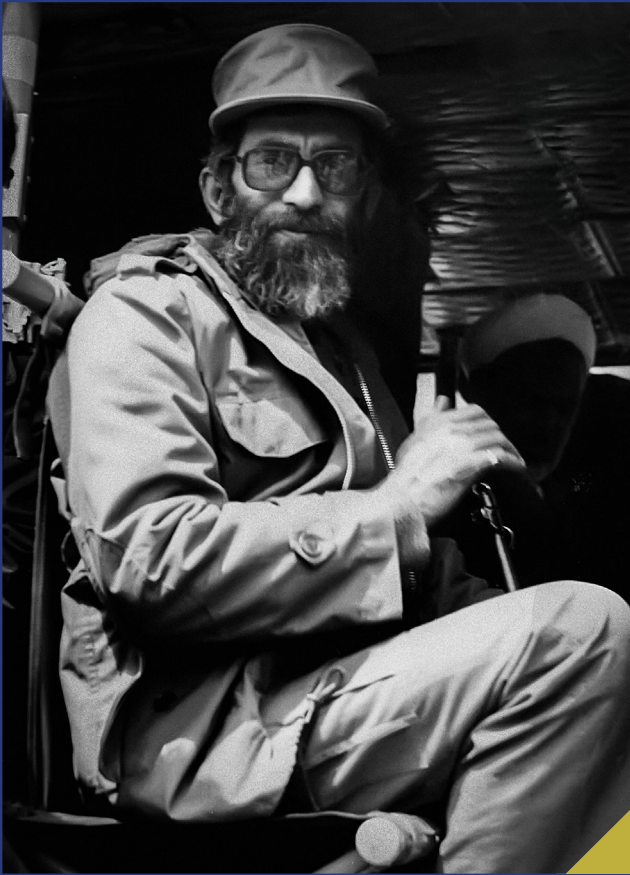
In that era [of the 8-Year Sacred Defense], it was not only the Ba'athist regime of Saddam that had confronted us, rather it was a general and international war against the people of Iran. NATO helped Saddam, so did America and the Soviet Union of those days. Moreover, the Arab reactionary system deluged their financial and monetary help and their oil revenues towards them like a flood.

As for their propaganda, it belonged and continues to belong to the Zionists. It used to work, day and night, against the Islamic Republic of Iran and in favor of them and it did so throughout the world. In that great spectacle... the great power of the people of Iran, the power of faith, the power of resistance, the power of trust in God, the power of reliance on "Ruhullah" [God's spirit] and above all, the power of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran staged an uprising. "Qiamullah" [uprising for the sake of God] means this: "I admonish you on one point: that you rise up for Allah in pairs or singly" (The Holy Quran, 34: 46). They staged qiamullah, they entered the arena, and they offered their lives, their power and their capabilities.

From Martyr Imam Khamenei's speech on Sept. 28, 2016



Memorable Frame



His formal attire was the traditional clerical vestment – the ammameh, qaba, and aba. Yet, in the very opening days of the war between Iran and the Iraqi Ba'athist regime [1980–1988], he put on a military uniform to stand alongside the combatants, boost their morale, and prepare firsthand battlefield reports for Imam Khomeini (ra).

In the final days of the first week of the war, Mr. Khamenei and Dr. Chamran met with Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in Tehran. There, they reached a decision that would change the course of the war in the days ahead:

"I sought the Imam's permission to travel to the south and mobilize the people against the enemy. That was the secret behind our departure. In the meeting where I raised the matter and sought his approval, the Imam did not simply

grant permission; he assigned it to me as a religious duty. In other words, he commanded me to go. I certainly hadn't expected him to issue such a clear and decisive directive. The late Martyr Chamran was also present at that meeting. Apparently, he had not initially come intending to ask for permission in that sense. But when I requested leave, he turned to the Imam and said, 'Then please allow me to go as well.' The Imam replied, 'I have no objection.'" He flew to Ahvaz aboard a C-130 aircraft alongside Martyr Mostafa Chamran and a contingent of military personnel. He put on a military uniform just like the others, carried a Kalashnikov rifle, and headed to the front lines to boost the fighters' morale and gather firsthand reports for Imam Khomeini. Upon returning from this trip, he went to see Imam Khomeini while still wearing that same military uniform. Seeing Mr. Khamenei in this attire, Imam Khomeini remarked that there was a time when wearing such clothing was deemed unsuitable for religious scholars, but now Muslim clerics take pride in wearing it. These trips soon became a regular mission for Mr. Khamenei. He would travel to the war zones, conduct field inspections, and submit his travel reports to Imam Khomeini.

Mr. Khamenei deeply loved his official clerical attire. He had been accustomed to the ammameh and qaba ever since he was a child. Yet, to fulfill his duties and serve the people, he would occasionally change his attire. During the war, he wore a military uniform; years later, following an earthquake, he went among the affected population in disguise to truly understand their plight. While his outward attire changed, all of these actions were guided by a single path and a single purpose.



The People Rise Up

Should any event befall this country, Almighty God will raise these people to confront it. The people will be the ones who will stop it.

Martyr Khamenei

Feb. 1, 2026



The massive "Ready to Sacrifice for Iran" parade took place on Sept. 18, 2026, with the participation of several thousand popular mobilization forces, men and women alike, under the slogan "Labbayk Ya Khamenei."





Opinion

Two Wars, One Test

Sayyid Abdollah Motevalian, strategic studies expert

The 46th anniversary of the Sacred Defense coincides with the seventh month of the recent war, offering two major lessons. The first war was a school of resistance for Iran; the recent war is a test of whether that resistance can be transformed into strategic resilience.

Wars begin with weapons, but their fate—especially in the new generation of hybrid wars—is not determined by weapons alone. At times, the most important battlefield is one that does not appear on any map: the point at which a nation must decide how to stand after the first blow, how to rebuild itself, and how to prevent the “shock” it has suffered from turning into a “calculative defeat.” Forty-six years after the outbreak of the 8-Year Imposed War, comparing that war with the recent one is highly instructive in one respect: The technological gap and the nature of warfare between the two eras have changed dramatically, but the fundamental question remains the same: Can military blows and multilayered pressure alter Iran’s system of strategic calculation?

In the First Imposed War, Iraq, backed by the system of domination (NATO and the Warsaw Pact), initially managed to occupy parts of Iranian territory through a surprise attack. Yet the war did not end at the point where the aggressor expected it to. Eight years later, Iran had driven the enemy out of every inch of Iranian territory. In the new war, the battlefield environment is entirely different: precision and speed of fire, intelligence, satellites, cyberspace, electronic warfare, the economy, and media operations have become deeply intertwined. In official US documents, the policy of “maximum pressure” encompasses economic, diplomatic, financial, technological, media, and military pressure applied simultaneously. Yet at least five strategic similarities between the two wars merit consideration.

First, the initial blow is not the same as the final outcome. Surprise can buy time, destroy infrastructure, or impose heavy costs; but none of these, on its own—at least within Iran’s political system—is equivalent to changing

the strategic outcome. The gap between “operational success” and “achieving the political objective” is precisely where resilience reveals itself.

Second, the objective of war is not merely military capability; it is also decision-making capacity. If pressure can create a gap between the costs of war and the will of society, between economic pressure and social cohesion, or between threats and the quality of decision-making, then it has moved beyond the military battlefield. True resilience, therefore, means preserving the quality of decision-making under pressure.

Third, in both wars, the people have been a vital component of the strategic power environment, although the form of their participation has differed.

During the first Sacred Defense, popular participation—from support and relief efforts to providing manpower and intelligence—turned the war into a national, people-centered struggle. Today, however, being “people-centered” does not simply mean participation on the military front. Public trust, the continuity of economic activity, resistance to psychological operations, the production of reliable information, the preservation of social cohesion, and the continued presence of the people on the scene are also essential components of that capacity.

Fourth, in both wars, supreme command and the bond between the people and the leadership were pillars of preserving national will. During the Sacred Defense, the leadership of Imam Khomeini (may God sanctify his soul) succeeded in connecting the battlefield with the will of the people and keeping society cohesive in the face of wartime pressure. In the recent war as well, the leadership and the emotional and ideological bond between a large part of society and the leadership have played a pivotal role in maintaining cohesion and sustaining resistance. In both experiences, command was not merely about directing the military battlefield; it also involved transforming the pressure of war into collective will and preserving the nation’s strategic direction.

Fifth, the end of a war cannot be measured solely by the intensity of fire. In the first war, the determination of military commanders and the unique role of the

people—from their homes to the front lines—became essential parts of the process that brought the war to an end. In modern wars as well, the presence of the people on the scene, the military battlefield, political and diplomatic activity, and efforts to serve the people cannot be separated from one another. From this perspective, the most important lesson of September 22 is not merely a reminder of past resistance. The Sacred Defense is a historical asset for understanding “how to stand”; the new war has posed a more difficult question to Iran: How can the ability to stand be transformed into the capacity to adapt, rebuild, preserve the power of

calculation, and impose one’s will on the enemy? If the first war was a school of standing firm and resistance, the greater test today is strategic, multilayered resilience: the ability of a nation to absorb a blow, repair the damage, learn from experience, and determine its future not by the severity of the blow it has suffered, but by its actual capacity—and to impose its will on the enemy. Two wars, two eras, and two different forms of warfare; yet one shared test: how far can pressure affect a nation, and how far can a nation preserve its right to determine and calculate its own future? In both wars, victory belongs to the nation that remains in the field.

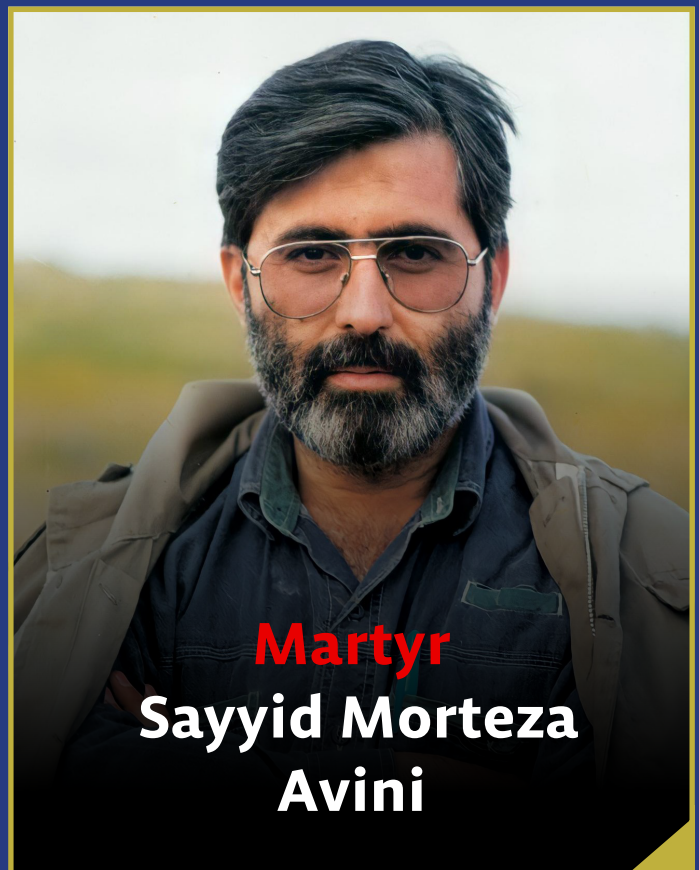


A moment with caravan of martyrs

Martyr Sayyid Morteza Avini: The Master of the Martyred Writers

He was born on September 12, 1947, in the city of Rey, into a family that would give Iran one of its most remarkable artistic and intellectual figures. His early years took him from Rey to Khomein, then to Zanzan, and later to Kerman, where he completed his secondary education in mathematics. He went on to study architecture at the University of Tehran, earning his master’s degree in the field. But even then, his true preoccupations lay elsewhere — in philosophy, in literature, and in poetry. His peers recognized in him a rare intellectual depth, a mind that was never content with surfaces. He was drawn to the questions that matter, and he pursued them with a quiet, relentless intensity.

Then came 1979 — the return of Imam Khomeini from exile, and the triumph of the Islamic Revolution. Morteza Avini listened to the words of the Great Khomeini with undivided attention, and something in him settled. He had found what he had been searching for.



Martyr
Sayyid Morteza
Avini

He set aside his work in architecture and dedicated himself entirely to cultural and artistic work.

Between 1985 and 1988, alongside a group of dedicated companions, he created the documentary series *Ravayat-e Fath* (The Narrative of Conquest). It began with the Kheibar operation and continued through the

Mersad operation, capturing the Sacred Defense in a form that had never been seen before. His method sought not merely to record events but to reveal their inner truth, to make visible what lay beneath the surface of the Imposed War.

Those films became legendary. In *Ravayat-e Fath*, and in every film he directed or edited, the names of the crew were never shown. Avini had made a decision, and he remained faithful to it: the work would speak, and he would remain unknown. His voice, however, was unmistakable. The martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution, speaking of that voice, described himself as a regular viewer of *Ravayat-e Fath* — without ever knowing who Avini was. He had stated: "Sometimes a person says something great, but it is clear he himself does not believe it. But this voice, the narrator of *Ravayat-e Fath*, was the voice that spoke the greatest words and believed them. He would say, 'Our youth are more familiar with the paths of the heavens than with the paths of the earth.' He said it in such a way as though he himself had walked the paths of heaven, seen them, and knew they were more familiar. We imagine that a voice of war must be rough and harsh. But he did not have that kind of voice. It was an innocent, noble voice — and yet possessed a special firmness, in a strong and artistic written form."

On September 12, 1992 — Avini spoke of martyrdom: "Life is beautiful, but martyrdom

is more beautiful than it. The health of the body is beautiful, but the bird of love sees the body as a cage placed in a garden."

On April 9, 1993, while producing a new series of *Ravayat-e Fath* in Fakkah, Sayyid Morteza Avini was martyred — struck by a mine left behind by Iraqi forces. He was forty-five.

His body was carried through the streets on April 11, in a funeral attended by Martyr Imam Khamenei. In a handwritten note on a Quran gifted to the martyr's family, the martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution remembered him as "the dear martyr and the Master of the Martyred Writers." His martyrdom anniversary was named "Islamic Revolution Art Day." The cultural institution *Ravayat-e Fath* was established in 1991 following the emphasis of the martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution on continuing the production of such documentaries.

He was a filmmaker, a photographer, a journalist, a writer, and a theorist of Islamic cinema. His analytical essays critiquing Western civilization were published in *Sureh* magazine.

He walked among us unknown — filming the heavens with a camera, narrating the courage of others while hiding his own. He was not a man of fame. He was a man of truth. And when he fell, he fell on the soil of the front, in the land where he had spent his life searching for meaning. The world learned his name only after he was gone — and when it did, it wept.



Narrating the Art



"O you who have faith! If you help Allah, He will help you, and make your feet steady."
(Holy Quran, 47:7)

Since the triumph of the Islamic Revolution, the enemies of Iran have never ceased their attempts to overthrow the popular Revolution — seeking, in one way or another, to undermine the lives and well-being of the Iranian people. Shortly after the Revolution's victory in 1979, Saddam Hussein — with the full backing of many powers around the world, above all the United States — launched an aggression against Iran, hoping to conquer its cities, overthrow the Islamic Republic, and dine in Tehran by the third day of the war. The Iranians, however, had different plans for him. What was meant to end swiftly in Iran's absolute defeat became one of the longest

wars of the modern era. Across eight years of Sacred Defense, courageous Iranian fighters retook every inch of occupied territory and inflicted severe damage on Saddam's fully equipped army.

Nearly five decades later, history repeated itself. This time, the Zionist regime — joined by the United States itself — waged two wars against Iran and its people. Once again, in both conflicts, they dreamed of Iran's immediate surrender. Once again, the powerful Iranian Armed Forces and the brave Iranian nation made the enemy regret its aggression.

This time, the powerful strikes of the Iranian Armed Forces against the most vital interests of both the United States and the Zionist regime were matched by the epic presence of the people in streets and squares across Iran — defending their country, their identity, their heritage. And this continues to this day: the people remain in the streets, demonstrating their full support and unwavering dedication, fearing nothing, defending their homeland, and wishing for martyrdom in the path of Almighty God.

"Martyrdom is the reward for relentless struggle, whether it's in the 8-year Sacred Defense or it's in the heroic 12-Day battle...What is of paramount importance is that we should be certain about God's promise concerning the victory of truth and the decline of falsehood, and that we must be committed to our duty to aid the religion of God."¹

1. Excerpt from the martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution's speech on Sept. 24, 2025



A word to my martyred Leader

To Imam Sayyid Ali Khamenei.

Asalaam alaikum.

I'm writing this message far away from the borders of the Islamic Republic of Iran not as a supporter of the Islamic Republic of Iran but as a human who believes in justice and respect for everyone irrespective of race, tribe, colour or religious affiliation.

If I could sit before you, even for a moment, the words would struggle to express the ocean of gratitude and admiration that fills my heart. So, I write this message, a prayer whispered on paper, hoping its essence reaches your noble spirit. First and foremost, I want to thank you. Thank you for being a voice that refuses to be silenced. In a world where might and arrogance often makes right, where the powerful rewrite history to justify their crimes, your voice has rung out, clear and unwavering, for the oppressed. You have not just spoken for the people of Palestine; you have given them a place of honor on the world stage. You have reminded the Ummah, and all of humanity, that the occupation of a land and the siege of a people are not political issues to be managed, but moral wounds that must be healed. You have kept the cause of Al-Quds alive, not as a slogan, but as a central pillar of justice. For this, every free person on earth owes you a debt of gratitude.

To me, you are an embodiment of the highest morality in leadership. In an era of transactional politics and self-serving rulers, your life is a testament to principle. You have demonstrated that true strength lies not in the might of an army alone, but in the strength of one's conviction. Your patience, your steadfastness (your Sabar), and your profound dignity in the face of relentless pressure from the world's superpowers are a masterclass in ethical leadership. You have shown that a leader's greatest asset is not his wealth or his arsenal, but his unwavering trust in God and his unshakeable commitment to his people and his values. This is the morality of the true leaders—a leadership that serves, that sacrifices, and that stands for truth even when standing alone.

This is why I believe you are the definition of a true leader—the kind every leader in the world should strive to emulate. You are not merely a political figurehead; you are a guide, a father figure to the Ummah. You lead with wisdom,

not whims; with justice, not prejudice; and with a vision that looks beyond the immediate horizon to a future of dignity and liberation. You remind us that leadership is a responsibility not a privilege, a heavy trust from God, and you have carried it with an honor that inspires millions around the world.

It is my deepest and most sincere wish that I could meet you, Imam. To sit in your presence, even in a large gathering, would be a profound honor. To see the light of faith and certainty in your eyes, to hear the wisdom of your words directly—it would be a spiritual pilgrimage. I believe such a meeting would not just be an encounter with a leader, but an encounter with the living spirit of the Revolution, with the unwavering faith that moves mountains. I will hold your example in my heart as a beacon of hope.

May The Almighty Allah grant you Jannah and May Almighty Allah continue to help the Islamic Republic of Iran to win against the aggressors for humanity. A win for Iran is a win for humanity. You are in our prayers.

With the deepest respect and love,
A humble admirer from afar.

Hashim Ali,
Kampala, Uganda.



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