

# Terror and consolidation



Especially during the first years of its rule, the revolutionary regime was confronted by numerous strong internal opponents. Although the diverse opposition groups had cooperated in their common goal of bringing down the [Shah's regime](#), their ideas differed greatly in many respects. Many of the dissident groups that had been part of the broad and diverse coalition that [brought about the downfall of the Shah](#) opposed Khomeini's policies.

Moreover, the revolutionary movement that took power after the downfall of the Shah, like revolutionary movements elsewhere, did not have a clear programme for the building of a 'just Islamic state'. Arguments arose within the leadership over the form of the state and the institutionalization of power.

A new phase in the Revolution began with the impeachment of President Banisadr on 22 June 1981. While the revolutionary movement had consisted of clerics, middle-class liberals, and secular radicals against the Shah, the dismissal of Banisadr by Khomeini represented the triumph of the more fundamentalist clerical party over the other members of the coalition.

Especially during 1981 and 1982, people became disillusioned with the course the revolutionary government had taken. Revolutionary groups such as the [Tudeh](#) and the [Mujahedin-e Khalq](#), which had also contributed to the downfall of the Shah, fiercely opposed the shape the new state was taking, with some resorting to violence. In addition, rebellions by various ethnic groups erupted throughout the country. The revolutionary leadership suppressed the rebellions and the opposition groups harshly.

Following the fall of Banisadr, opposition groups attempted to reorganize and violently overthrow the government. The government responded with repression and terror. The [war with Iraq](#) that had started with Iraq's invasion in September 1980 was often used as an argument for the harsh suppression of opponents, who were portrayed as a threat to national security. Thousands of opponents were arrested, tortured, and executed or forced to flee the country. The government also took steps to implement its version of an [Islamic legal system](#) and an Islamic code of social and moral behaviour.



From l. to r.: Abolhassan Banisadr (first elected President of the Islamic Republic), Mehdi Bazargan (interim Prime Minister) and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in 1979



Abolhassan Banisadr in 1979