



What Do Structural Changes in the Revolutionary Guards Mean?

By Ali Alfoneh

In 2007, the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) changed command. Major General Mohammad Ali Jafari became the new commander in chief, only the seventh in the organization's history. He immediately implemented a major restructuring to move the IRGC's primary focus from external defense to internal security. The changes are more cosmetic than actual, but they do signal a renewed crackdown on reformism and civil society.

The old Washington adage that personnel are policy is as true in the Islamic Republic of Iran as in the United States. On September 1, 2007, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei appointed Brigadier General Mohammad Ali Jafari—also known as Aziz Jafari and Ali Jafari—to be the seventh commander in chief of the IRGC (see table 1).¹ Two days later, he promoted him to major general.² Jafari immediately announced fundamental structural reform in the security apparatus of the Islamic Republic.

Jafari's career success has been intertwined with growing regime acceptance of his once controversial threat assessment. Jafari earned his stripes during the Iran-Iraq War, in which he was chief of the IRGC's Najaf base.³ Against the backdrop of the grueling war, Iranian defense doctrine focused on countering external threats. Conscripts were the frontline grunts, and the IRGC became the elite, crack units. After the war, Jafari served as commander of IRGC Ground Force for more than a decade (1994–2005). He then became chief of the newly established IRGC Strategic Studies Center.⁴ Under his supervision, the center began to conduct research into “velvet revolutions” and alleged U.S.

“soft regime change policies.”⁵ He argued that the IRGC should focus on future internal threats to the Islamic Republic's stability, a push that led the IRGC to establish the Al-Zahra and 'Ashoura Brigades to serve as anti-riot forces within the organizational framework of the paramilitary Basij Resistance Force,⁶ long the subordinate little brother of the IRGC.

Upon assuming the mantle of IRGC leadership, Jafari sought to implement the theories he had developed as head of the IRGC think tank. If the chief future threats were velvet revolutions and internal strife—perhaps supported by the hidden hands of outside powers—then the IRGC needed to readjust to meet the challenge. The structure that helped the Islamic Republic beat back Iraq needed reform.

Reorganization

Jafari's reorganization had two major components: merging the Basij into the IRGC and restructuring the IRGC itself to become less centralized and more focused on the provinces. Jafari justified merging the paramilitary Basij with the elite IRGC because both organizations shared the same goal of “guarding achievements of the Revolution.”⁷ On September 28, 2007, at the farewell

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TABLE 1
IRGC LEADERS

Name	Year of Birth	Place of Birth	Educational Background before Appointment	Tenure
Zamani, Abbas-Agha (Abou-Sharif)	1939	Tehran	Bachelor's degree in Islamic law	1979
Mansouri, Javad	1945	Kashan	Unknown	April 22, 1979–unknown
Douz-Douzani, Abbas	1942	Tabriz	Introductory theology, unfinished studies in Arabic literature	1980–81
Rezai, Morteza	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	1981
Rezai, Mohsen	1954	Masjed Soleiman	High school diploma	1981–97
Safavi, Yahya Rahim	1958	Unknown	High school diploma	1997–2007
Jafari, Mohammad Ali	1957	Yazd	IRGC War College	2007–present

SOURCES: Iran Research Group, *Who's Who in Iran* (Berlin: Medien & Bücher Verlagsgesellschaft mbH, 1990); and "Az razmandegi ta sazandegi" [From War-Fighting to Reconstruction], *Shahrvand-e Emrouz* (Tehran), February 10, 2008, available in Persian at www.aftab.ir/articles/politics/plitical_history/c1c1202639143_enghelab_eslami_p1.php (accessed July 30, 2008).

ceremony for Basij chief Brigadier General Seyyed Mohammad Hejazi, Jafari explained that the IRGC was a "military-political-cultural organization sharing the same organizational goals as the Basij" and that "half of the Revolutionary Guards' mission is placed on the shoulders of the Basij."⁸ Then, on October 25, 2007, Jafari assured Basij members that their organization would not be merged into the IRGC Ground Forces, but would remain as a distinct unit within the IRGC.⁹

The supreme leader endorsed Jafari's reorganization, an unsurprising move given that he does not generally appoint officials whose agenda he does not support. Indeed, when the supreme leader appointed Hejazi as deputy chief of the IRGC on May 22, 2008,¹⁰ he demonstrated his full support for formally folding the Basij into the IRGC. After all, such an appointment involved displacing IRGC graybeards such as former IRGC chief and counterintelligence director Brigadier General Morteza Rezai.¹¹ Khamenei also preserved the special status of the Basij when, on July 13, 2008, he appointed Hojjat al-Islam Hossein Ta'eb to be "IRGC Basij chief."¹²

This may suggest that there is less to security sector reform than meets the eye. Perhaps Jafari wishes to demonstrate his abilities as a strong man, and he initiated a process by which he is least likely to encounter resistance: incorporation of the Basij, an organization whose independence is more form than substance. The Basij and the IRGC both arose out of the chaos and upheaval that led to the Islamic Revolution. The leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, established the paramilitary Basij by a November 26, 1979, decree,¹³

but the Basij was already a fact on the ground before Khomeini formalized its existence.

Initially, Khomeini supervised the Basij, but in August 1980, President Abol-Hassan Bani Sadr laid claim to the Basij in his capacity as commander in chief. The IRGC opposed Bani Sadr's claim, which they saw as a power grab,¹⁴ and legally the control of the Basij remained disputed. After Bani Sadr fell from favor and fled into exile in June 1981, the Basij theoretically fell under Ministry of Interior control, but in reality, the IRGC never lost control from the very beginning of the Basij.

The March 19, 1980, issue of IRGC mouthpiece *Payam-e Enghelab*, a weekly newspaper, explained that the IRGC had formed the Basij as a specialized unit within its own organizational structure to "answer the call of the Leader of the Revolution Imam Khomeini to expand military training all over the country, especially among the youth." It was composed of "representatives of different units of the Guards."¹⁵ The IRGC was further responsible for "registration, screening, training and organizing,"¹⁶ hardly a factor that would suggest the Basij to be an organization independent of the IRGC. Any remaining doubt should have been put to rest when, on February 17, 1981, the Iranian parliament formally incorporated the Basij into the IRGC's organizational structure.¹⁷

In subsequent years, the IRGC focused on primary security threats—largely external—while the Basij filled secondary gaps. The statute of the Revolutionary Guards, passed by parliament on July 6, 1982, listed the obligations of the Basij as defense of the country and the regime and response to natural disasters (earthquakes are quite

common in Iran). With the IRGC taking command of the front with Iraq, the Basij focused on internal security to ensure discipline and loyalty to the regime, even as privations increased. The Basij divided Iranian cities into large resistance areas that were divided into zones and smaller bases, basically at the neighborhood level at which local clergy and “trusted citizens” aided recruitment.¹⁸ Tehran, for example, was divided into eight Basij areas with three hundred IRGC members serving as instructors.¹⁹ Weekly IRGC reports show that the Basij initially fulfilled its role enforcing internal security, but, as the Iran-Iraq War progressed, they also became more active as soldiers on the front lines.²⁰ Thus, while the IRGC may have been the varsity team and the Basij junior varsity, both played the same game. Bifurcation was more theoretical than real.

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Underlying this point was the fact that, while the IRGC took predominant responsibility for operations beyond Iran’s borders, the Basij also played some role. In 1982, for example, the IRGC established a Basij unit in Lebanon to “counter Zionist Israel’s expansive and multi dimensional invasion of Lebanon.”²¹

After the end of the Iran-Iraq War, IRGC members were largely recruited from the ranks of the Basij. But the Basij also assumed a role in defense, especially in non-urban areas.²² The Iranian leadership may bill Jafari’s changes as pathbreaking and radical, but a close examination shows more continuity than change.

The Mosaic Doctrine

The second major reform Jafari introduced was his “Mosaic Doctrine,” which involves dividing the IRGC into thirty-one commands—one for each province and two for Tehran (see table 2). The IRGC has, from its beginning, been a centralized entity (see figure 1 on page 7). Throughout summer 2008, Jafari and Hejazi named the

thirty-one units and appointed their chiefs and deputies. The Office of the Supreme Leader has appointed representatives in each unit to be the eyes and ears of the supreme leader. The provincial basis of IRGC units is meant to better local commanders’ control over recruitment,²³ but it also restructures IRGC capabilities as an anti-riot force and guards the organization against any attempts to decapitate it, such as might occur should U.S. or Israeli military forces strike the Islamic Republic.

Again, there may be less here than meets the eye. Many of the commanders and deputies resumed service in the same province in which they had already been based and in units that had been little more than renamed. For example, the Hazrat-e Abbas Brigade has been based in the northwestern province of Ardebil both before and after implementation of the Mosaic Doctrine. The same holds true for the ‘Ashoura Brigade in East Azerbaijan, the Shohada Brigade in West Azerbaijan, the Imam Sadegh Brigade in Bushehr, the Ansar al-Hossein Brigade in Hamedan, the Neynava Brigade in Golestan, the Ali Ibn-e Abi-Taleb Brigade in Qom, the Hazrat-e Gha’em al-Mohammad Brigade in Semnan, and the Al-Ghadir Brigade in Yazd. The only significant change in the structure of personnel appears to be the promotion of former Basij provincial chiefs to be IRGC deputy chiefs—the continuation of the pattern set by the promotion of former national Basij chief Hejazi to deputy IRGC chief. The Tehran appointments deviate slightly from the pattern since the top commanders are recruited from among central cadres of the IRGC.

Conclusions

The IRGC is the main pillar of defense for the Islamic Republic. Originally envisioned to counter both internal and external threats, the IRGC was forced to focus on external defense after Iraq’s 1980 invasion of Iran. Since the war’s end twenty years ago, the IRGC has been looking for a clear role and purpose. Jafari appears to have found it. “For the time being the main responsibility of the Revolutionary Guards is to counter internal threats, and [only] aid the Army in case of external military threat,” he clarified.²⁴ Indeed, internal threats dominated Jafari’s speeches.²⁵ At a press conference, he explained that the IRGC’s responsibilities necessitated a “special and flexible force able to counter different types of threats.”²⁶

While democracies fear external enemies, undemocratic regimes fear their own people. The paranoid dynamics of politics in the Islamic Republic make

authorities look for—and find—internal enemies, saboteurs, and, more recently, “velvet revolutionaries.”²⁷ The imagined state of emergency and fantastic claims of U.S. plots against the Islamic Republic serve the regime well. Any sign of dissent or the slightest opposition to the Islamic Republic is depicted as involvement in a foreign conspiracy. The paranoia also legitimizes IRGC intervention in domestic politics.

Jafari’s restructuring is an acknowledgment of the regime’s weakness, but its real impact is slight, more smoke-and-mirrors than a real change in command. In practice, the Basij has always been subordinate to the IRGC. Its independence was more form than substance. Likewise, the IRGC’s new provincial structure simply legalizes what had become informal reality. The IRGC has long acted as a parallel bureaucracy in the provinces. Whether Jafari truly wants reform is impossible to tell. What is clear is

that reform is difficult for the Islamic Republic. Still, sometimes even cosmetic reform can be telling. Whenever the Islamic Republic looks for internal enemies, it finds them. Indeed, having made defense against velvet revolutions his defining issue, Jafari must now prove that he will succeed. The Basij-IRGC merger and the Mosaic Doctrine may not do much for national defense, but they certainly suggest strengthening of the IRGC in internal politics of the Islamic Republic—a power that is more than likely to be used, not only against dissidents, but also against loyal elements of the Islamic Republic who challenge the creeping coup d’etat of the Revolutionary Guards.

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TABLE 2
IRGC ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AT GENERAL GOVERNORATE LEVEL—JULY 2008

Province	IRGC Unit	IRGC Commander	Previous Position	IRGC Deputy	Previous Position
Ardebil	Hazrat-e Abbas ²⁸	Colonel Jalil Baba-Zadeh ²⁹	Ardebil Hazrat-e Abbas Brigade chief ³⁰	Colonel Ghanbar Karim-Nezhad ³¹	Ardebil Basij chief ³²
Azerbaijan, East	‘Ashoura ³³	Commander Mohammad-Taghi Ossanlou ³⁴	31st Armored ‘Ashoura Division chief ³⁵	Unknown	Unknown
Azerbaijan, West	Shohada ³⁶	Brigadier General Mehdi Mo’ini ³⁷	West Azerbaijan Shohada IRGC force chief ³⁸	Commander Said Ghorban-Nezhad ³⁹	West Azerbaijan Basij chief ⁴⁰
Bushehr	Imam Sadegh ⁴¹	Colonel Fath-Allah Jamiri ⁴²	Bushehr Basij chief ⁴³	Colonel Abdol-Reza Mataf ⁴⁴	Bushehr Basij deputy ⁴⁵
Chahar-Mahal and Bakhtiari	Ghamar Bani-Hashem ⁴⁶	Brigadier General Mohammad-Soleymani ⁴⁷	Fars senior IRGC commander ⁴⁸	Commander Mehdi Jamshidi ⁴⁹	Unknown
Esfahan	Saheb al-Zaman ⁵⁰	Brigadier General Gholam-Reza Soleymani ⁵¹	Senior Esfahan IRGC commander, 14th Imam Hossein Division chief ⁵²	Unknown	Unknown
Fars	Fajr ⁵³	Brigadier General Gholam-Hossein Gheib-Parvar ⁵⁴	25th Karbala Division chief ⁵⁵	Commander Mohammad-Reza Mehdian-Far ⁵⁶	Fars Basij chief ⁵⁷
Gilan	Qods ⁵⁸	Commander Hamoun Mohammadi ⁵⁹	Iran-Iraq War veteran ⁶⁰	Commander Nazar Alizadeh ⁶¹	Gilan Basij chief ⁶²
Golestan	Neynava ⁶³	Commander Brigadier General Naser Razaghian ⁶⁴	Gorgan-based 1st Brigade of 25th Karbala Division chief ⁶⁵	Unknown	Unknown

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(Table 2 continued)

Province	IRGC Unit	IRGC Commander	Previous Position	IRGC Deputy	Previous Position
Hamedan	Ansar al-Hossein ⁶⁶	Commander Abdol-Reza Azadi ⁶⁷	Hamedan IRGC chief ⁶⁸	Commander Mehdi Sedighi ⁶⁹	Ansar Brigade deputy, Quds training camp chief, Mottahari training camp chief, Ansar al-Hossein Division deputy ⁷⁰
Hormozgan	Imam Sajjad ⁷¹	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Ilam	Amir al-Mo'ememin ⁷²	Brigadier General Seyyed Sadeq Kaki ⁷³	Hamedan IRGC senior commander, ⁷⁴ 3rd Ansar al-Hossein Brigade of the 4th Be'sat Division chief ⁷⁵	Unknown	Unknown
Kerman	Sar-Allah ⁷⁶	Commander Rouhollah Nouri ⁷⁷	Hamzeh Seyyed al-Shohada base chief ⁷⁸	Commander Gholam-Ali Abou-Hamzeh ⁷⁹	Kerman Basij chief ⁸⁰
Kermanshah	Kermanshah IRGC	Commander Mohammad-Nazar Azimi ⁸¹	4th Be'sat Infantry Division chief ⁸²	Commander Bahman Reyhani ⁸³	Unknown
Khorasan, North	Javad al-A'emeh ⁸⁴	Commander Ali Mirza-Pour ⁸⁵	Unknown	Commander Hossein-Ali Yousef-Ali-Zadeh ⁸⁶	Khorasan North Basij chief ⁸⁷
Khorasan, Razavi	Imam Reza ⁸⁸	Commander Ghodrat-Allah Mansouril ⁸⁹	5th Nasr Division chief ⁹⁰	Commander Hashem Ghiasi ⁹¹	Khorasan Razavi Basij chief ⁹²
Khorasan, South	Ansar al-Reza ⁹³	Brigadier General Gholam-Reza Ahmadi ⁹⁴	Khorasan South Basij chief ⁹⁵	Unknown	Unknown
Khuzestan	Vali-ye Asr ⁹⁶	Commander Mohammad Kazemeini ⁹⁷	7th Vali Asr Division chief ⁹⁸	Commander Mehdi Sa'adati ⁹⁹	Khuzestan Basij chief ¹⁰⁰
Kohkilou-yeh and Boyer-Ahmad	Fath ¹⁰¹	Commander 'Avaz Shahabi-Far ¹⁰²	48th Independent Brigade chief ¹⁰³	Colonel Ali-Asghar Habibi ¹⁰⁴	Unknown
Kordestan	Beit al-Moghaddas ¹⁰⁵	Allah-Nour Nour-Allahi ¹⁰⁶	Kordestan Basij chief ¹⁰⁷	Unknown	Unknown
Lorestan	Abol-Fazl al-Abbas ¹⁰⁸	Commander Shahrokh ¹⁰⁹	Independent 57th Hazrat-e Abolfazl Brigade chief ¹¹⁰	Colonel Teymour Sepahvand ¹¹¹	Lorestan Basij chief
Markazi	Rouh-Allah ¹¹²	Commander Mohammad-Taghi Shah-Cheraghi ¹¹³	Golestan Basij chief ¹¹⁴	Commander Nour-Khoda Ghasemi ¹¹⁵	Chief of 1st Rouhollah Infantry Brigade of Arak 17th Ali Ibn Abi-Taleb Division ¹¹⁶
Mazandaran	Karbala ¹¹⁷	Brigadier General Ali Shalikal ¹¹⁸	25th Karbala Division chief ¹¹⁹	Commander Ali Garmeh-i ¹²⁰	Mazandaran Basij chief ¹²¹
Qazvin	Saheb al-Amr ¹²²	Brigadier General Salar Abnoush ¹²³	12th Hazrat-e Qa'em Brigade chief ¹²⁴	Unknown	Unknown
Qom	Ali Ibn-e Abi-Taleb ¹²⁵	Brigadier General Akbar Nouri ¹²⁶	17th Qom Ali-Ibn-e Abi-Taleb Infantry Division chief ¹²⁷	Unknown	Unknown

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(Table 2 continued)

Province	IRGC Unit	IRGC Commander	Previous Position	IRGC Deputy	Previous Position
Semnan	Hazrat-e Gha'em al-Mohammad ¹²⁸	Colonel Mohammad-Hossein Babayi ¹²⁹	Kerman Basij chief ¹³⁰	Unknown	Unknown
Sistan and Baluchistan	Salman ¹³¹	Brigadier General Rajab-Ali Mohammad-Zadeh ¹³²	Unknown	Colonel Habib Lak-Zayi ¹³³	Sistan and Baluchistan Basij deputy ¹³⁴
Tehran	Seyyed al-Shohada ¹³⁵	Commander Ali Fazli ¹³⁶	Deputy operations chief of IRGC Central Command ¹³⁷	Commander Morteza Shaneh-Saz ¹³⁸	Tehran Basij chief ¹³⁹
Tehran, Greater	Mohammad Rasoul-Allah ¹⁴⁰	Brigadier General Abdollah Eragh ¹⁴¹	Greater Tehran Basij chief ¹⁴²	Unknown	Unknown
Yazd	Al-Ghadir ¹⁴³	Brigadier General Mohammad-Ali Allah-Dadi ¹⁴⁴	Independent Al-Ghadir Brigade chief	Unknown	Unknown
Zanjan	Unknown	Commander Seyyed Mehdi Mousavi ¹⁴⁵	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

Note: "Commander" is used when the exact rank is unknown.

Notes

1. "Sarlashgar Jafari farmandeh-ye koll-e Sepah-e Pasdaran shod" [Major General Jafari Appointed Commander in Chief of the Revolutionary Guards], Mehr News Agency (Tehran), September 1, 2007, available in Persian at www.mehrnews.com/fa/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=544358 (accessed July 29, 2008).

2. "Rahbar-e mo'zzam-e enghelab be farmandeh-ye jadid-e Sepah darajeh-ye sarlashkari e'ta kardand" [Supreme Leader of the Revolution Promotes Commander in Chief of the Guards to Major General], *Hamshahri* (Tehran), September 3, 2007, available in Persian at www.hamshahrionline.ir/News/?id=31692 (accessed August 4, 2008).

3. "Farmandeh-ye jadid-e Sepah-e Pasdaran kist?" [Who Is the New Chief of the Guards Corps?], Baztab (Tehran), September 1, 2007, available in Persian at www.baztab.com/news/74278.php (accessed August 4, 2008).

4. "Entesabat-e jadid dar Sepah-e Pasdaran-e Enghelab-e Eslami" [New Appointments in Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps], Aftab News (Tehran), August 20, 2005, available in Persian at www.aftabnews.ir/vdcb9a8brhb9.html (accessed August 4, 2008).

5. Mohsen Sazegara, "Iran in Three Dimensions" (speech, AEI, Washington, DC, May 19, 2008), available through www.aei.org/event1726/.

6. "Dovvomin marhaleh-ye razm-ayesh-e bozorg-e payambar-e a'zam aghaz shod" [Second Phase of the Great Prophet War Game Begins], Mehr News Agency, November 1, 2006, available in Persian at www.mehrnews.com/fa/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=400882 (accessed August 4, 2008).

7. Ibid.

8. "Sardar Jafari: Ma'mouriat-e asli-ye Sepah moghabeleh ba tahdid-ha-ye dakheli ast" [Commander Jafari: The Main Mission of the Guards Is to Counter Internal Threats], *Hamshahri*, September 29, 2007, available in Persian at www.hamshahrionline.ir/News/?id=33971 (accessed August 4, 2008).

9. "Basij dar nirou-ye zamini-ye Sepah edgham nemishavad"

[Basij Will Not Be Dissolved in the Ground Forces of the Guards], *Hamshahri*, October 26, 2007, available in Persian at www.hamshahrionline.ir/News/?id=36411 (accessed August 4, 2008).

10. "Sardar Hejazi janeshin-e farmandeh-ye koll-e Sepah shod" [Commander Hejazi Appointed Deputy Commander in Chief of the IRGC], Fars News Agency (Tehran), May 23, 2008, available in Persian at www.farsnews.net/newstext.php?nn=8703030441 (accessed August 4, 2008).

11. "Tashkil-e Sepah-e Pasdaran-e Enghelab-e Eslami be Revayat-e Mohsen Rafiqdoust" [Establishment of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps According to Mohsen Rafiqdoust], Iranian Students News Agency (ISNA) (Tehran), April 22, 2007, available in Persian at <http://iranianuk.com/article.php?id=10554> (accessed August 4, 2008); and "Mo'arefeh va towdi'e chahar farmandeh-ye arshad-e Sepah" [Presentation and Farewells of Four Senior Guards Commanders], *Kayhan* (Tehran), May 7, 2006.

12. "Marasem-e mo'arefeh-ye farmandehan-e nirou-ye zamini-ye Sepah, nirou-ye moghavemat-e Basij va Gharar-Gah-e Sar-Allah" [Presentation Ceremonies of the Guards Ground Forces, the Basij Resistance Force, and Sar-Allah Base Chief], ISNA, July 13, 2008, available in Persian at <http://isna.ir/ISNA/NewsView.aspx?ID=News-1163318&Lang=P> (accessed August 4, 2008).

13. "Artesh-e bist milyouni" [Twenty-Million-Men-Strong Army], *Payam-e Enghelab* (Tehran), November 28, 1981.

14. "Sepah, bazou-ye Velayat-e Faqih" [The Guards, Arms of the Supreme Jurist], *Payam-e Enghelab*, July 11, 1981.

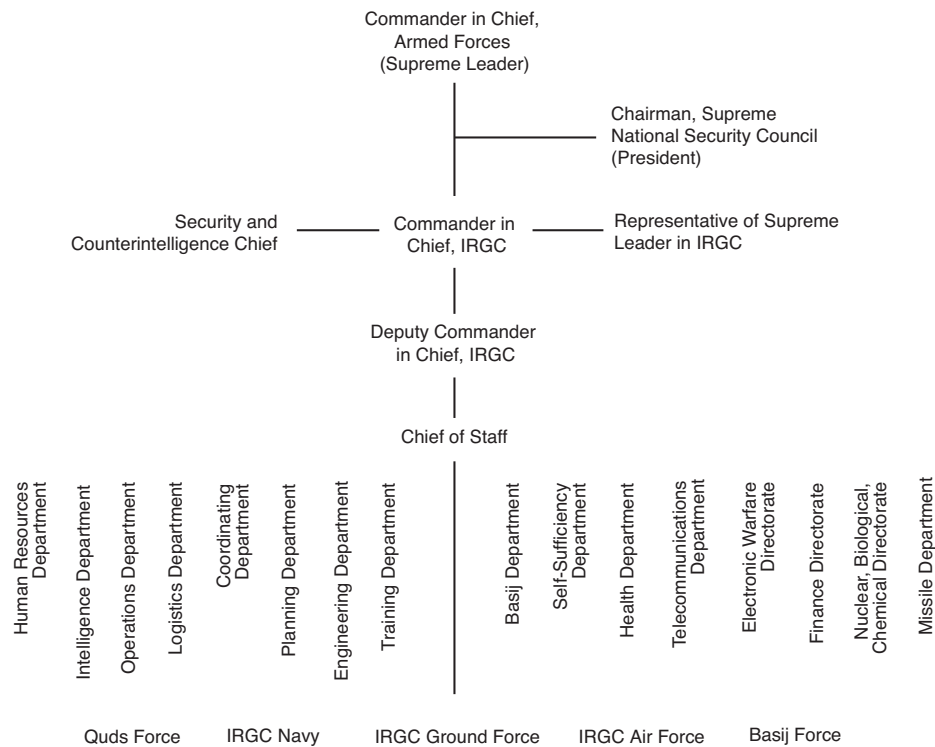
15. "Gousheh-i az karnameh-ye Sepah dar sali ke gozasht" [Activities of the Guards in the Last Year at a Glance], *Payam-e Enghelab*, March 19, 1980.

16. Ibid.

17. "Ghanoun-e edgham-e Sazeman-e Basij-e Melli (Mostaz'afin) dar Sepah-e Pasdaran-e Enghelab-e Eslami" [Law on Incorporation of the National Mobilization Organization of the Oppressed into the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps], *Rouznameh-ye Rasmi* (Tehran), March 7, 1981.

18. "Fasl-e chaharom-e asanameh-ye Sepah-e Pasdaran-e

FIGURE 1
IRGC ORGANIZATIONAL CHART—AUGUST 2008



Enghelab-e Eslami dar khosous-e اساسnameh-ye vahed-e Basij-e Mostaz'afin" [Fourth Chapter of the Statute of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps Regarding the Statute of the Basij of the Oppressed], *Rouznameh-ye Rasmi*, October 3, 1982.

19. "Morouri bar fa'aliyat-ha-ye 'Basij'-e Sepah" [A Survey of Activities of the "Basij" of the Guards], *Payam-e Enghelab*, February 16, 1981.

20. "Sepah va Basij-e Sepah" [The Guards and the Basij of the Guards], *Payam-e Enghelab*, May 29, 1982.

21. "Gozareshi az tashkil-e Basij-e Sepah-e Pasdaran dar Lobnan" [A Report on Establishment of the Basij of the Revolutionary Guards in Lebanon], *Payam-e Enghelab*, October 22, 1982.

22. "Mosahebeh-ye matbou'ati" [Press Interview], *Payam-e Enghelab*, January 27, 1990.

23. "Farmandeh-ye nirou-ye zamini-ye Sepah: Tarh-e moza'ik-ha-ye defa'i sor'at-e 'amal-e Sepah va Basij ra bala mibarad" [IRGC Ground Forces Chief: Realization of the Mosaic Defensive Doctrine Increases Operational Speed of the Guards and the Basij], *Mardomsalari* (Tehran), July 27, 2008.

24. "Sardar Jafari: Ma'mouriat-e asli-ye Sepah moghabeleh ba tahdid-ha-ye dakheli ast," *Hamshahri*.

25. "Sardar Jafari: Ghena'at be vaz'-e mowjoud khata-ye rahbordi ast" [Commander Jafari: Being Satisfied with Status Quo Would Be a Strategic Mistake], *Hamshahri*, September 4, 2007, available in Persian at www.hamshahrionline.ir/News/?id=31793 (accessed August 4, 2008); and "Tagh'ir-e rahbord-e Sepah-e Pasdaran" [Change of the Revolutionary Guards' Strategy], *Hamshahri*, September 25, 2007, available in Persian at www.hamshahrionline.ir/News/?id=31729 (accessed August 4, 2008).

26. "Marasem-e mo'arefeh-ye farmandeh-ye jadid-e Sepah" [Presentation Ceremony of New Commander in Chief of the

Guards], *Hamshahri*, September 3, 2007, available in Persian at www.hamshahrionline.ir/News/?id=31729 (accessed August 4, 2008).

27. Middle East Media Research Institute, TV Monitor Project, "Iranian Intelligence Ministry Broadcast Encouraging People to Snitch on Spies Features 'John McCain' Masterminding a Velvet Revolution in Iran from the White House," February 5, 2007, available through www.memritv.org/clip/en/1678.htm (accessed August 11, 2008).

28. "Farmandeh-ye Sepah-e Hazrat-e Abbas-e ('A) ostan-e Ardebil mo'arrefi shod" [Chief of the Hazrat-e Abbas (Peace Be upon Him) Army of Ardebil Province Appointed], Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) (Tehran), July 17, 2008, available in Persian at www.irna.ir/View/FullStory/?NewsId=105653 (accessed July 21, 2008).

29. Ibid.

30. "Mohajeman-e mossallah dar marz-e Iran va Turkiyeh koshteh shodand" [Armed Assailants Killed in Iranian-Turkish Border], BBC Persian, March 1, 2007, available in Persian at www.bbc.co.uk/persian/iran/story/2007/03/070301_he-insurgents.shtml (accessed July 22, 2008).

31. "Farmandeh-ye Sepah-e Hazrat-e Abbas-e ('A) ostan-e Ardebil mo'arrefi shod," IRNA.

32. Ibid.

33. "Farmandeh-ye Sepah-e 'Ashoura-ye Azerbaijan-e Sharghi mo'arrefi shod" [Chief of 'Ashoura Army of East Azerbaijan Appointed], IRNA, June 28, 2008, available in Persian at www2.irna.ir/05/news/view/line-156/8704086609163547.htm (accessed July 21, 2008). The 'Ashoura Army is a merger of the 31st 'Ashoura Army, the regional Basij Resistance Force, IRGC in the province, and other command layers of East Azerbaijan.

34. Ibid. Ossanlou's predecessor as IRGC chief in East Azerbaijan

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