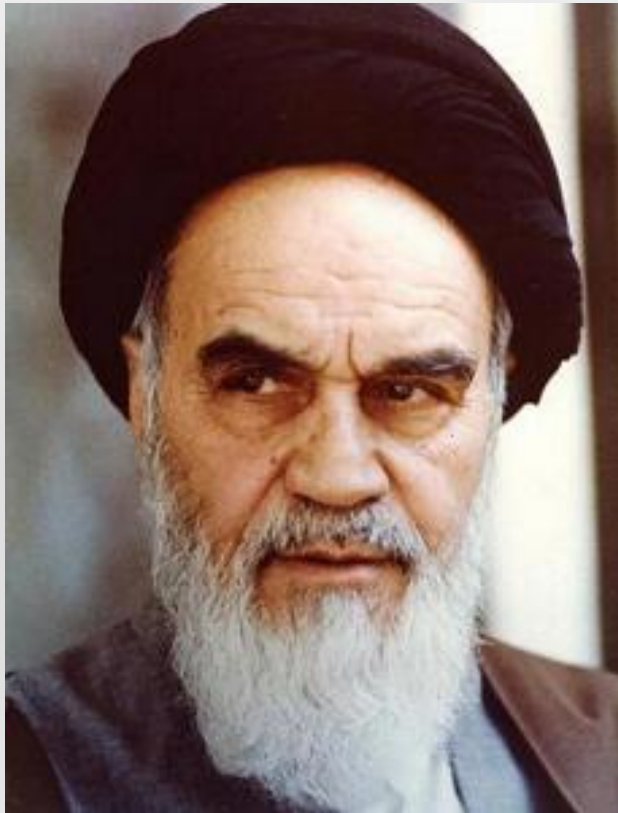


# Unit 6: Newly Industrialized and Developing Countries

## Lesson 6.2 – Structure of Iran's Government



# The Basics

- Theocratic Republic
  - Theocracy with democratic elements
- Highly Centralized Unitary State
  - But is divided administratively into provinces, districts, sub-districts, and local areas (local elections allowed since 1999)
- Dual Executive (**HOS**, Supreme Leader; **HOG**, President)
- Unicameral Legislature
- Judiciary not independent; Based on Sharia Law



# The Supreme Leader Head of State – Chief Executive

- Chosen by the Assembly of Religious Experts – rules for life
- Links the government together
- Powers:
  - Limit Presidential candidates
  - Authority to overrule/dismiss president
  - Command of armed forces
  - Declaration of war and peace
  - Issue decrees for national referenda
  - Appoint head of judiciary
  - Appoint half of the members of the Guardian Council
  - Appoint Friday prayer leaders and the head of radio and TV



Supreme Leader - Ayatollah Khamenei

# Guardian Council

- 12 members – six year terms
  - 6 from Supreme Leader
  - 6 approved by Majles
- Upholds Sharia Law in Iran
  - “Guard” against secularism
- Veto Power
- Vetting Power





# Assembly of Religious Experts

- 88 members – 8 year terms
  - Directly elected by the people.
- Elect Supreme Leader
- Can dismiss Supreme Leader



# Expediency Council

- 32 members – most chosen by the Supreme Leader
- Settle disputes between Majles and Guardian Council
- May originate legislation





# President Head of Government

- Head of Government – Direct election – Two rounds
- 4 year term – consecutive 8 year limit
- Powers:
  - Selects vice presidents & cabinet members
  - Devises budget & presents legislation to parliament
  - Signs treaties, laws & agreements
  - Chairs National Security Council
  - Appoints provincial governors, town mayors & ambassadors



President Rouhani

# The Legislative Branch (Majles)

- 290 Deputies – 4 year term – Single Member Districts
  - Five guaranteed seats for religious minorities
  - Two round voting
- NOT a rubber stamp, but heavily checked
- Powers
  - Enact/Change laws (with approval of Guardian Council)
  - Appoint 6 of 12 members of Guardian Council, chosen from a list drawn up by chief judge
  - Investigate cabinet ministers and public complaints against executive and judiciary
  - Remove cabinet members (not president)
  - Approve budget, cabinet appointments, treaties & loans

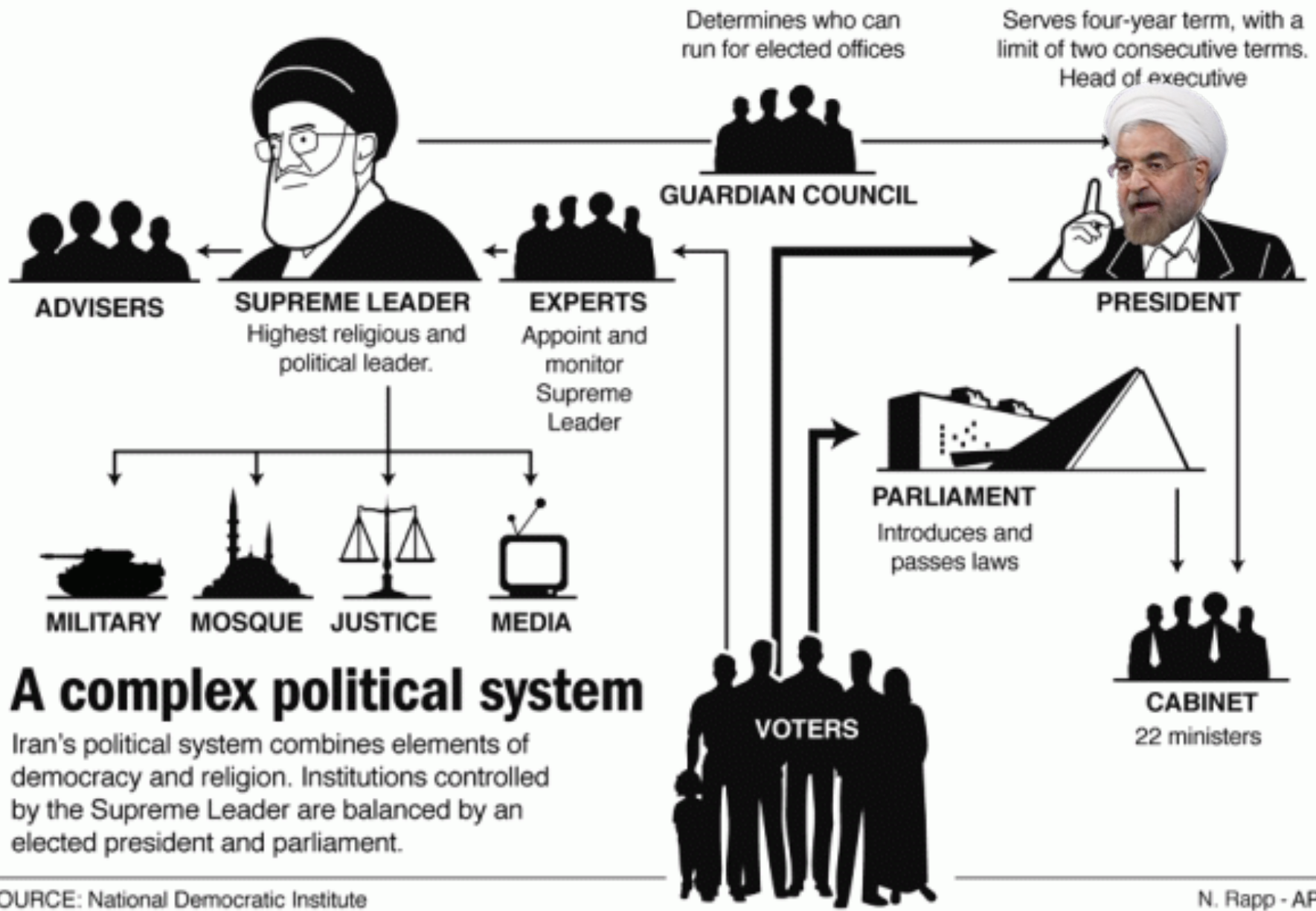




# Iranian Supreme Court

- Chief Judge appointed by Supreme Leader – Chief Judge chooses other judges
- Highest court of appeal
- Sharia Law – Strict/Harsh
  - Stoning, 1 male = 2 females, capital punishment
- Overturn laws of Majles that contradict Sharia Law





# The Military

- Regular army of 370,000
- According to Constitution, regular army defends the borders, while the Revolutionary Guards protect the republic
- **Revolutionary Guards** (established after 1979)
  - 125,000 active troops, commanders appointed by Supreme Leader
  - Has its own ground forces, navy and air force, and oversees Iran's strategic weapons.







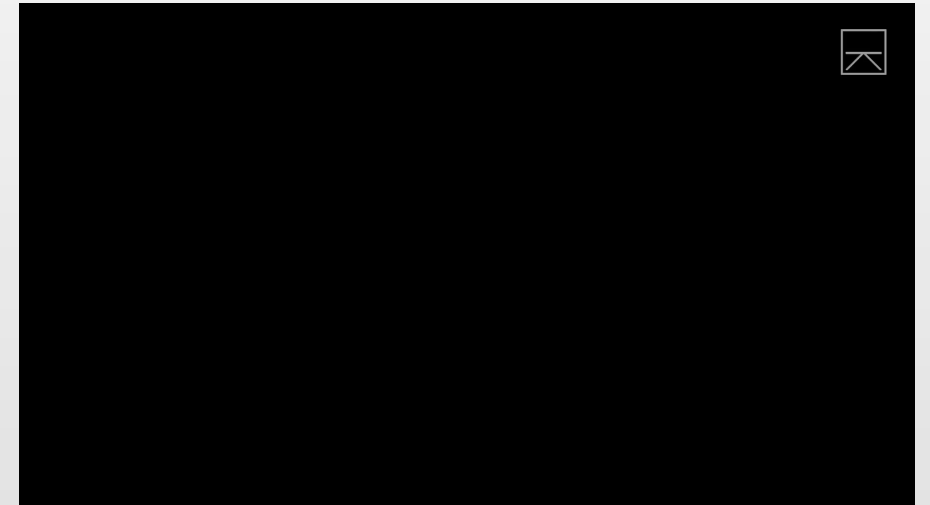
# Linkage Institutions – Interest Groups

- Very weak
- Workers House – one of the few prominent interest groups in Iran
  - Factory workers
  - Reform minded
- Few business interest groups have formed – the Iranian government controls between 65%-80% of the economy



# Linkage Institutions – Mass Media

- Speech against the government was a criminal offense after the 1979 revolution
  - Access to media – major issue between conservatives and reformists
- Major radio and TV is gov't-run by the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting
  - Some newspapers and magazines are privately owned (non-political)
- Since 2010, the gov't has been building a national network as a substitute for the Internet
- Social Media sites from outside of Iran are normally not accessible





# Review

- Discussion Question: What elements of Iran's political system make it theocratic? Which elements make it democratic?

Theocratic

Democratic