

## WHERE IS MASSOUD RAJAVI?

**Massoud Rajavi is a wanted man. He is wanted for crimes against humanity and specific war crimes, including the massacre of his own people in the Forough-e Javidan or Eternal Light operation of 1988, in which he deliberately and knowingly sent over 3000 MKO members to their deaths...**



Where is Massoud Rajavi? Javad Firouzmand says he has the answer to this riddle which for the past two years has puzzled everyone from Rajavi's own followers in Iraq to the US military and the Pentagon.

On March 18, 2003 Massoud Rajavi disappeared from view and has not been accounted for since that time. The date of his disappearance coincides exactly with the beginning of the allied offensive in Iraq which resulted in the deaths of fifty Mojahedin combatants.

Rajavi, the self-proclaimed leader of the Mojahedin, escaped Iran after his failed coup attempt in 1981. He went on, in 1986, to make his base in Saddam Hussein's Iraq after the French government asked him to leave his headquarters in Auvers-sur-

Oise just outside Paris.

With the help of Saddam Hussein, Massoud and his wife Maryam set about converting the guerrilla training camps which already existed in Iraqi Kurdistan into military bases from which Rajavi promised his combatants they would launch a final offensive into Iran to trigger a second revolution of the people which would finally free the country from the tyranny of religious rule. Instead Rajavi created his own version of tyrannical rule with which to keep his forces loyal and obedient.

Essentially, the Mojahedin became a military cult based around Massoud Rajavi and his wife. The army which they created out of these forces using Iraqi money, armaments, training and logistics became 'Saddam's private army', engaging in the 1991 massacre of Kurds and Shiites and helping to run notorious prisons like Abu Ghraib.

His wife, Maryam Rajavi escaped from Iraq before the American led invasion and using a false document went into hiding in France. She was arrested in Paris on June 17, 2003 on terrorism charges. Several members of the cult followed orders and set fire to themselves. Three people died and several remain scarred and disabled by their injuries. Maryam Rajavi was freed on bail but remains confined to Auvers-sur-Oise awaiting her trial which is to take place in the next few months.

There can be no doubt that Massoud Rajavi is the leader of a cult. The Mojahedin is not a normal military organization, it is certainly not a political organization. Its sole raison d'etre for the past two decades has been to provide a means for Massoud Rajavi to achieve some kind of power. That is, whether that power is in Iraq, Iran or even some other country. The place and the people have become irrelevant. The only aim of Rajavi is to hold on to his unaccountable leadership position and by any means possible to increase its influence over more people. Rajavi tells his combatants, followers and supporters that the Mojahedin believe in freedom, democracy and human rights. This state he says can only be brought about by the submission, blind obedience and sacrifice of his followers. In effect this has left the members of his cult in a state of perpetual slavery. They are not paid for their services. They are on duty 24 hours, seven

# EDITORIAL



Over the past month the MKO has been slapped down several times and in several different places. So, while we don't believe they will take this to heart and actually listen to the message 'GO AWAY' which is conveyed by these slaps, it certainly must give the supporters of this waning, geriatric cult something to ponder while sunning themselves at the beach.

Following the brouhaha of new political interpretation after the election of president Ahmadinejad in Iran, the Mojahedin tried to jump on the bandwagon of concern for the jailed dissident Akbar Ganji. They were forced to back off because of a huge outcry against them in Persian speaking opposition circles. Of course we should not forget that, prior to his hunger strike, the MKO had already accused Ganji of being an agent of the Intelligence Services of Iran.

Since the MKO had also been exposed trying to falsify information about Ahmadinejad using emotive photographs from the US embassy seizure in Tehran in 1979, they switched their attempts to get somebody to take notice of them by seizing on the renewed nuclear negotiations between Iran and the EU3. But it seems no one has heard them or responded to them. No one is prepared any longer to use this broken and degenerate tool.

Another propaganda ploy which went badly wrong for the MKO was its attempt to gain some credibility by having its supporters in the House of Lords hold a promotional meeting to resurrect its failing agenda. On July 7th unsuspecting parliamentarians meeting to discuss the issue of Iran after the elections were exposed to terrorist leader Maryam Rajavi talking via satellite from Paris about her plans for violence and chaos for the Iranian people, while immediately outside, other terrorists were killing people in the streets of

London. The incident is now subject to police investigation.

Many Iranian opposition groups have commented over the past month on the irrelevance of the MKO in Iranian politics. Prominent opposition personality, Mohammad Borghei from Washington was interviewed by Roshana Association in which he dismissed the MKO as a part of Iranian opposition politics. Also Faraj Sarkoohi, a well known Frankfurt based Iranian opposition writer, said that the disintegration of the Mojahedin could be traced directly to the role of its self-appointed leader Massoud Rajavi. It is Rajavi, says Sarkoohi, who led his organization into political suicide through his alliance with Saddam Hussein and his autocratic running of the cult.

After Iraqi President Jaafari visited Iran with several ministers from the new Iraqi government, several newspapers and officials in Iraq began to voice their impatience with the continued presence of the MKO in their country and urged the US to do more to dismantle the remains of the military cult. At the same time they urged the prosecution of MKO leaders for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed inside Iraq.

Meanwhile another attempt to create a smokescreen of credibility in the west was exposed. The Mojahedin started up a website called Iran-Focus and set about a campaign of disinformation.

But of course Maryam Rajavi is cursed, like Lady Macbeth, to have her hands permanently etched in blood for all to see. Her bloody fingerprints were easily detected in the website. Her lack of scruple was also exposed by the misappropriation of the name of Iran Focus, which along with Iran Energy Focus belong to the highly respected monthly newsletters of the British firm, Menas Associates ([www.menas.co.uk](http://www.menas.co.uk)) which have been in publication for many years and which, it must be stressed, have never had any association whatsoever with the MKO. ■

days a week. They are kept isolated from the outside world and are not allowed to form friendships even inside the organisation. Marriage or any expression of sexuality is strictly forbidden. They have no say whatsoever about the running of the organisation, its policies, activities or its methods. Contact with family and relations is treated as a crime or a sin for which people face severe punishment.

All members are subjected to cruel and inhuman treatment which is not punishment per se, but is part of the normal organizational relations. For dissent, criticism or contravention of rules the punishments become truly harsh, including solitary confinement, sleep deprivation, beatings [to the point of broken limbs, permanent physical damage and in some cases, death]. Ritual humiliation is commonplace as are group reinforcement meetings.

As cult members the question looms large in the mind of every single one of Rajavi's followers: 'where is our leader, where is Massoud Rajavi?'

The ceasefire and consequent disarmament came as a crushing defeat for Rajavi's strategy of armed overthrow of the Iranian regime. The combatants needed more than anything else at that time the strength of their leaders. Instead they discovered that over three hundred had already fled the country and escaped the war leaving them as scapegoats for the war crimes which the Mojahedin committed on behalf of Saddam Hussein. That is, as collaborators in several of Hussein's inhuman acts including the massacre of Kurdish villagers and Shiite Marsh Arabs in March 1991.

In these circumstances it is more than legitimate for Mojahedin members to ask where their leader is and what he intends for them in the future.

In a press conference in Paris on 12 July 2005, Javad Firouzmand talked about these events and about the situation inside the Mojahedin's camp at this time. He spoke of the feelings of desperation and despair which each combatant is forced to hide inside. Even before the war Firouzmand and his friends had been handed over to the joint Saddam-Rajavi torture chambers because of their criticisms of Rajavi. He had twice tried to run away but had been arrested and brought back. He spoke about how many others lost their lives or their mental balance under torture.

After describing this atmosphere of repression and fear which governs the Mojahedin, Firouzmand went on to talk about the events which led to the smuggling of Massoud Rajavi out of Camp Ashraf in December 2003 disguised as an Arab Sheikh, how he was transported to Jordan and from there smuggled into Switzerland.

In March 2003, two weeks before the fall of Saddam, Massoud Rajavi conducted a mass meeting in the camp and declared that in the event of the fall of Saddam Hussein, the MKO would attack Iran with everything they have. After the meeting he ordered all the forces to leave Camp Ashraf and take up defensive positions in and around Jalula (on the Iranian border).

However, just before the fall of Saddam all the MKO's camps were bombarded by British and American armed forces. The camp was destroyed and some of the high ranking leaders of MKO were killed and many permanently disabled. Rajavi was last seen in Camp Ashraf only a few hours before the bombardment.

The consequent ceasefire and disarmament agreed between the US military and the Mojahedin through Mahmood Ataee was almost certainly actually conducted by Massoud Rajavi himself from his hiding place. It is possible that some US military personnel were aware at that time of his presence in the camp. Massoud Rajavi went to ground inside Camp Ashraf in Iraq right at the beginning of the war. He and a few of his cohorts occupied a massive secret complex of secure, nuclear bomb proof offices and apartments built by the Iraqis as extra capacity for themselves and their allies, the Mojahedin leaders. Only a handful of Mojahedin leaders were ever aware of the complex. Ordinary members certainly were not aware of such a facility right in their own camp.

The combatants were left in limbo in the camp. The internal command structure of the Mojahedin remained intact and has not since been dismantled by the US forces - in spite of the fact that the US government had in 1997 designated the Mojahedin as a terrorist organization. Yet for a long time the US administration appeared reluctant to designate the captured terrorists as either prisoners of war or refugees or any other thing that would allow people to make decisions about them.

Taking matters into their own hands, the Interim Iraqi Governing Council unanimously agreed on 9th December 2003 that the MKO must be expelled en-masse from Iraqi territory. Massoud Rajavi saw the danger and began to put into action his plan to escape from Iraq. The same day, the Mojahedin issued a press statement which claimed that "the vast majority of the Iraqi people, particularly the honorable tribes and inhabitants of Diyala province, where Camp Ashraf is situated, support the PMOI's (MKO) presence in Iraq. This fact is borne out by the participation of thousands of Iraqis representing their tribes and different sections of Iraqi society in a series of gatherings in Camp Ashraf on June 20 and on other occasions marking the anniversary of the PMOI's foundation on September 6 and the Eid al-Fetr." Then, the following day it was stated that: "In the past 24 hours, different groups of Iraqi people, particularly the tribes of Diyala Province, have visited Camp Ashraf or official centers in Baghdad to express their abhorrence at the statement against the PMOI..."

By day three the message became: "In the past two days, thousands of Iraqis representing different sections of Iraqi society and tribes, particularly the honorable inhabitants and tribes of Diyala Province, have visited Camp Ashraf and declared their abhorrence and indignation at the political and terrorist conspiracies of the mullahs' regime against the Iranian Resistance." Javad Firouzmand explained how the Mojahedin prepared a mass meeting in Camp Ashraf and in addition to the MKO mem-

bers, Rajavi invited about 2000 Arabs to a banquet, some whom were known to them from the time of Saddam. Rajavi specifically invited some of the known Arab Sheikhs with whom the MKO had relations from Saddam's era, including Sheikh Shammeri a known Iraqi Sheikh. The MKO's own statement at the time lists "the chiefs and dignitaries of tribes such as Izza, Jobour, Obaid, Sumaida, Hamid, Bayat-Myah, Dulaym, Aws, Zuhair, Barzanji, Karwi, Tameem, Zargush, Salaam, Samarra, Shomori, Badri, Dafaee, Jameel, Ojaili, Qaraqul, Anbakya and Mahmoudi."

Each MKO statement seemed at pains to stress that these visits by Iraqi Sheikhs were a common occurrence and not simply a result of the IIGC's decision. The MKO had to find a way to explain it yet not to draw attention to it as a remarkable event. "...thousands of Iraqi intellectuals, professionals, tribal figures and Iraqis from all walks of life have attended gatherings in Camp Ashraf on several occasions in the past seven months..." (12 December, 2003)

Firouzmand's explained in detail how the MKO made arrangements for some of the guests to park their own cars in about a kilometre distant from Camp Ashraf, from where they would be transferred by MKO cars. Some of the sheikhs were taken by Rajavi's own cars (custom built, bullet-proof Mercedes cars). Later, Rajavi was brought out dressed in Arab clothing, hiding among these Arab sheikhs. Together they travelled to Baghdad through Khaled posing as an Iraqi delegation and from there to Jordan where they split into two groups. One group travelled to London to attend a conference held there in support of the MKO. An MKO statement on December 21 talked of "...the presence of thousands of Iraqi people, tribes and citizens in dozens of occasions at Camp Ashraf, including Eid al-Fitr, and the presence of their representatives in the "Evening for Iran" gathering in London..." The other group without any publicity travelled to Switzerland.

Firouzmand said that he and other commanders in the camp then received the news of Rajavi's safe arrival in Switzerland. Firouzmand's claim was backed by documents and maps showing the exact plan of escape although he declined to answer in detail some questions, including the actual whereabouts of Rajavi after he touched down in Switzerland. He told reporters that he has been asked not to disclose some specific details since an inquiry has been launched to find the fugitive war criminal.

Massoud Rajavi is a wanted man. He is wanted for crimes against humanity and specific war crimes, including the massacre of his own people in the Forough-e Javidan or Eternal Light operation of 1988, in which he deliberately and knowingly sent over 3000 MKO members to their deaths despite all the pleas made by four Iraqi generals who had been given orders by Saddam to give Rajavi full air and ground support. His wife Maryam Rajavi (nee Azodanlo) was second in command at the time. She is currently awaiting trial in Paris on terrorism charges. ■

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### The American hand in Iran

By Trish Schuh

Excerpted from *Asia Times*

July 6, 2005

...America is pulling strings, with Israeli assistance. The former head of Mossad's foreign intelligence division, Uzi Arad, told Worldnetdaily.com: "Support of Iranian opposition by the international community could be an effective way to handle the current regime" and that "its stability can be greatly reduced by the people themselves." Pro-Israel lobbyist Michael Ledeen wrote for the neo-conservative American Enterprise Institute, "Mr Bush is correct that we should actively help the brave Iranians who are leading demonstrations against the regime ..."

...The Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz reported the "AIPAC [American Israel Political Action Committee] spurring Congress to pass a sanctions bill against Iran". AIPAC is also pressuring the US to support the Iranian Mujahideen-e-Khalq (MEK) for use against Iran's mullahs. The Israeli Communication Ministry's R R Sat provides transponder capability to the MEK to broadcast programming on its two channels. Iran-interlink.org even hints that Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon personally approved funding for the broadcasts, because of his alliance with the MEK's influential Maryam Rajavi...

### Press conference: Where is Massoud Rajavi?

July 12, 2005

A senior high ranking official of Mojahedin-e Khalq organisation was able to escape the organisation following the invasion of Iraq and has since left Camp Ashraf.

Mohammad Javad Firouzmand held a press conference in Paris to reveal where the fugitive war criminal Massoud Rajavi is hiding.

The Mojahedin Khalq are classified as terrorists in the European Union as well as the USA. The other leader of this organisation is under investigation in France on the same terrorist related charges.

In June 2005, Human Rights Watch published a report about mistreatment inside the Mojahedin-e Khalq. And identified torture and assassination as being used to stop disaffected members from leaving the organisation.

### Protecting the Rights of Child Victims of Terror and Violence

July 15, 2005

Speaking at the seminar 'Protecting the Rights of Child Victims of Terror and Violence' held in Tehran, Ms. Lucy Smith, member of the UN Commission for the Rights of the Child, said that most of the MKO's documents on Iran

should be trashed. Highlighting the main articles of the Universal Convention on the Rights of the Child, she pointed to the victims of MKO terror and violence and said:

"Last year, I met a number of families of such victims and I was really affected."

"Child victims of the terrorist operations of the MKO in Iran and other places in the world expose the inhumane nature of the activities of this group." Referring to children being terrorized by terrorist organizations, she said: "we don't have the executive power to order groups and governments, so we can only advise them".

She condemned the use of children as tools by terrorist organizations like the MKO, and said that terrorist organizations shouldn't be allowed to use children. "Mojahedin-khalq has very small lobbies in the Norwegian Parliament and I have seen their documents on the situation in Iran, and it should be said that most of their documents should be thrown in the trash can. This group tries to present invalid, forged documents to parliamentary institutions to pave the way for receiving political aid from those institutions," she said.

Ms. Haghghat Talab, a victim of the terrorist Rajavi cult, spoke at the seminar and explained how a city bus in Shiraz was set on fire by the Rajavi cult and that she and her sister were burnt. In that event in 1981, she was severely injured and her sister died.

### **Five former MKO members return to Iran**

**IRNA, July 12, 2005**

Five former members of the banned Iranian opposition group, Mujahideen Khalq Organization, returned home following a special ceremony. The ex-MKO members explained how they joined the terrorist group, how the MKO treated them, and how they defected from the terrorist organization. A former MKO member, Massoud Ahmadi, told IRNA that he was deceived by smugglers who work for MKO and was smuggled to Iraq. "We were supposed to be smuggled to Dubai and then to European countries.

However, they took us to Iraq and handed us over to the MKO," he added. Ahmadi noted that since the time he entered Ashraf Camp, he dreamed of returning to Iran due to the lies and libel spread by MKO leaders. "After former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein was toppled, I followed up my case through the International Committee of the Red Cross. That is how I managed to defect from the MKO." Commenting on how Iranian officials had treated him upon his return, Ahmadi pointed out that he was treated fairly and in a manner he had not expected.

The five MKO members who returned on Wednesday were Masoud Ahmadi, Jalal Golmoradi, Ali Azizi, Nosratollah Ahmadi and Ali-Morad Mehdi-Panah. A total of 500 ex-MKO members have already returned home following the ouster of Saddam in late 2003.

### **Friends in High Places?: MKO Supporter Tom Tancredo says US could bomb Mecca**

**July 14, 2005**

In an interview with Pat Campbell, the host of WFLA Radio (in Orlando, Fla.) on July 14, 2005, Tom Tancredo- member of Congress and one of the main supporters of the terrorist MKO- talked about the possibility that the USA could bomb Mecca. Here's the transcript of his interview:

... Pat Campbell: Now here's the other thing too with the possibility of an attack ahead; Juval Aviv from the program, last Friday, he's former Israeli counter terrorism expert, he's claiming that an attack on US soil is imminent like the kind we saw in London within the next, you know, 90 days. And he said it's not just gonna be, you know, one city like New York, just major areas but probably six, seven, eight cities; some of them right in the heartland. Worst case scenario, if they do have these nukes inside borders and they were to use something like that what would be our response?

Tom Tancredo: What would be our response? You know there are things that you could threaten to do before something like that happens and then you may have to do afterwards that are quite draconian...

Campbell: Such as? Such as?

Tancredo: Well, what if you said something like- if this happens in the United States and we determine that it is the result of extremist fundamentalist Muslims, you know, you could take out their holy sites

Campbell: You're talking about bombing Mecca?

Tancredo: Yeah, you know, what if you said we recognize this is the ultimate threat to the United States therefore this is the ultimate response I mean, I don't know, I'm just throwing out there some ideas because it seems to me ...you try at this point of time you would be talking about the most draconian measures you could possible imagine and because other than that all you could do is once again tighten up internally.

### **Sarcozy's Warning For Terrorists**

**July 21, 2005**

In its fight against terrorism the French Government has announced tougher rules against those who promote violence; lapse of French citizenship and deportation are among these rules. French Interior Minister Nicolas Sarcozy is familiar with the terrorist group of Rajavi and in 2003 ordered the raid on the headquarters of this terrorist group. At that time he asked French public opinion "why have the MKO had been in France for twenty years?". Now he has said that measures against those who encourage young people to perform suicide bombings will be tougher. Maryam Rajavi who can't live without terror and violence should take note.



## Iraqi patience is running out over MKO presence in Iraq

August 1, 2005

Iraqi newspaper "Al-Jomhooriah", reflecting the opposition of Iraqi people and media to the presence of the terrorist group Mojahedin-e khalq in Iraq, requested that the leaders of this group be put on trial.

"We ask the Iraqi government to bring the leaders of this group to court for crimes against humanity and try them (as Ba'ath leaders) before the Iraqi people," Al-Jomhooriah wrote on Sunday. "The Iraqi people are waiting for the trial of the leaders of this group in a court of justice so that their real nature and face and their ties to Saddam's regime can be revealed." Stressing the need to expel the elements of the MKO from Iraq, Al-Jomhooriah wrote:

"The Iraqi government and leaders must take necessary measures to root out remnants of the Ba'ath regime, including the Mojahedin-e khalq."

According to this newspaper, after Mr. Jafari's visit to Iran, Iraq entered a new phase of its history and since the MKO was the agent of former regime, Iraqis want to get rid of it.

"This group found Saddam's regime a safe haven for expanding terrorism and assisted the Ba'ath regime in massacring Iraqi people."

There were also other articles about the MKO in other Iraqi newspapers. Al-Menar Al-Yaum newspaper discussed the issue of the MKO in a series of articles, stressing the need for their immediate exit from Iraq.

"The US agrees to consider the MKO a terrorist organization" and "Terrorism and its causes are the Iraqi constitution's priorities" were the titles of articles published in this newspaper on Saturday and Sunday. Last week also, on Thursday, Al-Menar Al-Yaum wrote: "Iraqis won't be influenced by the lies of MKO". "Despite its so-called nationalist slogans during 1960s, the MKO cooperated with Saddam Hussein in his war against Iran so that the former regime considered this group as one of its military units in

the war against Iran," the paper wrote. Al-Menar Al-Yaum stressed: "This terrorist group, which has acted against the people of its own country, is very wretched in the eyes of the Iraqis."

## More MKO defectors arrive in Iran

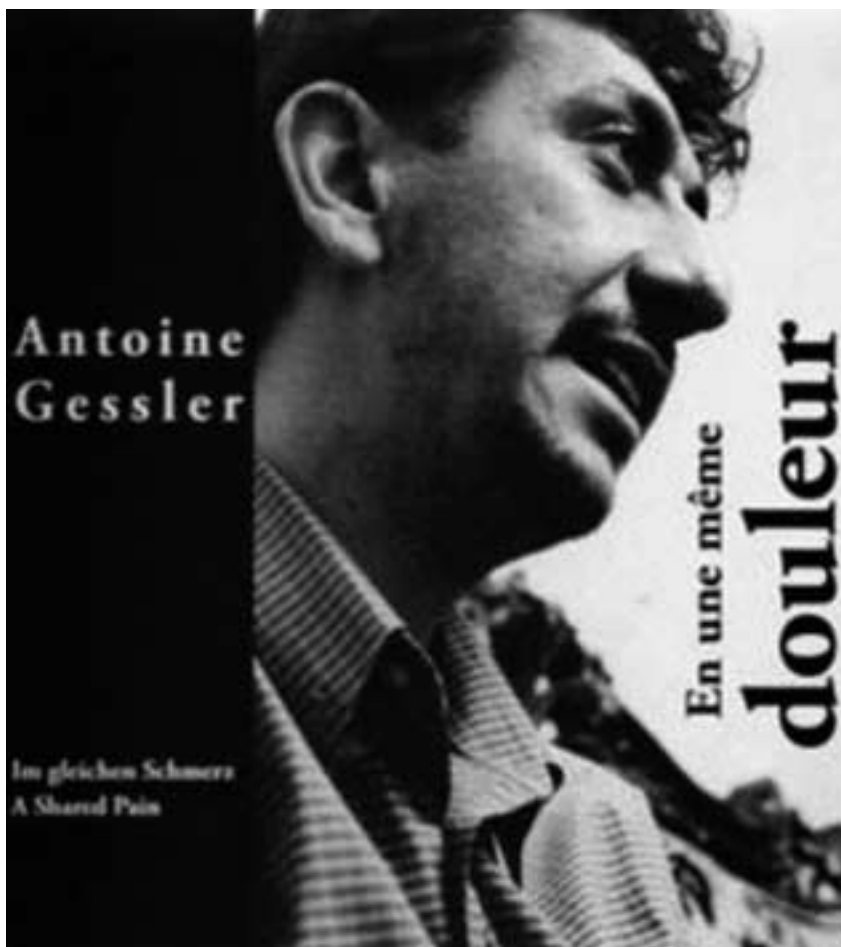
Nejat Association, August 3, 2005

In a phone conversation with the office of Red Cross, Mr. Khezr Aval, Deputy Representative of the Red Cross in Tehran, said that through the assistance of the International Committee of the Red Cross, a number of former MKO members who had been housed in a US camp in Iraq returned to Iran on Monday (August 2, 2005).

He noted that the office of the Red Cross would shortly release the names of these new returnees. Appreciating the efforts of Red Cross and other organizations, Iranian and Iraqi authorities and others, the Nejat Association congratulates the return of former members to the country and ask the authorities to follow up the fate of other former members in the US-run camp and those still detained by the cult (of MKO). ■

# TWO BOOKS

by Antoine Gessler



"These photographs do not want to be an indictment. They simply testify a final established fact: the MKO left in its wake only sacrificed people."

Born in Sion, Switzerland in 1954, Antoine Gessler began his career as a journalist in 1974. He worked in the press rooms of France Soir (Paris) and the Swiss news publications, La Suisse and Le Nouvelliste. Early on, Gessler specialized in international relations and geopolitics. Until the fall of the Berlin Wall, Gessler focused on the East-West Cold War in its hotter form, that is; national liberation movements in the Third World. With the end of the Communist system in Europe, he became interested in the Islamic world and in the then less-publicized wars in those countries. A reporter on the ground, Gessler covered the war

in Afghanistan during the Soviet invasion, the Civil War in Beirut, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, as well as Bosnia and Kosovo. He has developed strong links with the Iraqi National Congress (CNI), the group that brought together those opposing Saddam Hussein. As a young journalist, Gessler began accompanying his reports with his own photographs and became interested in studio photography. In 1978 he presented his first exhibition of photographs in the ASLEC gallery in Sierre.

These two books are the result of Gessler's interest in the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran.

## Autopsy of an Ideological Drift – Analysis and background on the People's Mojahedin organisation of Iran.

This is a thorough and enlightening examination of the Mojahedin from its early days up to its current situation. Researched through reference to a wide spectrum of documents and information, and interspersed by interviews with former members and other experts, this book gives a valuable insight into the cult nature of the Mojahedin which Massoud Rajavi created for himself.

### CHAPTER 19/

#### Fanatical to the Point of Suicide

*The day after the police operation against the People's Mojahedin in the Paris suburbs, European and world public opinion were shocked to discover individuals voluntarily turning themselves into human torches. What level of fanaticism could push seemingly sane and healthy people to such extremes? Moreover, some of the "spectators" tried block the access of rescue services which could have saved the victims' lives. The French judicial system could only note the facts to prevent any repetition.*

*'Two Iranians suspected of preventing the intervention of rescuers while a woman was immolating herself in front of DST headquarters in Paris on Wednesday will be brought before an instructional magistrate for their a criminal investigation, judicial sources made known on Friday.*

*The prosecutor's office stated that very day a criminal enquiry into possible 'obstruction of rescue services' and 'provocation to suicide'. It will soon demand an arrest warrant. The crime of obstructing rescue efforts can be punished with up to 7 years in prison.*

*The two prisoners bought 8 litres of*



Antoine Gessler

*petrol in a service station in Nelaton, near the DST HQ.*

*They then provided it to an Iranian woman who died yesterday in the specialized military hospital for burns, Percy, in Clamart (Hauts-de-Seine), the same source added. One of them was an obstacle to rescue workers when they tried save the 44 year old victim, while the other was in possession of the victim's blouse and papers, judicial sources emphasized. The two Iranians were questioned by police Tuesday morning during the operation against the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran. They were released during the evening, the judicial sources said.*

*One Iranian woman, arrested and questioned on Wednesday was in possession of gasolinefilled bottles and a letter explaining her intention to commit suicide. She was freed, she stated". (Associated Press, June 20, 2003) This is the point to begin asking some difficult questions. For many years, specialists on international terrorism, like the experts on post-revolutionary Iran, have been aware of the sectarian and violent nature of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran. Numerous journalists have had a bone to pick with*

*their propaganda. Those who gave space to the Movement's "deserters" or who expressed the slightest criticism were violently denounced as agents of Teheran, bought by the regime. But, in that Summer of 2003, reality hit.*

*Tom Heneghan of the British press agency, Reuters, asked himself if he was watching a sect in full collapse: "The images of men and women spraying themselves with petrol before setting themselves on fire in the streets of several European capitals, has shed dramatic light on the last days of the main armed opposition to the Teheran regime.*

*Since Tuesday, several supporters of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI) have tried to immolate themselves in Paris, London, Rome and Berne.*

*A woman in her forties has succumbed to her wounds Thursday night in the Paris region after immolating herself the previous day to denounce the intervention of French police against Maryam Rajavi — the person whom the Iranian opposition want one day to become President of Iran.*

*Successive student demonstrations in the streets of Teheran and the growing pressure of the American autho-*

*rities on the Iranian regime, summoned to explain its nuclear programme, could have led the Mojahedin to believe that the time had come to overthrow the authorities they have been fighting for thirty years. However in just a few weeks, the organization has seen its military installations dismantled in Iraq, its arsenal seized by the Americans and its HQ in Auvers-sur-Oise, North of Paris, searched and closed down by the French police.*

*For many specialists on Iran, these images of men and women in flames, writhing in pain have shown the true nature of the PMOI: a sect based on the cult of personality of Maryam Rajavi and her husband, Massoud, one of the movement's founders. 'It's a sect,' says Ali Ansari, expert on Iranian affairs at Britain's Durham University. 'Their militants are strangely, passionately loyal to this couple. 'We now realise who they are', he adds.*

*'My only hope, is that, in the event of a revolution, we won't have the People's Mojahedin in their place,' confides a young Iranian interviewed in Teheran: 'They're worse than the mullahs'...*

*Gessler's analysis examines the*



Mojahedin's ideology in the context of a cult, in particular drawing valuable comparisons with the ideology and methodology of Mao Tse Tung. Rajavi could easily have written the following quote from Mao himself.

*"In what concerns us, whether it involves an individual, a party, an army or a school, I consider the lack of an enemy against us to be a bad thing. It means we are in league with the enemy. If we are attacked by the enemy it is a good thing because it proves that we have drawn a line of demarcation between ourselves and the enemy. If they attack us violently, in portraying us in the darkest colours and in denigrating what we do, that is even better. It proves not only that we have made a clear demarcation between the enemy and us, but we have also won important successes in our work."*

Gessler's mixture of leftist analysis and quotes from a wide range of sources brings the Mojahedin organization into a clear and understandable focus.

### A Shared Pain

*"The People's Mojahedin organization claimed responsibility for the mortar attacks which killed one person and wounded four others on Saturday evening in Tehran, in the district where the Iranian presidency, the official Parliament and other official buildings can be found".*

A brief dispatch from a news agency, like so many of those which for more than twenty years have fallen sporadically on newsdesks around the western world. A few lines which can never hope to relate the extent of the heartbreak and trauma caused by the terrorism in Iran. Beyond the words there are shattered lives which can no longer be ignored.

This photographic report shows the people who have suffered from the misdeeds of the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran (MKO) led by Massoud and Maryam Rajavi.

For all those who appear in these pages, their lives should have continued differently.

All were promised an uneventful existence. That is, until the day their destiny was turned upside down

because somebody stole their body or their soul, sometimes both.

Their dreams ruined, their flesh ravaged, they will not be able to forget. Paths were crossed, paths which in other times and other places would never even have come close. The choices of some weighed on others, terrible convergences upset the normal course of life.

These photographs do not want to be an indictment. They simply testify a final established fact: the MKO left in its wake only sacrificed people. Some lead an isolated existence, simply seeking the tranquillity of an everyday life. Others get involved to save those who remain in the grip of this political group that became a sect, with its gurus and its particular rules. Logically, this book should have been divided into two distinct chapters; one devoted to the victims, the other to the torturers: but there can be no division, because all of them share the same pain.

The truly guilty, however, continue to manipulate the strings of thousands of brainwashed creatures: the innocent puppets of delirious ambitions. ■

## PERSONAL EXPERIENCES: Mohammad Javad Firouzmand

**This account is briefer than brief. Where, after all, do I begin to explain the past thirty years in such a small space. Of course my own story is unique, but I hope this small account will speak for the many.**

The introduction phase

At the start of the year 1354 (1975) when I was in college, I started getting to know about politics. In 1356 (1977) I was the chairman of an association in our college and there I began to find out about the Mojahedin. During the period covering the downfall of the Shah, my thoughts and activities were in line with those of the Mojahedin and I used to think that if only these ideas could be implemented, Iran would become a heaven. Two months into

the year 1358 (1979), a period in which Iran enjoyed an open political and social atmosphere, I spoke with my Massoul [supervisor] and expressed my view that now the Shah had been toppled, I was glad that we could start our activities to rebuild the country with full energy. He paused a while and then said that he did not think that our job had been completed and that this was just the start of our struggle. I had a bad feeling and hoped that perhaps my Massoul was wrong.

### The decision phase

During 1358 (1979) I was working in the Mojahedin's social department in the poor districts of south Tehran. Little by little, our political activities were changing to more violent and more sectarian activities. Fights in the streets were taking casualties from both sides. In many demonstrations some of the members and agents of the Mojahedin would pose as Hezbollahis (supporters of the hard liners) to attack their own



demonstrations, encouraging the genuine Hezbollahies and the ordinary people to take sides and engage in violence. Whenever I would ask for the reason behind these tactics employed by the organization, the answer was that in this phase of the struggle there is need for a catalyst to bring the people into the streets. In 1360 (1981) we witnessed the height of this street violence. Then the Mojahedin announced the official start of the armed struggle against the regime. I thought it had all happened very quickly. Was this the result of all the efforts of all these political prisoners and the deaths and casualties of all those years before the revolution? When I did not turn up to take part in the 30th Khordad demonstration [Rajavi's failed coup attempt before running away from Iran], my Massoud said "whoever does not have this fire in himself does not deserve to exist". I said, "Armed struggle, no. Helping people and political struggle, yes."

### **The bombings and terrorism of 1360 to 1364 (1981 to 1985)**

Rajavi who was establishing his place on a wave of blood from the

drowning youth of Iran was extensively exaggerating the number of killed and wounded day by day in a bid to get some credibility and legitimacy for his assassinations of the heads of the regime. The plans for bombing the HQ of the Jomhoori Party and the office of the prime minister were made by Mussa Khiabani. Massoud Rajavi distributed cakes and sweets in an internal meeting to celebrate the imminent downfall of the regime.

Mohammad Hayati (aka: Siavosh, currently under detention by US forces in Iraq) said on many occasions that the plans were drawn up by Massoud Rajavi himself. He told us how the organization infiltrated the group of workers who were working on the audio system of the building and put explosives in every loud speaker, in every possible place and ... and in the end "the anger of the people", as Massoud Rajavi called it, came about and the building collapsed killing dozens of people attending a Party meeting on that day. This gave a boost to the morale of the terror teams and they started blocking roads and killing people under the pretext that they belonged

to the Revolutionary Guards or the Bassij. The reasoning behind Rajavi's strategy of using armed struggle was clear now. The more the killing, the nearer the downfall of the regime. He failed to realize that during this phase he would lose whatever popular support he had left. This is actually what came about and he lost practically all the support which the Mojahedin once enjoyed.

Faced with this problem, Rajavi started convincing some ex-prisoners and other people who had not been engaged in armed struggle that they now, willingly or unwillingly, were involved in this struggle and therefore the regime would arrest and execute them. With this tactic he managed to send many of them to the Iranian and Iraqi Kurdistan area. The first endowment payment made to Saddam Hussein to buy his friendship was to send seventy five terror teams from the Iraqi city of Kirkuk into Iran for terrorist operations. This was in 1364 (1985). The communications for all these terror teams was based solely on the telephone, and of course Rajavi knew well that with the surrender or capture of the first base by the Iranian forces in any city, the rest of the teams would be pursued and be killed or arrested wherever they were in Iran. But he had to answer Saddam's question which had been asked of him: "If you say that you have widespread support in every major city in Iran, why don't you start a widespread campaign of operations in every city?"

### **The year 1364 (1985)**

The year of 'Maryam's Revolution'. In this year everybody had to bow to the decision that Maryam divorced Mehdi Abrishamchi and married Massoud Rajavi. Whoever behaved differently was sent into solitary confinement in Kirkuk or Soleimaniyah (the Iraqi cities) under the pretext of "clearance from suspicions". One man called Manssour who was an

electronics graduate from the US and had lost a leg in Kurdistan was one of these critics. He was kept in prison for three months with no attention to the wounds on his leg. Then he was transferred to Soleimaniyah and from there he vanished. The majority of the critics of this period who had given every thing they had to Rajavi were taken to Mavet in Iraqi Kurdistan and from there to the regions under the rule of the Kurdish parties. They were left there with no support and no place to go. Not many of them survived.

### The year 1368 (1989)

This was the year that all the members had to go through the ideological revolution again on the subject of Maryam (Massoud's wife). All members were required to divorce their spouses while there was great uncertainty over the future of their children. They had to sign that they would not even think about marriage for the rest of their lives. Rajavi said: "that the 'monster of sexism' is blocking the path of revolution and is stopping us from toppling the regime. The path of revolution and the downfall of the regime is through the Mojahedin's ideological revolution". About 350 families and over 100 individuals who expressed objections to the Ideological Revolution, were taken to the public prisons of the Mojahedin and after the year 1370 (1991) were handed over to Saddam's forces. Most of these people ended up in Hela and Ramadi camps.

### The years 1369 to 1371 (1990 to 1992)

After the military invasion of Kuwait by the Iraqi army, Rajavi under the pretext of defending the organization's bases in Iraq from a potential attack by the Iranian regime, attacked several Kurdish areas using tanks, katusha missile launchers and helicopters and, according to his own

published announcements, he killed over 30,000 people in the Kurdish towns of Khales, Baquba, Jalula, Mandaly, Tooz Khormatoo and Soleiman Beck. It was after this massacre that Saddam Hussein made a speech in the city of Baquba and told his generals they should learn and emulate the fighting methods of the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization led by Massoud Rajavi. This speech was broadcast by Iraqi Radio and Television stations across the country. From this date all the official meeting between Rajavi and the officials of Iraq's Defense Ministry or the heads of the Iraqi Army, Army Intelligence, the Secret Services of Iraq or others, took place in Rajavi's residence in Camp Ashraf. I was present in many of these meetings myself. Mehdi Abrishamchi (the representative of Saddam's Secret Services in the Mojahedin), Abbas Davary (the representative of the Mojahedin in Saddam's Secret Services), Mahboobeh Jamshidi (the official contact for the Iraqis in respect of the Mojahedin's terrorist operations in Iran) would officially give estimates about the cost of infiltration, operations, special requests by the Iraqis, and of course the armaments and ammunition needed. They would always emphasize to the Iraqis that "you should consider us and deal with us as a mechanized unit of the Iraqi army, like the Presidential Guards. We produce the same kind of commitment and result and we expect the same kind of logistics from you".

In both of the Mojahedin's major operations called Forough-e Javidan (Eternal Light, July 1988) and Morvarid (massacre of the Iraqi Kurds in March 1991)", non-military people from Europe and the US were sent to the military zone. These people, who for the most part were handling a gun for the first time in their lives and were essentially civilians, were sent directly to the front lines.

### My enemy's enemy

The years 1371 to 1381 (1992 to 2002) were the peak of Rajavi's mercenary activities for Saddam Hussein. During these years according to the deal between Rajavi and the Intelligence and Security Services of Saddam's regime, no disaffected member of the Mojahedin would be allowed to leave Iraq. The people who asked to leave the organization and go about their lives would be handed over to Saddam's security agents. In 1373 (1994) about 400 of these disaffected members were sent to torture chambers in Camp Ashraf and were under constant physical and mental torture for about four months. The names of six of the people who lost their lives during these four months has been established now. Parviz Ahmadi, Ghorban Ali Torabi, Farhad Tahmasbi, Jalil Bozorgmehr, Elyas Karami and Hamzeh Heydari. Still more are believed to have been killed under torture. Meanwhile Rajavi was organizing and conducting meetings in the Mojahedin's Baghdad Hall [known as the hall of the National Council of Resistance]. The meetings were called "meetings of purification". This was considered by Rajavi as cleaning his own backyard. Everybody was expected to go one by one and stand in the middle of the crowd to become the individual subject for the crowd and submit themselves to massive collective pressure. Whoever could not pass this test would be handed over to the forces of Saddam or, at best, would be sent to the internal prisons of Camp Ashraf. During this time Maryam Torabi, the sister of Ghorban Ali Torabi who died under torture, lost her mind and is now critically ill. Mehdi Eftekhari the commander of the operation which took Massoud Rajavi out of Iran has also lost his mind under these pressures and is in a very critical state. Mohammed Reza Tamei and many others have been similarly affected.

From this time all the positions of command were reserved only for women and Rajavi gave an ideological order to all the men that they must obey women's orders in any place, at any time, no questions asked. This formula for total obedience and the consequent punishment for not obeying orders by accusing people of being agents of Iranian regime and imprisoning and torturing them, did not work as Rajavi wished. People started running away from the camps. Over a thousand people tried to run away from Mojahedin camps across Iraq. From Basra in the south to Jalula in the north. The majority of these people were arrested and sent to prison. Many ended up in Saddam's notorious Abu Ghraib political prison near Ramadi. In 1379 (2000), Esmail Shamsaldin, who was a mechanized unit commander, together with his second-in-command Mohammed Masih (son of the famous Haj Masih) ran away from Basra to the Iraq-Kuwait border. Rajvi gave the order to find and shoot them. Esmail was summarily executed on the border and Masih was brought back to Camp Ashraf. In 1380 (2001), six people ran away from Basra, Al Emare and Kut. One of them by the name of Mostafa was arrested and executed on the spot. The fate of the others is unclear.

In mid 1380 (2001), I tried to run away while I was in Baghdad and headed towards Jordan. After three days I was arrested and taken to the Intelligence Services of Baghdad from there I was transferred to the main prison in Camp Ashraf camp. I spent about two months there where I was tortured severely by Mahvash Sepehri, Mehdi Abrishamchi, Fahimeh Arvani and Hassan Nezamalmolk. After that they took me to a court headed by Massoud and Maryam Rajavi and after fourteen hours they issued the death penalty for me. In late 1380 (2001), Massoud Tayebi and Abbas Mirsadeghi were success-

ful in trying to run away from Jalula. Mehdi Abrishmchi used to say, "we do not recognize such a concept as 'disaffected' or 'unwilling'. Everybody has to stay or die. And the charge for escape is 'treason and spying', and the consequence is execution. If Saddam Hussein beheaded the British journalist Farzad Bazoft and sent the coffin to the British, we will mince up traitors and then give them to the dogs to eat." In 1383 (2004), I managed to run away from the hell made by Rajavi and take refuge with the US armed forces from whom I requested asylum. I escaped along with my second-in-command Reza Iranloo who also has a very painful story to relate. He had been arrested by the Mojahedin when he was only 19 years old. In 1372 (1993) the Mojahedin attacked a border base and Reza [a soldier with the Iranian army] was hit in the head by a bullet. He was due to get married in Bojnoord in three months time. Instead, he and two others were arrested by the Mojahedin and transferred to Iraq. He spent over a year in the prisons of Kut and Ashraf. He could not speak for one and a half years because of the injuries to his head and since these men were captured after the ceasefire between Iran and Iraq, the Mojahedin would not accept that the Iraqis should register them with the Red Cross as prisoners-of-war. After his imprisonment he asked the Mojahedin to let him go but their response was severe torture, and they told him, "since you are not registered in any place, your life is ours and we can take it as and when we wish". He had no choice except to stay with them. In 1383 (2004) we managed to run away to the US army camp. The Red Cross representatives who interviewed him were shocked by what Rajavi had done to him. He is currently back in Iran and has been reunited with his family. ■

## SURVIVORS' REPORT

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