

ASSOCIATION FOR THE SUPPORT OF VICTIMS OF MOJAHEDIN-E KHALQ

PARIS AND WASHINGTON TOLD OF RAJAVI'S WAR CRIMES

“On orders from the Iraqis and against receiving a monthly sum of 27 million US Dollars, not only would we fight, kill and arrest the Kurds and the Shi’a insurgents, but any ordinary Iraqi suspected of opposing Saddam and hand them to Iraqi intelligence, of which the MKO was a special unit. We would even arrest Iraqi soldiers who would desert the army.” Behzad Alishahi, Paris, October 18, 2005

The trial of former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein was marked by press conferences in Paris and Washington, DC in which former members of the Mojahedin-e Khalq demanded that Massoud Rajavi, the organization's self-appointed leader, also be brought to justice alongside Saddam Hussein, for war crimes, crimes against humanity and terrorism.

The meetings, held in Paris on Tuesday October 18th, and in Washington, DC on Monday October 24th broadcast films which depict MKO leaders in talks with Saddam's security service officials discussing operations planning, logistical cooperation and haggling over financial reward. The films were retrieved from Saddam's security services buildings after coalition forces invaded Iraq in 2003.

Meetings in these buildings had been secretly videotaped by Iraqi Security chiefs for their own records, and provide incontrovertible evidence of Saddam Hussein's support for international terrorism, with the Mojahedin as his main protégés.

Behzad Alishahi, the most senior MKO member to escape the clutches of the cult in recent years, spoke in Paris of Rajavi's involvement in Saddam Hussein's reign of terror in Iraq and his

complicity in the suppression of the Kurdish and Shiite uprisings in March 1991 which arose out of the Gulf War. In Washington, DC, Karim Haghi alerted western lawmakers to the history of the Mojahedin, its cult nature and its absolute reliance on violence to achieve its aims, and warned people not to be fooled by the MEK's propaganda which portrays the Rajavis as a democratic, secular and feminist leaders.

The Mojahedin made attempts to prevent and then to disrupt both meetings. In Washington, the organization, which is listed as terrorist under all its pseudonyms including the NCRI, was forced to use its lobbying agency, the Iran Policy Committee led by Professor Raymond Tanter, to issue the MEK's official rebuttal of the accusations. American-Iranians were greatly interested in the visit for the first time of former members of the MEK who could talk about the organization with inside knowledge.

The Washington based 24 hour Iranian satellite television channel www.rangarantv.com hosted a live program with Karim Haghi. The program attracted a flood of phone calls and was prolonged for three hours. It has since been repeated four times by popular demand. ■



EDITORIAL



In spite of obvious set-backs, the fall of Saddam Hussein, the terrorist listing, for long enough the Mojahedin had felt impregnable in its three 'safe-houses' of Auvers-sur-Oise, Washington, DC and Camp Ashraf in Iraq. They believed that these places were theirs and that no-one could dare to expose them there. How wrong they were.

The Mojahedin itself compared the visit to Washington, DC, by former MKO members to the similar 'invasion' of Auvers-sur-Oise earlier this year. Rajavi should be aware by now that we intend to 'invade' all of these 'safe-houses' and lift the lid on the MKO's crimes. The MEK's past and present involvement in war crimes, crimes against humanity and terrorism are now indisputable matters of public record. What is interesting is that when confronted with these facts, the MEK's only defence is to create a diversionary smokescreen by accusing everyone involved in exposing the crimes of Massoud and Maryam Rajavi of working for the Iranian Intelligence

Ministry. And of course, some people, whether paid by the MEK or not, will be willing to be diverted by this. Should we be satisfied with this defence? Is this a reasonable answer to counter the facts? Can a group gain credibility simply by discrediting its critics? In a 'debate' conducted on Traitors USA blog, Ali Safavi, the MEK's unofficial spokesman in the USA, gets cornered by such facts and has only one answer: "Because, in the final analysis, one has to make a choice between the mullahs and the MEK. There's nothing in between. Indeed, the MEK is the mirror image of everything that the mullahs stand for. Since the mullahs are all evil,

the MEK must inevitably be good." When this does not silence the questions and challenges Safavi retorts: "I see no further point in continuing this dialogue. I guess, your response only proves the point I made to your friend: Anyone who shows enmity to the MEK is either a paid agent or de facto agent of the Iran's Intelligence Ministry." So, Mojahedin thinking can be reduced to this simple black and white view of the world. Massoud Rajavi famously told his followers 'ideology is what you do, not what you say.' For once, we agree with Rajavi, that the MEK's ideology can easily be discerned through its actions and not its nice words. ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran-Interlink

October 2005

Mr Paulo Casaca, member of the European Parliament, visited Camp Ashraf in September. Based on this visit he claimed that Human Rights Watch had been duped by the Iranian Intelligence Ministry, and that its May 2005 report was "devoid of any truth." Mr Casaca, an MEP for Portugal, has an Iranian born parliamentary assistant named Firouz Mahvi.

Googling this name reveals that Mahvi is a well-known member of the National Council of Resistance of Iran (aka Mojahedin-e Khalq) which is listed as a terrorist organization in the USA.

<http://www.europarl.eu.int/members/expert/assistantAlphaOrderByMep.do?letter=C& language=EN>

"Guns and bombs are not speech"

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct 20 (Reuters)

- The United States can designate foreign organizations as terrorist groups and bar Americans from financially backing them, a federal appeals court ruled on Thursday. "Leaving the determination of whether a group is a 'foreign terrorist organization' to the executive branch ... is both a reasonable and a constitutional way to make such determinations," Judge Andrew Kleinfeld wrote for a three-judge panel.

"The Constitution does not forbid Congress from requiring individuals, whether they agree with the executive branch determina-

tion or not, to refrain from furnishing material assistance to designated terrorist organizations."

The ruling by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals was made in a case involving people who raised money in California for Mujahedin-e Khalq, or MEK, an Iranian opposition group designated as a terrorist organization by the U.S. government since 1997. The defendants argued the MEK was not a terrorist group and they had First Amendment rights to contribute to the group. The court disagreed, saying contributing money was not the same as exercising a right to free speech. "Guns and bombs are not speech," Judge Kleinfeld wrote. The 9th Circuit ruling was a rehearing of the same panel's decision in June. Both 9th Circuit decisions overturned a district court's dismissal of the indictment in the case. The "Committee for Human Rights" had solicited contributions at the Los Angeles International Airport and sent them to the MEK in Turkey.

...The ruling acknowledged geopolitical changes could change the perception about the MEK, but said the U.S. government should be the entity that decides.

"Defendants could be right about the MEK. But that is not for us, or for a jury in defendants' case, to say," the decision read.

"The sometimes subtle analysis of a foreign organization's political program to determine whether it is indeed a terrorist threat to the United States is particularly within the expertise of the State Department and the executive branch."

Terrorist MKO paid British MP to visit UN

From Hansard and IRNA October 12, 2005

A parliamentary debate on Iran on Tuesday October 11, was sponsored by Conservative MP David Amess, a self-confessed supporter of the front group for the Mojahedin-e Khalq terrorist group. The debate concentrated on Britain's relations with Iran and recent issues including Iran's nuclear programme and allegations of interference in Iraq. David Amess was unable to get any support for his favoured group. The Chair of the all-party Iran parliamentary group, Phyllis Starkey totally disassociated herself from Amess and his Conservative colleague Brian Binley, whom he accompanied on a paid trip to the UN General Assembly last month to rally support for the so-called National Council of Resistance. "It is a sect, not a political party, and has virtually no support in Iran. It is a diversion from the real issues," she said and repeated that the UK Government should be "clear, consistent and transparent" in engaging in dialogue with Iran and its people.

Group Fighting for its Future

IRNA, October, 13 2005

The German weekly magazine "Focus" has published an article on the issue of MKO defectors' return to Iran. "Now the group is fighting for its future," the article said. Carrying some photos, which showed former MKO members' families welcoming their loved ones, the article added that "the families of these people welcome their lost boys and girls with indescribable happiness". "15 years ago in the deserts of Iraq, Faramarz Massouri was trained to kill. He used to shout slogans against Islamic Republic values, but now he is now returning to Iran," Andrea Claudia Hoffman wrote. "Massouri and several other former members said to International Red Cross representatives that they want to return to their country voluntarily."

Quoting these people, Focus added: "We stopped our activities

and want to start a new life in Iran."

"To date, 340 out of 3800 MKO members have returned to Iran." Reflecting MKO's fear from defection of its members, the BBC also reported last week that 90 former members of the organization have warned European countries, the U.S. and Canada in a letter that the group (by its agents) wants to harass former members. In the letter, they said that a number of MKO agents, trained in urban warfare, security and intelligence courses, have been smuggled to the West to identify critics and former members in order to harass or even assassinate them.

More former MKO veterans return to Iran

Nejat Association, October 13, 2005

According to the correspondent of Nejat Association, another group of 13 former members of Rajavi's terrorist group arrived at Mehrabad International Airport with a Red Cross plane on October 13 and joined their families.

The report suggests that most of these returnees had been in the MKO for 18-20 years and left the group because of torture, horror and choking situation in the cult.

The names of returnees are as follows:

1. Mohammed Reza Barati - Tehran
2. Marzieh Ghorbani Moghaddam - Tehran
3. Jamal Amiri - Tehran
4. Behrooz Nazarian - Nahavand
5. Jabbar Ghaderi - Kamyaran
6. Mohammed Ebadi - Mahshahr
7. Shanbeh Kalantari - Ahwaz
8. Hussein Farah Bakhsh - Rasht
9. Nasser Ravayee - Tehran
10. Ali Ekrami - Mahshahr
11. Saeed Nasserli - Abadan
12. Siavash Daryapeima - Minab
13. Gholamreza Yousefi - Dargaz

IRANIAN DISSIDENTS SQUARE OFF IN DC



By Sherrie Gossett and Monisha Bansal
October 25, 2005

CNSNews.com Staff Writers

(CNSNews.com) - A news conference conducted by self-described Iranian dissidents descended into chaos on Monday as audience members and two journalists accused the speakers of spreading disinformation and being agents of Iranian intelligence.

As supporters of the rival dissident groups vied for media attention, one group accused the other of being imposters. An hour and a half into the National Press Club event in Washington, D.C., organizers halted it and Capitol police were called in to keep order.

Monday's news conference, titled "Saddam and Terrorism," was sponso-

red by the Iran Peyvand Association and was supposed to focus on Iraq as it was. Speakers argued that after fleeing Iran, the Mujahedin-e Khalq Organization (MEK) operated out of Iraq as a terrorist group. For that reason, its leader, Massoud Rajavi, should be brought to justice just as Saddam Hussein was, the Iran Peyvand Association insisted.

The MEK was expelled from Iran after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Starting in the late 1980s, its main support came from Saddam Hussein's Iraqi regime. While it conducted terrorist attacks against the interests of the religious regime in Iran, it also mobilized to suppress the 1991 Shiite and Kurdish uprisings against Saddam, a point the presenters emphasized.

According to U.S. government terrorist group profiles, the MEK advocates the overthrow of the Iranian regime and its replacement with the group's own leadership.

Currently, over 3,000 MEK members live in Camp Ashraf, north of Baghdad, where they remain under the Geneva Convention's "protected person" status. A press release for Monday's event promised that attendees would see a documentary film exposing the MEK's role in the suppression of the 1991 Iraqi uprising and "video evidence, secretly filmed by Saddam's own security services," showing the "financial, spying and terrorist relationship between the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization and Saddam's regime." Anti-war activist Carol Moore warned that if the U.S. attacked Iran, the result could be world-wide nuclear war. A flier distributed by the organizers echoed the "catastrophic" repercussions of an American attack and argued that Iranian officials could

deploy "millions of troops and enter Iraq," as well as attack Israel's nuclear sites and cities, American bases and troops in Iraq and U.S. ships at sea. "They could cut off much of the world's oil, which comes through the Strait of Hormuz," read the flier, which was produced by StopTheWarNow.net, DawnDC.net and UnitedForPeace.org. Karim Haqi, introduced as a former member of the MEK, followed Moore's speech.

After a video was shown, he addressed the meeting in Farsi while Marukh Haji translated.

Shortly into Haqi's speech, audience members began interrupting, including one unidentified young woman who said she spoke Farsi and complained the translation being given to the audience was erroneous.

Another woman who refused to be identified except to say she was an immigration attorney, stood up and complained that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security had allowed a

former "terrorist" into the country. A man who described himself as a "freelance journalist" asked Haqi whether it was true, as alleged, that he had worked with Iranian intelligence. He was escorted from the meeting by organizers. But the charge was echoed in questions by a British-Israeli journalist.

Haqi later denied any such ties to Iranian Intelligence, and through translator Marukh Haji, added that he and his supporters had spent years in Iranian prisons and were the "first ones" the government attacked.

"We put all our hopes in [the MEK]" said Haqi. "They betrayed us."

Two individuals carrying materials from the Committee Against Ahmadinejad (Iran's new president) repeatedly interrupted Haqi and his translator. Later, members of the group gave reporters copies of a document accusing the organizers of Monday's news conference of being in the employ of Iranian intelligence. ■

MKO DISSIDENTS DEMAND THAT MAS' OUD RAJAVI ALSO BE PUT ON TRIAL

By Safa Haeri, Iran Press Service

October 19, 2005



PARIS, 19 Oct. (IPS) On the eve of the trial of the toppled Iraqi president Saddam Hussein, some former members of the Mojahedeen Khalq Organisation (MKO) demanded that the leader of the outlawed Organisation and some of his close associates be also tried for "crimes against both the Iraqi and Iranian peoples".

"The toppled regime of Saddam Hussein actively supported international terrorism and committed crimes against Iraqi and Iranian peoples and the Mojaheedeen Khalq Organisation, led by Mas'oud Rajavi, were at the top of the list of these terrorist organizations", Behzad Alishahi, a former member of the group said in a press conference held in Paris on Tuesday 18 October 2005.

Created in the sixties, the MKO, a mix of radical Islam and Stalinism, took an active part in operations against the regime of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi and is suspected to have assassinated at least six American military advisors.

Mr. Rajavi sided with Grand Ayatollah

Rouhollah Khomeini in the Islamic Revolution of 1979, but was declared outlaw after he attempted a coup against the leader of the Revolution and along with Mr. Abolhasan Banisadr, the first president of the Islamic Republic, fled to Paris.

In 1886 and at the height of Iran-Iraq War, Mr. Rajavi and his Organisation left France for Baghdad, where he started an active cooperation with the Iraqi army and intelligence not only against Iran, but also the Kurds and the Shi'as.

"The Mojahedeen, as part of Saddam's military establishment, played a decisive role in the suppression of the internal uprisings in Iraq in 1991, and are responsible for the massacre of many Iraqi

Shi'ites and Kurds who opposed Saddam.

The best documented of these being the massacre of the Kurds in their uprising in March 1991", the dissident claimed.

Mr. Alishahi said he is in possession of some of the "crimes" the MKO committed against both the Kurds and the Shi'ites, adding that he had sent the documents to Mr. Jalal Talabani, the former leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) who is now the President of Iraq.

"Acting as Saddam's Private Army, the Mojahedeen have actively participated in the war which Saddam Hussein waged against Iran between 1980 and 1988, engaging themselves in intelligence gathering for the Iraqi army as well as

participating in joint operations with them”, the former MKO members said. “On direct orders from Hasan al-Majid, better known as Ali the Chemical, (then Governor of the province of Basra and later Saddam’s Representative in Kuwait after the occupation of the oil-rich country by Iraqi forces), we organised military maneuvers in Basra and paraded with tanks for days just to frighten the Shi’a population of the town, known for their hate of Saddam”, Mr. Alishahi recalled. “Each and every military and terrorist operation carried out by the Mojahedeens in Iran has been ordered directly by Saddam Hussein and his intelligence and secret services in Iraq”, he went on, adding that on occasions, the Organisation would carry espionage operations in Iran, mostly from Ahvaz, the capital city of the oil-rich Iranian province of Khuzestan.

“On orders from the Iraqis and against receiving a monthly sum of 27 million US Dollars, not only we would fight, kill and arrest the Kurds and the Shi’a insurgents, but any ordinary Iraqi suspected of opposing Saddam and hand them to Iraqi intelligence, of which the MKO was a special unit. We would even arrest Iraqi soldiers who would desert the army”, another dissident told reporters. Accusing Mr. Rajavi of “murdering” several members of the group suspected of “not sharing his views”, Mr. Alishahi said of the 3,000 to 4,000 mojahedeens now living in the Camp Ashraf near Baghdad, “all except a very few would leave if a plane from the International Red Cross would land there”. An anchorman of the MKO’s television that would broadcast from both Baghdad and Basra, Mr. Alishahi said had been jai-

led for five months and tortured on orders from Mr. Rajavi some eleven years ago, but was latter pardoned and stayed with the group until the Americans toppled the Iraqi regime. Then, he said, he took refuge at the huge Ashraf Camp, which is now under American protection and went to Iran with the help of the International Red Cross (ICRC), but had to leave the country because of the pressures he endured from the Revolutionary Guards and other Iranians. From Turkey, Mr. Alishahi came to France where he enjoys political asylum. As the MKO dissidents were talking to correspondents and showing films about Mr. and Mrs Rajavi, the so-called “co-leaders” of the MKO, Afshin Molavi, a spokesman for the Organisation sent e-mails, describing Mr. Alishahi as “a member of the Iranian Intelligence Ministry”. ■

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH: 'WE WEREN'T DUPED.'

By LEIGH BALDWIN

WASHINGTON, Oct. 13 (UPI) -- Human Rights Watch reasserted claims of abuses by an Iranian dissident group Wednesday even after a report compiled by a European Parliament delegation denounced its initial report as "devoid of any truth."

Earlier this year, the global watchdog group published a report alleging serial abuses at Camp Ashraf, the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq headquarters, six miles north of Baghdad. The report described the MeK as an extremist sect, whose leaders had exerted a manipulative psychological influence on their followers, as in the case of the 1980s mass divorces enforced to ensure total loyalty to their cause. Members who wish to leave the organization suffered from beating and prolonged solitary confinement, resulting in a number of fatalities, the report said. The MeK denies the allegations, claiming an Iranian conspiracy to discredit the group. A report by the parliamentary delegation, based on a visit to Camp Ashraf in September, backed the MeK’s claims. In its report, the delegation said that the watchdog group had gone “far beyond the mandate of a human rights organization.” The delegation heard counter-testimonies

from MeK members, supporting this view and vilifying Human Rights Watch. “We found the allegations contained in HRW report unfounded and devoid of any truth. We also came to the conclusion that the HRW report was procedurally flawed and substantively inaccurate.” The HRW has been criticized by the delegation for not visiting Camp Ashraf and for basing their report on testimony gathered in 12 telephone interviews. But HRW’s Joe Stork Wednesday fiercely defended his conclusions, throwing his own accusations back at the EU delegation. “They’re fine ones to talk about methodology,” he told United Press International. “The counter-testimonies are all from people high up in the MeK. Most of the criticisms in the delegation’s report are from MeK sources.” Asked why HRW did not visit Camp Ashraf, despite invitations from the MeK, Stork explained that his organization’s allegations dated back before the occupa-



Joe Stork

tion of Iraq led by the American coalition. “We were invited during the Hussein era. No human rights organization could credibly take up that offer.” HRW had sought permission to visit the camp since the fall of Saddam, he said. But “U.S. forces did not respond positively to later requests. In hindsight, I regret not including that in the report.” Coalition forces in Iraq were unable to confirm that these requests had been made, according to Stork. The MeK was designated a terrorist organization by the Clinton administration in 1997. But the group has since won favor in the United States by providing information on the Iranian nuclear program. In 2004, MeK members were given ‘protected status’ by coalition forces in Iraq. The group’s seemingly contradictory status, at once a source of valuable intelli-

gence and an acknowledged terrorist organization, is fuelling a fierce propaganda war between the MeK and the Iranian regime, in which HRW, the European Parliament and the United States Government have become players. Stork is a target of an elaborate deception by the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence and Security, claims Raymond Tanter, a Georgetown University academic and founding member of the Iran Policy Committee, which advises the United States government, citing a June White Paper issued by the IPC that describes HRW as "victims of a world class intelligence operation."

According to the IPC paper, many of the witnesses interviewed by HRW were in fact Iranian agents. These included Hossein Sobhani, "whom HRW cites as a "credible" victim but who, in fact, runs an intelligence ring in Europe that works under the direct supervision of MOIS deputy chief Mohammad-Reza Iravani." "Human Rights Watch has been duped," said Tanter.

Terrorists or indispensable friends?
Uncertainty over the true personality of

the MeK has prompted debate over the U.S. administration's relationship with the group. In an October report by Foreign Policy magazine, freelance writer Erik Saas suggested that MeK intelligence might not be quite as indispensable as their advocates claim:

"The group has a record of exaggerating intelligence or sometimes simply making things up. U.S. officials have learned to take MeK claims with very large grains of salt," wrote Saas.

Nevertheless, there is, according to Saas, increasing co-operation between the MeK and the United States. (Although they remain on the U.S. State Department's terrorist list.) Saas even claims MeK fighters have been deployed in Pakistan and Afghanistan, although this has not been confirmed.

Alireza Jafarzadeh, President of Strategic Policy Consulting and former MeK leader, says he sees no reason why the terrorist designation should not soon be lifted.

MeK was placed on the terrorist list in 1997 as a conciliatory gesture aimed at Iran's president at the time, Mohammed Khatami Jafarzadeh told UPI. "The desig-

nation came weeks after Khatami was elected," he said. But with the election this summer of hardliner Mahmoud Ahmadinejad a shift in policy was likely. "With the new regime, the situation will change."

Tanter gives credence to the suggestion that the terrorist list has more to do with political expediency than human rights. "The designation is a diplomatic football tossed around to gain various diplomatic benefits," he said.

Asked if, in the light of the HRW allegations, co-operation with the MeK could damage the image of the United States, Tanter said: "American credibility is damaged if it doesn't take sides with the Iranian resistance in general. The U.S. has to stand with the dissidents. That doesn't mean picking a group."

"Regime change is the implicit policy of the Bush administration," he said. "Diplomacy has failed and the number of nuclear installations makes military action unfeasible." If Tanter is right, alliance with dissident groups, however unsavory, is one of increasingly few options. ■

COALITION FORCES REMIND MKO MEMBERS THEY ARE FREE TO LEAVE

October 2005

Coalition General Command in Iraq has written a letter addressed to each of the residents at Camp Ashraf to remind them of their individual rights under the Fourth Geneva Convention.



Paulo Casaca, MEP visited Camp Ashraf in September

Part of this letter reads as follows:

"It is important that all Camp Ashraf residents know their rights and how they can exercise their rights. It is also important that all Camp Ashraf

residents understand that they are free to leave Iraq at any time they want and that Coalition Forces, international organizations and humanitarian groups are ready to help them.

All Camp Ashraf residents who want to return to their homeland are entitled to receive help from Coalition Forces, the

Iraqi Ministry of Human Rights and the International Committee of the Red Cross, who have already secured the return of 300 former members to Iran and other countries.

All those [Camp Ashraf] residents who do not want to return to their homeland, and instead want to get individual or family refugee status from a third country, can ask for their case to be referred to the UNHCR."

Also, article 10 of the rights given to Camp Ashraf residents by the Fourth Geneva Convention says that "they have the right to leave, at any time, the land of conflict to go to their homeland or a country for which they have valid documents".

During the past two years, and particularly after Coalition Forces granted Fourth Geneva Convention status to the mem-

bers, the Mojahedin-e Khalq organization has prevented its members from becoming aware that they are free to leave Iraq at any time they desire. During the past two years, they have repeatedly forced the members to pledge not to leave Iraq, in direct contradiction to their rights: "Residents of Camp Ashraf are subject to the measures of control and security against danger, violence, obligation and special protection is provided for women's rights". Coercing people to stay in Camp Ashraf against their will is a violation of their rights.

The second article of the rights given to these people according to humanitarian and international laws is their right to request to meet their families who are outside the camp. The MKO leaders systematically violate this law by ban-

ning the members from meeting with families who have come to the doors of Camp Ashraf to see their loved ones. According the 3rd and 4th articles, of which it has been necessary for the Coalition General Command to remind the MKO, "they have the right to receive help from the International Committee of the Red Cross, UNHCR and other humanitarian organizations. They can enjoy freedom of thought, religion, speech, formation of associations inside their society and freedom of political views as well as freedom from harassment and servitude."

The Mojahedin-e Khalq systematically violates these rights. The members are prohibited from contacting the Red Cross or UNHCR, and these agencies in turn are not permitted to contact the members either.

In addition the MKO, using its well documented cult manipulation techniques, deprives these people of freedom of thought and forces them to work (without reward) and occupies them in such a way as to deprive them from exercising political and/or religious freedoms. Other aspects of the Convention, reiterated by the Coalition General Command, are that the privileges applied during past year and the continuation of their

application should not encourage or allow misuses by the MKO. After distribution of the Coalition Forces letter, the MKO responded by claiming that the large number of families who come to Iraq with the assistance of Nejat Association to visit their loved ones [in Camp Ashraf] proves that there is democracy in the cult and that they [the MKO] allow such meetings. This response, announced by the MKO's European spokesman, Mohammed Mohaddessin, who is awaiting trial on terrorism charges in Paris, has been forced by the circumstance of the Coalition letter. Otherwise, the potential of the Fourth Geneva Convention to expose the MKO's internal suppression is huge. After the Coalition General Command in Iraq announced that all residents of Camp Ashraf have the right to meet their families and to be in touch with them - and only after experts on the cult have revealed that the MKO leaders have systematically deprived the members of their rights and described how they isolate the members politically, emotionally, intellectually and theologically - the MKO cult leaders (under heavy pressure) issued permission for such meetings and have claimed through this that Camp Ashraf residents

do enjoy enough freedom. Internally, the cult leaders continue to tell members that family meetings are "family bombs", and have described the family as "the core of corruption". Using the pretext that the visiting families all have links to the Iranian Intelligence Ministry, they have been able to coerce some members into insulting their parents. Families who have gone to Iraq to visit their family in Camp Ashraf can readily testify that prior to this permission, they were denied contact with their children for years and that the MKO still does not allow its members to be in touch with the outside world. It would appear that, in order for Coalition Forces to properly apply the conditions of the Fourth Geneva Convention in Camp Ashraf, it will be first necessary to act to dismantle the MKO cult mafia which illegally governs the Camp, and which threatens the lives and the human rights of all members. Only at that point will the residents be able to enjoy the intellectual freedom, freedom of speech, and freedom of association which comprise their basic human rights. ■

AUTOPSY OF AN IDEOLOGICAL DRIFT

CHAPTER 24/Low Profile

Antoine Gessler

Little remains of the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran after the difficult Summer of 2003. They have been hit by a criminal judicial proceeding in France, where they have been officially designated a "terrorist group that is dangerous to public order". An official ban stops all NCIR activities in the United States and the European Union has no intention of lifting its condemnation of Saddam Hussein's former servants.



Deprived of its rear bases by the fall of the Baghdad tyrant, its militants are rotting away in camps under guard by the US Army. The National Liberation Army is no more. But, even more important, the European media are looking closely at them, underlining their contradictions and its sect-like nature. All the French newspapers are unanimous in describing the cult of personality, iron discipline,

internal oppression that characterize the PMOI. It is impossible in these conditions to have easy entry, as in the past, to editorial offices and to solicit support statements from elected officials. Moreover, most of those who allowed their names to be used by the Mojahedin have kept carefully away from any statements or any petition supporting them now. These are friends

who have "Gone With the Wind" when the wolf blows outside their doors: to combine Margaret Mitchell with the children's story about the wolf and the 3 little pigs: "Today, Saddam Hussein's former guests have never kept a lower profile.. .The glory days of the People's Mojahedin seem gone forever. The organisation, supervised by the National Council of the

Iranian Resistance in Auvers-sur-Oise recruited most of its fighters in days following the 1979 Revolution. From the outset, they based their support on an intense communications campaign, targeting Western media, and systematically denouncing the mullah's policies. "We are for democracy", insists Massoud Rajavi. But the nice words of the Mojahedin have disenchanted many of their supporters". (239)

The big danger for the PMOI is inside. The organisation is risking implosion which would be their death warrant. Its militants, cut off from their source, could start questioning the leadership. We can see that their powerful role is still there in the immolations. But criticism is increasing. What damage will it do? Their Iranian political adversaries in the West are sharp tongued and they are leaning hard on the Mojahedin's contradictions:

"The Massoud and Maryam sect calls for creating another Islamic Republic. Their Islamic Republic is accompanied by the word 'democratic'. They want to give Khomeini's office and now Khameni's post to Massoud Rajavi. Apart from the name, there is no difference between Khomeini's Islamic Republic and the Democratic Islamic Republic of Massoud Rajavi. If, at least in words, the Islamic Republic's regime calls itself anti-imperialist, Rajavi's organisation feels no shame in now making public its dependence on imperialism and reaction. For this organisation, photos taken after thousands of intrigues with no matter what American Senator are claims to glory!" (240)

Contrary to their flat claims, the People's Mojahedin do not have the support of Iranians. They report a 65 per cent, solid support. This has no basis in fact. They now find themselves isolated without any hope of setting off a popular uprising inside Iran:

"Iranians, including opponents to the regime, are hostile to the movement which carries the memory of a 'terrorist organisation' which, in addition, was assisted, financed and armed by Iran's worst enemy: Saddam Hussein's Iraq". (241)

The day after the election of President Khatami in 1997, the Fedayin Organisation (Minority) stated the irony: they declared baldly that the Mojahedin were finished as a representative force:

"The Islamic Republic has not been embarrassed to publicise exaggerated figures from the ballot boxes. It mobilised all its efforts to misrepresent the relatively massive turnout, concluding that the people's vote was one of confidence in the system, in the velayat e-faghih (the leadership of the Supreme Religious Guide for Life) and the Islamic Republic. Other Islamists who dream of an Islamic democracy' (!) have taken initiatives in the opposite direction! These other islamists cannot bear any reality that runs against their desires, which themselves are completely contradicted by the facts.

The Mojahedin Organisation refutes the relatively massive participation of the people in these elections. According to this group and the National Resistance Council they completely invented, if the State apparatus gave out such figures, it was to compete with the Mojahedin and their President of the Republic.

According to a survey made by the Mojahedin, two thirds of the people support the President of the Mojahedin's Republic, Mrs Maryam Rajavi.

Mojahedin analysts saw things simply that way! The Islamic Republic inflated the vote for its own President in order to compete with those voting for the Mojahedin!

Obviously this kind of analysis, if this is an example of their work, is worthless and does not deserve our attention. They are so infantile that they are only for the Mojahedin and their worshipers. In the thinking of the Mojahedin, any time Massoud or Maryam Rajavi get on an airplane or land somewhere, a new phase and a new step forward are beginning. The last trip of Mrs Maryam Rajavi 'near home soil' was thus translated into a new phase for the Mojahedin's paralysed armed forces. Without this kind of analysis, how can the Mojahedin make their troops hope that the 'Planetary Hope' and 'the President of Iran' will lead them to Teheran? The Mojahedin and all the forces that want to take decisions for the people without consulting them and without giving any importance to their opinions will only fall into the shameful state in which they now find themselves. The Mojahedin boycotted the election and have activities designed only to overthrow the regime. Their analyses are not based on any knowledge of the

existing situation and how to change it, but on their own situation and needs". (242)

The Beginning of the End

The long decline which seems irreversible can now be seen to be irrefutable as well. But, in the course of future months, of future years, the Mojahedin will keep a fragment of their ability to annoy. They can still break lives and mislead a youth which will suffer the damnation of believing in their promises.

This will be so, even if very many Iranians now know what they are dealing with:

'This attachment to the home country and the absence of resentment toward a regime which pushed them into exile (giving them the opportunity to find success) also explains the scant success of the opposition in exile.

Only the People's Modjahedin mobilise a part of the youth in exile, especially in Europe. Yet, their sectarianism and their use of terrorism and armed action frighten the large majority of the diaspora'. (243)

The PMOI, naturally, protests, swears on its good faith and insists on the free will of its militants:

"It is impossible to imagine that the mass f Mojahedin or their supporters who live in the different cities of Europe, the United States or Asia could be forced to do anything.. .At the very least, the authors of the report suggest that the Mojahedin carry out... propaganda of such breadth that they hypnotise tens of thousands of their compatriots and lends, body and soul, and force them to come out for large scale demonstrations throughout the world.". (244)

Hollow words indeed when held up to rigorous analysis:

"The Mojahedin are strange. They speak to no one. They don't mix", says Hamed Kadam, a shepherd in the Arab village of Beyukhara near Camp Ashraf. The armed opposition group to the Iranian regime also suffers from an extraordinary lack of credibility within the Iranian population, even if its leaders claim 65 per cent support in Iran.

Teheran's youth (most supporters of a change in regime there) see the Mojahedin as a form of extremism that promotes sexual segregation, and make references to Communist values with a

tinge of fundamentalism (their female fighters, without exception, wear the scarf).

In order to clean up its image in foreign countries, the organisation bought half pages of advertising in the American press last January, even getting 150 signatures of Congressmen. This media operation did not work in preventing the American military intervention in Iraq". (245)

Without some dramatic intervening event, Maryam Rajavi has to face French justice. But where is her husband, Massoud? According to the Interlink Website, run by former members of the PMOI who broke with the movement and try to assist those who would do the same, Rajavi planned the worst possible fate for his people.

A Ray of Hope

"Iran-Interlink revealed last year a plan laid out by Massoud Rajavi if American forces attacked Iraq. This resulted in the arrival of 'useful' members of the Mojahedin in Europe: three hundred, according to estimates, and growing... Rajavi anticipated perfectly the fact that the Mojahedin could not survive in Iraq without Saddam Hussein's support. Thus, he smuggled his most useful members to Europe to reconstruct the organisation in the West.

The other part of the plan was to abandon the other members in Iraq and use them as propaganda tools, carrying out suicide attacks against Iran. But the American bombing raids forced the Mojahedin to surrender and accept their own detention and disarmament." (246) Supposing that the People's Mojahedin of Iran stop recruiting? Would those hundreds of militants who gave their existence to a lost cause continue despite this disaster?

Nadere Afshari knows quite well how Maryam and Massoud keep their followers in line:

"By the power of repeating the legends of Abraham and Ismael, as well as mystical poetry, the organisation's members, men and women, end up killing their own instincts and repressing their feelings. This is the way they establish a disciple-teacher relationship with Massoud and Maryam Rajavi. . . Massoud pretends to have a relationship with God and the Saints of Islam. He considers himself a Saint. He wants the

members to believe that all who remain at his side will go to Paradise". (247) How can we not complete this thesis without citing Chairman Mao Tse Tung one last time. He was an expert in manipulation, and in the science of alienating a whole nation:

"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 have also won important successes in our work". (248)

Where will other members come from? From among those abandoned in the sands of Iraq without any place to turn to. They number less than 4,000 and could easily return to their home country. Figaro reports:

"From its own side, Iran has just officially announced the amnesty of the Mojahedin.

'The Iranian Government is ready to welcome them on its territory and pardon them', announced Abdollah Ramezanzadeh, spokesman for the Iranian Government". (249)

Meanwhile, children, the mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers, even sometimes abandoned spouses and children have taken the road home, moved by the hope to finally be reunited:

"Some three hundred families of Mojahedin members, recently arrived in Iraq, assembled in front of the Mojahedin's offices in Baghdad to demand the liberation of their children from Rajavi's organisation". (250) For the luckiest, perhaps the nightmare is ending.

The Mojahedin Expelled

During 2003, which, without doubt, would be the People's Mojahedin's year leading to the end of the road, the wheel of destiny did turn against Rajavi. The man saw the net tighten around him.

And his final destiny will probably be like that of this old ally, Saddam

Hussein. The latter was finally arrested on Saturday, 13 December 2003, hidden in a two square metre dug out; a rat hole in a modest house in Ad-Dour. The Rais will now have to stand trial for his crimes. His accomplices are trembling.

This is all the more so for Rajavi. Press agencies reported in November-December 2003 that: "The Governing Council for the Iraqi Transition has decided to expel the remaining 4,000 members of the Iranian People's Mojahedin in Iraq by the end of 2003. It considers it a 'terrorist organisation'. The announcement reads:

"The Governing Council voted unanimously to expel by the end of the year the People's Mojahedin present in Iraq because of their black history as a terrorist organisation".

The Governing Council indicated that it had decided to 'close down the movement's offices and prevent its members from undertaking any activity prior to leaving'. It also decided to confiscate the arms and money of this organisation and create an indemnity account for the victims of the former fascist regime', according to a press release. 'The Iraqi individuals and institutions have the right to bring charges against this organisation for its crimes and demand damages from the funds which the organisation holds inside and outside the country". (AFP, 9 November 2003)

For his part, Iraqi acting Vice President Mohammad Ali Abtahi explained the decision as one based on the role of the Mojahedin in the repression of Shi'as and Kurds under Saddam Hussein". (AFP, 11 November 2003)

The question is one of international law and is difficult to resolve. Labeled terrorists by Iraq and the Americans who control the country, the PMOI has few options.

A terrorism specialist thinks that: "The leaders of the PMOI have decreed what they call a phase of patience' and 'judicial mobilisation'. This is to add the help of lawyers in assisting the PMOI members obtaining political refugee status so that they can enter Europe legally. ■

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

Anne Singleton

BBC Radio Four/Woman's Hour, October 6, 2005

Jenni Murray: When we hear about young people who've become involved in terrorism we often wonder how did they get drawn into it and what makes them take part in violent acts that most people would find utterly repulsive. Well, Anne Singleton from Leeds became involved with the group which has been declared a terrorist organization in recent years, the Iranian Mujahideen. She was at University in Manchester in the late 1970s, then spent a time in their military training camp in Iraq and eventually struggled to leave. She now helps others who want to get away. I spoke to her earlier this morning, how did she get involved in the first place?

Anne Singleton: I was very much interested in changing the world. I was a very idealistic young person and very passionate about justice and injustice in the world and it happened that I came across this group who were very, very serious about what they were doing and they held a lot of meetings and they held demonstrations and I went along and was recruited.

Murray: So, how did it intensify? I mean you started on the periphery of it but then really became involved in it?

Singleton: They would use techniques such as being very, very friendly towards you, making you feel that you perhaps are understanding a little bit more than other people, a bit of flattery and a bit of guilt, and they will say 'well, how can you sit around doing nothing when all these people are suffering'. And then they will, little by little, take things from you, such as your money. They start with that, 'can you make a contribution? Would you mind helping out? We are desperately in short of funds can you please help us out', and I would because I was working and I could give them sums of money which made me feel good about helping. I would give them quite large amounts of money. Then, it didn't stop there and they would say 'well it's ok but can you just please take some time off work and come to a demonstration because we really, really need the support, we really need the help'. So I would give up my time and it gradually escalated from there.

Murray: And how were your family and friends involved this?

Singleton: I tried to get my friends involved because I thought it was such a good cause and I felt very strongly about it. They were practically a bit more cynical than I was.... I was involved emotionally. So, yes they were aware, but they didn't try to stop me because I don't think they felt there was any problem with it.

Murray: How aware were you of things like attacks on US civilians in Tehran and that they'd supported the take over of the American embassy in 1979?

Singleton: I think those are things which I became aware of in passing, and I read the literature from the time before the revolution, but of course the history of the organization had changed quite a lot in 20 years it had been operating.

Murray: Why did you go to military training in Iraq?

Singleton: Because I underwent a process of psychological manipulation which didn't allow me to think properly and really numbed my critical faculties to the point where I would have followed them to the ends of the earth if they'd asked me to.

Murray: You were young when you started. Were you naïve getting involved with them?

Singleton: Will these recruitment methods work on young people, will they work on old people, will they work on rich people, poor people? Yes, is the simple answer. I don't think you

can say that because somebody is young they're more vulnerable. I actually became fulltime in that organization when I was thirty. And I gave up my job and my home and my car and I gave everything up and gave it to them when I was thirty. The reason I did that is because of the psychological techniques which they used on me and it wouldn't have mattered at what age I was, they work on anybody at any stage.

Murray: So, what were you doing in military training?

Singleton: The military training, it was kind of an inevitability. I went to Iraq because everybody went. It was just a standard for that organization, for the Mujahideen-e Khalq that they take people to Iraq and give them basic military training; marching, information, you learn basic skills, handling a gun, crawling under the barbed wire, assault courses, it's really just quite basic military training.

Murray: Would you have taken part in a violent attack if they asked you to?

Singleton: You know this is the point where I very recently decided I had to talk more about my experience because when I heard about the London bombings and I saw these three young men who were brought up in the same area that I was and I thought about them going off, I can't remember if I heard that they'd gone, but I thought they must have gone off to training camps in Pakistan or Afghanistan, and it suddenly hit me that that was me, that was exactly

what I did, what was the difference? What on earth was the difference between them and me? I had gone to Iraq, to a terrorist training camp and I hadn't thought about it. I had not given it one thought about where that might have led at the end of the day. At that point I started to question myself, this was just a few months ago, and I thought well surely, surely, surely I would not have ever, ever got involved in violence because I personally, deeply don't believe in that, you know, I catch flies and put them out of the window rather than kill them. But being very honest with myself, I realized that I would have gone along with it because I would have not had the will to resist at that point. I was so completely under their influence that I would have just gone along. If they had said that 'well OK, we're going to start an armed operation into Iran', I would have probably felt scared and doubtful but I'm sure I would have found myself swept along with it, I'm sure I would.

Murray: How difficult was it for you to actually free yourself?

Singleton: Very, very difficult. Very difficult. Although I was failing in the organization, and I had the sense that I just could not bring myself to conform fully and I was struggling, I was under so much stress I stopped eating for a long time and then because of this kind of inability to conform they, from Iraq, they sent me back to Paris and then from Paris they sent me back to England. And I think it was in England where, because it was my homeland that I had the possibility to make little escape routes. Fortunately my mother had never lost contact with me. She always kept in contact, and that was a lifeline, definitely, knowing that they were there, knowing that they hadn't given up on me. But the other thing was also being back home, feeling that there's a social security system, I had somewhere to go, I could find a flat and get housing benefit. I knew these were escape routes but those are the physical escape routes. The actual ability to get out of the cult is much, much harder because you are brain-washed. It is simple as that.

Murray: I was talking to Anne Singleton. ■

Open Secrets

repeatedly, "once you give me the key to your bedrooms, you will feel the freedom you have always been after". For the past two decades, Rajavi has claimed that although members are on the right path, no one has yet been able to give the key whole heartedly. He has even compared himself with the Prophet Mohammed, alleging that a man who saw Mohammed looking at his wife would divorce her straight away so as not to stand in the way of the Prophet's having her. This, of course, was the way he explained Maryam Rajavi's duty to divorce her previous husband so that he would not stand in the way of the ideological leader.

When Mohtaram Babaee became pregnant, she and her husband, Karim Haghi (a high ranking commander in the Mojahedin), were excluded from others in Camp Ashraf. Mohtaram afterwards related that they told her she would be kept in the furthest corner of the Camp, and denied her every facility so that she would "give birth like a dog". This is exactly what happened. After she ran away from the camp with her child and husband and arrived in Europe, doctors in the Netherlands tried to reduce her trauma. But when she found she was pregnant again she committed suicide, leaving behind her daughter who has been raised by her father.

On 20th February 1996, Ms. Zahra Rajabi's (commander in the MKO's army and member of the National Council of Resistance) body was found together with that of Mr. Abdul Ali Moradi (a supporter of the cult in Turkey) in Mr. Moradi's flat in Istanbul. They were both murdered in cold blood. Rajavi blamed the Iranian government for the assassination. But details emerged of a personal relationship between Ms. Rajabi and Mr. Moradi. Turkish police announced that at the time of the assassination, Ms. Rajabi was heavily pregnant and that also, according to the investigators, the assassins were known to Ms. Rajabi and Mr. Moradi. There was no sign of a struggle; they had opened the door themselves to the assassins

and received and entertained them in their flat. Experts on the Mojahedin believe that Rajavi could not have allowed Ms. Rajabi, as a leading member, to discredit the 'Second Phase of the Ideological Revolution' and she had to be eliminated.

The Mojahedin have, until now, refused to comment on these and similar cases. They rarely agree to talk about the implications of the forced 'Ideological Divorce' order which has left the Mojahedin with no children for more than a decade. They do not want to talk about the Ideological Courts and the punishments carried out against the people who have broken this cult 'law'. In a rare interview, Maryam Rajavi, in answer to Craig S. Smith reporting for the International Herald Tribune, September 24, 2005, tried to bypass such a question, but nevertheless admitted the factual basis of the question. The International Herald Tribune writes:

"...In discussing the mass divorces ordered by the group's leadership, which split the movement's families in 1989 and sent their children into foster care abroad, she said the policy focused energy on the cause instead of personal relations..."
Researchers can contact Iran-Interlink for further information on Rajavi's 'Second Phase of the Ideological Revolution'. ■

Did you know... why there have been no births among Mojahedin-e Khalq members since 1989?

In 1989, Rajavi ordered every member of his organization to divorce their spouse. From that time, all sexual relations as well as any kind of family life or raising children became forbidden and was stopped. Since then there have been no births among the rank and file of the Mojahedin. The few who have broken this 'law' have been severely punished.



Zahra Rajavi

Rajavi convinced Saddam to let him use the last opportunity of attacking Iran in a joint operation just after the ceasefire in the Iran-Iraq war in 1988. The operation, named Forough-e Javidan (Eternal Light) by the Mojahedin, or Mersad by the Iranian regime, was the bloodiest operation ever carried out by the Mojahedin in which they lost more than half their forces.

Rajavi, who had anticipated this bloodshed and in fact looked forward to it, announced that "the blood of the martyrs from this operation will be the insurance for our future existence". In desperate need of blood, from either his own people or the Iranians, he banked on the esca-

lating antagonism

created by this bloodshed to ensure that there would be no grounds for a peaceful solution to Iran's problems in the near future. To convince his own people that it was they who had failed in this operation, rather than have them question his decision in ordering it, he started a new wave of psychological manipulation sessions which is known as the 'Second Phase of the Ideological Revolution'. The main shock tactic in these sessions was the 'Ideological Divorce'. Rajavi ordered all members of the cult to divorce their spouse and never again to think of family, spouse, children, or for that matter sexual intercourse. The members were ordered to hate their spouses and children as obstacles in the way of devotion to the leader. Since this order, the members are checked through submitting daily written reports about their thoughts in this respect and attending weekly sessions to confess their 'illegal' thoughts.

The concept of the 'Second Phase of the Ideological Revolution' was announced by Massoud and Maryam

Rajavi in this way:

"the conclusion is that we did not win this war not because the leadership did not do enough, but because every member of the organisation has had something except the leadership in their minds [i.e. family, children, etc.], hence members were not devoted enough to the ideological leadership".

This divorce order never covered Massoud and Maryam Rajavi as the heads of the cult. To encourage and guide the members, Maryam Rajavi announced that every man should consider all women to be the property of the ideological leader, so that even thinking about a woman is an act of betrayal against Massoud Rajavi. And every woman should consider herself as the slave of Massoud Rajavi who has the right to ask them to have sexual relations with whoever he wishes. This was aimed at derailing the hearts and minds of members away from their families toward the cult's ideological leader.

Massoud has said in public

»11

SURVIVORS' REPORT

Association for the Support of Victims of Mojahedin-e Khalq ©2005

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