

SWEDEN

The Family Network Association was formally introduced on Saturday 10th December 2005 at a Seminar in Sweden on Women and Children in the Mojahedin-e Khalq cult.

Swedish and international personalities who attended include: Ms Eva Arvidsson Member of Parliament; Mr Tommy Soderblom, Ms Brigitt Carlsson, Mr Sverre Launy from the Local Council; Ms Mona Ljungquist and Ms Lisa Sundling from the Swedish Red Cross. Journalists who participated in the seminar reported on the work of the Family Network Association. Nynashamns Posten published a full page article introducing the Family Network and its head, Ms Parvaneh Ahmadi. According to Parvaneh, the Network has been established in an effort to rescue the children who have been exploited by the Mojahedin and their war, and to expose the human rights abuses inflicted on them. Parvaneh told the newspaper, "We want to bring the children who have been denied freedom back to their normal lives". She added, "Hundreds of people who

have been confined in Iraq since the 2003 invasion of that country were raised in European countries. We ask European governments to take responsibility and to follow the cases of these children and see what their needs are". Ahmadi wants to bring the issue to the attention of Members of Parliament, diplomats and human rights organization. She says: "We want to reach the European Parliament". Ahmadi herself has been in the war [against Iran's clerical regime] and has suffered its consequences, she lost three of her brothers to this struggle. She says, "In this Association we have people who have seen war with their own eyes and many have experienced torture inside the Mojahedin. We cannot accept the continuation of this situation. We have to do something about it." The Seminar on December 10 was hosted by Thomas Schmidt. The ope-

ning speech by Ms Parvaneh Ahmadi, founder of the Family Network in Sweden was followed by a film from German television which revealed how evidence of the brainwashing these children had undergone and the misuse of them in the Mojahedin-e Khalq cult organisation has been exposed in that country. Other speakers at the Seminar included Mr Alain Chevalerias, French journalist and author of the book "Burned Alive"; Ms Anne Singleton, author of the book "Saddam's Private Army"; Mr Massoud Khodabandeh, an ex official of the Mojahedin and its political front the National Council of Resistance, now working as a research analyst with the Centre de Recherché sur le Terrorisme in Paris. The Seminar ended with the speech of Amir Atefe, university lecturer in philosophy and member of the Iran Philosophy Academy. ■



EDITORIAL



This month's article reviewing the activities of the Association of Victims of the MEK has brought back some special memories.

One thing that is clear from the past year's activities is that some extraordinary people are involved in this Association; people whom I have had the pleasure of meeting and working with over the past year; people who have displayed a wealth of ability, humanity, kindness, wit and good humour; people with strengths perhaps they are not aware of in themselves. For some of these people, to have sur-

vived the crushing experiences during their time with the MEK is an extraordinary feat in itself. For them to find the strength and conviction to continue to speak out the truth is truly inspiring. We all know people who have left the Mojahedin for whom simply the experience of having been in the cult has become a virtual prison from which they cannot escape. MEK indoctrination infects their thinking even now and stunts their lives in every aspect. The former members who have had the courage to speak out about the crimes of the Mojahedin leaders are all extraordinary people. When these people joined the MEK it was because they were not ordinary; they felt the desperate need of their people for freedom and they acted on it. Now, they have come out of the MEK with their integrity intact. They did not give way to the crushing manipulations of Rajavi. It is because of this that they are able to resist the threats and expose the machinations of the leaders. It is also, we should not forget, because Rajavi is not godlike; he is mortal and fallible like the rest of us. News of Massoud Rajavi's arrest and interrogation by US forces in Camp Mercury in Iraq should not come as a

surprise. After all, the man is fallible. What is of greater significance is that the unanswered questions which the MEK leadership tried so hard over the past three years to sweep under the carpet have now infiltrated into the body of the organisation. Questions about Rajavi's relations with Saddam Hussein, human rights abuses inside the camps and the massacre of Kurds and Shiites are no longer the questions of former members, but are rather the question of existing members. Rajavi, having failed to fob off the 'enemy', is now hearing the same questions emitted from the mouth of his devotees inside the organisation. Looking back over the past, as we do at this time of year, what strikes me as most interesting is just how far the MEK has shrunk from its glory days at the time of the revolution in 1979, when it could command thousands of supporters. Now, instead of trying to set up her own regime in Iran, Maryam Rajavi is spending her entire resources on squabbling with a handful of former members – the Association – in the west. No doubt the people of Iran will be truly grateful to know that the MEK's attention is taken up elsewhere. ■

ASSOCIATION FOR VICTIMS OF THE MOJAHEDIN-E KHALQ – ANNUAL REVIEW 2005

Delegates of the Association met during the Christmas and New Year holiday period to review their progress over the past year and to discuss plans for activities in 2006.

Comprising mostly former members of the MEK, the Association brings together several small groups and individuals residing in western countries having the common aim of exposing human rights violations and war crimes committed by the MEK leadership.

At the end of December, Association members met informally to talk about their collective efforts during the past year. Delegates agreed that before all else a statement needed to be published in order to clarify their position vis-à-vis Iran and the MEK. It was agreed that these positions be expres-

sed in clear terms thus:

- All members affirm their unequivocal opposition to the religious dictatorship which governs Iran, and support every non-violent effort of Iranians to establish a genuinely secular, democratic and pluralistic government in their country.
- All members reject the MEK's claim to political legitimacy as an opposition and affirm that the MEK is essentially a military cult seeking absolute power with terrorism and suppression as its core modus operandi.

- All members agree that in its current configuration the MEK cannot be either party to, or relevant to, the relations which western governments seek with both the Iranian government and with any Iranian opposition whether inside or outside Iran.
- All members agree that the MEK in its present form represents the single greatest obstruction to the development and progress of genuine opposition to the religious dictatorship ruling Iran.

Once these points had been agreed upon, delegates then turned their attention to the Association's achievements over the previous year. Although each group has its own unique perspective and its own priorities and agenda, it became clear that since its formation, the work performed collectively by these different personalities has been very effective in exposing the MEK to governmental representatives, organisations, institutions and individuals who might otherwise remain ignorant of the true nature of this group.

Of course, it is important to keep in mind the broad context for these activities. The MEK remains a proscribed organization in North America and throughout Europe.

MEK co-leader, Maryam Rajavi and six of her closest collaborators have been under investigation by French police since June 2003 and are currently awaiting trial on terrorism related charges. The MEK in Iraq has been disarmed and is soon to be dismantled, while Massoud Rajavi, co-leader is detained in Camp Mercury subject to interrogation by US forces. However, the Association pressed ahead with its activities to expose the MEK's human rights violations, a small part of which was described in the May 2005 report 'No Exit' by the US based Human Rights Watch.

Since these activities have been published in Survivors' Report it is not necessary to review them here. Except to comment that the most interesting and effective of the collaborative efforts were the week of action held in Paris, 28 March to 1 April, and the press conferences in Paris (September 18), Washington (October 24) and London (November 10). It was these events which once and for all laid at the door of the MEK the basic facts and questions which it desperately needs to address if the organisation is to survive. The issues of the MEK's relationship with Saddam Hussein, the MEK's record of human rights abuses and the MEK's murder of civilians in terrorist acts in Iran and Iraq all need to be acknowledged and addressed before the organisation can move forward.

Even before the introduction of these issues, the MEK was enforcing its own unique kind of censorship in order to avoid answering to its critics; 'if you are not in our favour you must be working for the intelligence ministry of Iran and must therefore be silenced'.

This is a logic which steadfastly resists addressing the questions and allegations which former members continue to present in public forums. However, the facts, evidence

and questions are by no means exclusively ours; they come from the people of Iran, from western governments, from human rights activists, from military, political and sociological analysts and from the media. It is inevitable too that answers for these issues are now being sought by the MEK's closest supporters and even by the members themselves. Ironically, thanks to the collective efforts of the Association over the past year, delegates agreed that the MEK now has the opportunity to take control of its destiny and transform itself so that it changes side and comes back the people of Iran. We know that the MEK members have the latent talent, experience and the commitment to transform their organisation into a representative opposition group. In order to do this, delegates identified several steps the MEK must take toward becoming a legitimate, representative organisation and for it to be considered for removal from the terrorist lists.

- Revoke unequivocally its use of violence to annul the rule of religion in Iran.
- Revoke its cult practices; in particular, allow its members to form families, to stop daily reporting of their thoughts and feelings.
- Address the leadership question so as to allow for the replacement of appointed leaders with leaders elected by the membership in a secret ballot under the observation of a neutral external body.
- Allow for merit to determine qualification for positions rather than gender.

The Association, over the next twelve months will be pressing for these changes in a series of actions designed to highlight these particular issues. Our hope is that by the end of 2006, the MEK will begin to acknowledge these issues and will begin to address them meaningfully. Eventually, the membership of the MEK could claw back their organisation from its cult status, could rescue it from its terrorist label into being a political pressure group and could even begin to make bridges which would allow the people of Iran to no longer reject it out of hand.

As the MEK's internal crises escalate and the leaders are forced to answer to these issues, Survivors' Report is hoping to be able to publish news of changes brought about by the members themselves. Indeed we cautiously welcome the first evidence of change; removal of the kalishnikov logo from the MEK's Persian language publication 'Mojahed'. If, that is, this really is the first step along the path to renouncing violence as the MEK's means of achieving power and not simply another trick. We await evidence of real change with interest. ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

December 2005

The United States, Europe and the UK were unanimous in their approach to the Mojahedin-e Khalq as each re-designated the group as a terrorist entity. The MKO has protested the terrorist label, but continued proscription of the MKO means the group will need to undergo difficult internal changes before it is able to convince western governments that it has changed from being an armed cult into a viable political pressure group.

Abdullah Saleh/AlAsr (in Arabic)

December 6, 2005

<http://www.alasr.ws/index.cfm?method=home.content&contentid=7233>

Abdullah Saleh writing in Arabic in the Iraqi newspaper AlAsr says several sources in US intelligence community admitted that some information 'revealed' by the Mujahideen-e Khalq, particularly on Iranian nuclear activities, has been wrong. This is exactly what was seen reflected in the IAEA's recent reports.

US intelligence authorities had previously become suspicious about the accuracy of Chalabi's information on Iraq and issued warnings about the issue. This time, authorities warn that the MKO's information can't be trusted.

As the debate heated on Iran's nuclear program and Tehran-Washington ties worsened, MKO leaders tried to convince US officials that they have important information from inside the Iranian regime and that this information

proves that Tehran has been enriching uranium on a large scale. This brought new discussion to the White House on the issue of support for this group and its possible role in applying US policies against Iran.

The Bush administration sees itself now in a situation similar to that of pre-Iraq war.

At that time Ahmed Chalabi, the head of Iraq National Congress, had close relations with senior officials in the US, such as Richard Perle and Paul Wolfowitz. He had convinced them that Saddam Hussein's regime possessed weapons of mass destruction and that the Iraqi people would receive US liberators warmly.

Today, Maryam Rajavi, so-called president-elect of the NCRI, wants to repeat the scenario again by repeating the claim that "Mujahideen-e Khalq is ready to give urgent valid information on nuclear activities of Iran to Washington."

Some White House officials believe that the MKO is able to serve the goals of Americans and that it is an opposition group with thousands of militants with many supporters. These officials say that the MKO has proved its ability in giving information with revealing Iranian nuke sites in Natanz and Arak. They ask for the removal of MKO's name from terror lists and stress that the members of this organization would give necessary information to the US and besides, they can play an important role in disrupting the order in the Iranian government with their supporters.





Confirmed – Massoud Rajavi detained, interrogated in Iraq

December 2005

In a series of reports throughout December the Iranian website irandidban.com claimed to know where MKO leader Massoud Rajavi is. Irandidban first indicated that several MKO leaders were being held in US custody in Camp Mercury.

Camp Mercury (former MKO Base, Badi'zadegan) is a place for keeping PUCs (Persons Under Control). PUCs are those considered to have valuable intelligence for coalition forces.

"Persons Under Control would be kept and stringently investigated in Camp Mercury before being transferred to Abu Ghraib prison. PUCs include the leaders of all terrorist

and insurgent groups."

Irandidban went on to stress that "there is no doubt about Rajavi's detention in Iraq by some US security agencies".

According to this report, Rajavi surrendered himself to the US military immediately hostilities began, hoping to negotiate the terms his own safety. Since Badi'zadegan Camp was equipped with high-level security installations, US forces arrested Massoud Rajavi and 28 of his major officers at the camp and used the camp itself as a detention centre.

News of Rajavi's detention and interrogation has been kept from members of the organisation. They have been informed that he is well to quell rumours of his death or ill-health, but the MKO has not admitted that Rajavi is in detention facing serious charges as leader of a terrorist group. ■







IRAQ: IRANIAN MUJAHADEEN SAID TO BE IN U.S. CUSTODY

Baghdad, 3 Jan. (AKI) - The leader of the Iranian mujahadeen, Massoud Rajavi, who was thought to have been in hiding since the American occupation of Iraq, is under house arrest there, according to the Paris-based website, roozonline. Massoud Rajavi and another 27 leaders of the Iranian movement, who were confined in the Ashraf base, after the fall of Saddam Hussein, have reportedly been shifted to US military custody in the Mercury Camp. The Iranian mujahadeen is a militant guerrilla movement seeking to overthrow the government of Iran and was based first in France and then in Iraq.

The Mujahadeen of the Iranian People is active in Europe under the name of the National Resistance Council, with a declared aim of overthrowing the Islamic republic of Iran. Listed as a terror group by Washington and the European Union, the Muajahadeen

were founded in the late 1960s, before the Islamic Revolution in Iran as the armed wing of a religious movement opposing the then monarchy.

Their first action in that period was the murder of several American military advisors in Tehran to train the troops of the Shah. After briefly cooperating with Ayatollah Khomeini, after the 1979 revolution, the mujahadeen went underground to fight the Islamic regime.

During the Iran-Iraq war they transferred their base first to the outskirts of Paris and then to Baghdad, under the protection of Saddam Hussein.

Roozonline argues that the arrest of Massoud Rajavi and other senior figures is the result of the first encounter by the American ambassador to Baghdad, Zalmay Khalilzad, who was tasked by the White House with getting Iranian leaders to the negotiation table. "The negotiations are limited to

issues regarding Iraq," said the ambassador.

Iran has for some time been calling for the arrest and the extradition of more than 3,000 Iranian Mujahadeen in Iraq. After the American invasion of Iraq in 2003, Iranian mujahadeen camps were bombed by coalition forces and the weaponry seized. The personnel initially placed under armed guard in a camp outside Baghdad. In August 2004, despite considering it a terrorist group, the United States granted the mujahadeen in Iraq Geneva Convention protection, making deportation to Iran illegal.

The Iranian mujahadeen maintained an information office in Washington DC, until it was designated a terrorist group. This designation has never been fully accepted - in 2003, more than a hundred members of congress signed a letter calling for the lifting of this designation. ■





OPEN LETTER TO THE HEADS OF THE THREE MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES IN BRITAIN

Karim Haghi

Rt. Honourable Tony Blair

Rt. Honourable David Cameron

Rt. Honourable Charles Kennedy

As you are well aware, the Mojahedin Khalq Organisation (MEK/MKO) and related organisations such as the National Council of Resistance (NCR) and Moslem Iranian Students Society (MISS) have been kept in the new list of terrorist organisations in United States of America and according to documents published by the State Department on October 11, 2005 the MKO will be considered as permanently in this list.

The Mojahedin Khalq Organisation is also listed as a terrorist entity in the European Union as well as the United Kingdom and Canada.

As a former executive member of the MKO, I am well aware of the terrorist activities as well as the tricks this organisation uses to hide them. While welcoming the continued inclusion of this organisation in the list of terrorist organisations in US, I am shocked by and cannot understand some of the actions and some of the opportunities that this organisation is exploiting in Great Britain.

On January 6, 2006 the web sites dependent on the Mojahedin have published a statement entitled "joint statement by the members of both Houses of Parliament" in which they have claimed that the majority of members of both Houses have expressed doubts about a report published by Human Rights Watch in which only a small part of the shocking abuses of human rights by the Mojahedin Organisation has been exposed. In this so-called "joint statement", the authorship of the cult like MKO organisation is abundantly clear; in particular the way in which they have attacked all the witnesses, labelling them as agents of the Islamic Republic of Iran. I am one of the people who had the opportunity to give my witness statement to Human Rights Watch. I urge your good selves to clarify the credibi-

lity of such an allegation published by these websites related to Mojahedin Khalq Organisation. It is worth mentioning that in the past, the MKO has repeatedly published these unsubstantiated allegations so as to show that they have the backing of parliamentarians in western countries.

The second issue is the irrational support which some British parliamentarians provide for this terrorist organisation. Representatives of the MKO regularly have open meetings and conferences in the meeting rooms of both Houses of Parliament.

For example, I refer to the meeting of December 13, 2005 in parliament. A meeting in which, on the face of it, the situation of the MKO has been put to debate.

On the same day, the English language website Iranfocus.com, dependent on the MKO, published an item of news in which Lord Tony Clark was quoted as claiming that 405 MPs from both Houses have supported this group. There was, of course, no mention of any names or signatures. You know that it is normal practice in political work that the names and signatures of a statement would follow such a document.

Dear Sirs,

How is it possible that a terrorist organisation can so freely misuse the names of members of the British parliament and you show no reaction to that?

Do you believe that there is a difference between different terrorist groups?

Can the Al Qaida terrorist organisation use the same facilities enjoyed by the MEK in the British parliament?

Do you have any doubt that the free movement of terrorist MEK members in the British parliament puts a very laughable face on the list of terrorist entities in your country and places a big question mark in front of the legitimacy of your struggle against international terrorism? I hope that I will receive a convincing reply from you.

Yours,

Karim Haghi

Netherlands

January 10, 2006



members have been taken to the Iraq-Iran border in the middle of the night and made to walk towards Iranian border posts. From behind them the MEK would shoot to prevent them turning back and to alert the Iranian border guards, who would in turn shoot at the advancing victim. There are also numerous cases in which someone has vanished, or has died in suspicious circumstances, but who has later been announced as a martyr killed by the Iranian regime.

The use of cyanide and grenades and the obligation to die before capture has continued from the time of Shah to the present, but the purpose of it has changed completely. It is no longer about protecting information (otherwise Maryam Rajavi and her cohorts would have killed themselves upon their arrest in Paris in June 2003). It is now about providing numbers to

add to the list of Mojahedin Martyrs. The purpose is to "insure" the organisation's future since, in the atmosphere of bloodshed and revenge, no non-violent alternative or opposition to the ruling regime could emerge.

One of the most deplorable ways of achieving this "insurance policy" has been where the terrorist teams sent for operations have been instructed that anyone who might suspect their identities while travelling should be killed. Behzad Alishahi explained one such incident in which his team mates killed an innocent worker who was in their way only because he had seen them and told them not to go through a factory.

Alishahi later was sent back to the camp and underwent all kinds of pressure for arguing against this cold blooded killing.

Fortunately since the fall of Saddam

Hussein, although Rajavi has desperately tried every avenue to generate some killings and/or torture to produce fresh blood, the cult's success has been minimal. Even the arrest of Khodabandeh and Bassam in Syria and their transfer to Evin prison, which Rajavi hoped would buy "new insurance" for the organisation, failed totally. During the past three and a half years, the only new blood they have achieved has been the deaths of two members and the permanent disability of several more who committed acts of self-immolation. Interestingly, the culture of carrying cyanide tablets, even in western countries, is encouraged more than ever. The cult leaders' only hope for survival is linked to bloodshed, and they are impatiently waiting for any opportunity to kill any number of people no matter if they are friends, foes or even passers by. ■



OPEN SECRETS

Did you know... that members of Mojahedin are obliged to kill themselves when they face arrest?

Why is it that no member of the Mojahedin is ever briefed as to what they should do if they fall into enemy hands?

From the time of the Shah, carrying a cyanide tablet and, where possible, a hand grenade has been a part of the everyday life of any member of MEK. To allow yourself to be arrested alive is regarded as a sin, as betrayal and as a crime committed against the organisation and its leaders. Conversely, 'martyrdom' through suicide by any available means has been encouraged whenever and wherever a member has faced the enemy. During the era of the Shah, this enemy was the police or any other law enforcement agent. The idea had been originally taken from the revolutionary groups existing during the 1960s and 1970s in South America and other parts of the world which were engaged in guerrilla war against Imperialism backed by the communist Soviet Union. The explanation for this requirement was that it was "to protect information" and "to sacrifice yourself in a way that the enemy could not obtain any information from you under torture".

A long time has past since then, but in the Mojahedin the idea of killing yourself in the event of facing arrest has not changed. It is an established fact that a Mojahed-e Khalq (People's Warrior) will kill him/her self before being arrested. It is for this reason that no member of the MEK is ever advised what they must do if they are unable to kill themselves when they are arrested.

After the 1979 Islamic Revolution and the consequent sidelining of the Mojahedin in the establishment of the new Islamic Republic, Massoud Rajavi introduced a new phase referred to as "Lebanonisation". This meant instigating antagonistic action which would lead to bloodshed. Any kind of conflict,

any kind of riot, unrest, attack from any side... and especially having a supporter injured or, even better, killed, was a good point from which to fire up morale, to advertise the victimisation of the organisation and in particular to ask for revenge.

Later, living on the blood of both friend and foe became an integral part of Rajavi's strategy. The defeat of the tragic paramilitary assault on Iran in 1988, in which about 5,000 untrained civilians including old women, teenagers, PhD students from western universities and even disabled people, were asked to go to Iraq to fight against the Iranian Army with eight years' war experience, was announced by Rajavi as "the insurance of the organisation for years to come". The ensuing massacre of about 3,000 untrained Mojahedin civilians and the deaths and injuries suffered by the Iranian Army created enough enmity between them to pave the way for acts of violence and vengeance for several years to come and to negate the emergence of any non-violent ideas which could have arisen. Rajavi's concept of "insuring the future of the organisation" was that this fresh blood would halt the advance of any possible solution except that of the bloody take over of power – which, obviously, was reserved for the only force which enjoyed the use of Saddam Hussein's tanks and guns.

Later this need for blood brought Rajavi to employ even more sinister and even nastier ways and tactics. In recent years there have been numerous cases in which individuals who had been sent to perform terrorist acts inside Iran had been sent deliberately to their death in order to provide fresh blood and increase the number of mar-

tyrs. The majority of these individuals had been given just enough training and planning to carry out their terrorist operation and had been told nothing about what should happen afterwards. They were given no information about how to return or how to deal with arrest. The only possible interpretation of this was that they were not only expected to not come back, but were in fact not expected to survive.

The expectation was that if they faced arrest, they would fight to the last bullet, to kill or injure as many as possible and then kill themselves. The number of people who have used their cyanide tablet and/or exploded their grenade tight to their bodies are countless. A few who have survived, like Mrs. Marjan Malek or Mr. Arash Sameti, or people like Ebrahim Khodabandeh and Jamil Bassam who did not have the opportunity to kill themselves, revealed later that they had been indoctrinated by the cult such that the torture they had been told would be inflicted upon them after their arrest was so terrifying that suicide seemed to be the only option.

But Rajavi's quest for fresh martyrs did not stop here. Numerous cases have been recorded in which disaffected

SURVIVORS' REPORT

Association for the Support of Victims of Mojahedin-e Khalq ©2006

Editor

Anne Singleton

Contact details

Iran-Interlink
PO Box 148, Leeds LS16 5YJ
United Kingdom
Telephone +44 113 278 0503
Email info@iran-interlink.org
Website www.iran-interlink.org