

ASSOCIATION FOR THE SUPPORT OF VICTIMS OF MOJAHEDIN-E KHALQ

MKO ISSUES DEATH SENTENCE FOR DEFECTORS

In September this year, eighty people signed an open letter addressed to the Interior Ministers of western countries warning of the hidden menace in their countries. The threat identified in the letter comes from the terrorist Mojahedin-e Khalq. Since 2003, the MKO has transferred and regrouped its Iraqi intelligence and security operatives in new bases throughout Europe. The headquarters for the re-grouped division is Cologne, Germany.

After a two year reformation, which has included surveillance activity to gather relevant information, this division has recently been activated. Its mission is to silence critics of the Mojahedin-e Khalq and its leaders. It is these critics which the Rajavis believe are the root cause of the organization's present state of disintegration and deadlock.

Successive attempts by the MKO to boost the morale of its members and supporters through various publicity stunts - making fresh accusations against Iran's nuclear programme, arranging meetings inside the British parliament or demonstrating outside the European parliament - have been set back by the constant refusal of governments to remove the group from their terror lists.

On top of this, the MKO's involvement in the Oil for Food programme on behalf of Saddam Hussein and in the massacre of Kurdish and Shiite rebellions in March 1991 also on behalf of the Iraqi dictator, have become public knowledge.

The smokescreen of deception behind which the MKO hides its crimes and inhumanities is getting thinner and thinner. The means by which it can convince its supporters of its righteousness are also getting fewer and less convincing. As a result, many long time loyal supporters are now beginning to voice their doubts about the organization's strategies and even about its future.

The Rajavis have needed somehow to draw a cordon around these wavering supporters and keep them inside the sphere of control of the organization's psychological manipulations. In order to do this, they have focused almost all the organization's time and energy and resources on demonizing those former members who are active in speaking out against the MKO and exposing its past

and present crimes.

The purpose of this behaviour has been to sharpen up the faded line of demarcation between the righteous MKO and the corrupt 'rest of the world'; to reinvigorate the 'us and them' mentality which is so integral to the MKO's ideology. Of course, those who know them best, the former members, have been able to reach behind these defensive lines and affect the members still inside the organization. One of the manifestations of this latest strategy has been the more aggressive and reckless behaviour of MKO supporters who have been deployed to disrupt meetings held by former members to publicise the evidence of links between Saddam Hussein and international terrorism. However, this backfired when one such charged up supporter maliciously insulted and assaulted a journalist as she was leaving a press conference held in London on November 10.

Rather than issue a timely apology, the Mojahedin tried to cover its error by increasing the attacks on its critics. The Mojahedin's television channel broadcast a series of interviews with some of the handful of non-MKO members in its 'alter ego' the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI).

In Norway, Mr Parviz Khazai (Iran's former ambassador to Norway under the shah's regime) likened the Mojahedin's critics to people who betrayed the Norwegian Resistance in World War Two to the Nazis.

In Paris, November 26, Ms Sufi Saedi said that the French Resistance as well as guerrilla groups in Latin America during the 1960 and 70s, had also suffered from such traitors.

The conclusion which both came to was that it was entirely natural and normal in such cases to [summarily] execute these

people. The inference clearly was that it is entirely natural and normal for the MKO to summarily execute former members which it has [extra-judicially] judged to be traitors.

Interestingly, the people interviewed are those most unlikely to have come to such a conclusion themselves, both being rather ineffectual and wavering members of the NCRI. Their appearance on MKO television has perhaps been arranged to firm up their positions and give them some semblance of backbone.

The concept of extrajudicial sentencing of 'traitors' to death is nothing new in the MKO. It is standard practice to deal with any obdurate critic inside the organization first by intimidation, then imprisonment and torture and if this does not work, a death sentence is issued against the 'traitor'.

What is new in this case is that the MKO is now openly implicating the NCRI in its crimes.

Although this recent hardening up of attitudes has been formulated to distract internal attention away from the MKO's glaringly obvious rapid decline, it is not something which should be dismissed as 'simply an internal issue'. When eighty people signed the letter warning western interior ministers of the MKO threat, they did so based on the presence of several hundred of Rajavi's Fedayeen forces in Europe. These forces have no other mission in life except to kill or die on Rajavi's order.

It is all too possible that these implied death sentences may soon become real death sentences as the critics of this organization continue to reveal fact after fact about the MKO and the Rajavis. This group will eliminate its opponents whenever and wherever it finds an opportunity. ■

EDITORIAL



Welcome to the December edition of Survivors' Report. As regular readers will have noticed, we have moved our Personal Experiences column inside and added a new column on the back page. Where Personal Experiences allows individuals to describe what has happened to them in the Mojahedin, the Open Secrets series aims to open up the internal world of the Mojahedin as a whole.

Each month we will lift the lid on various aspects of the Mojahedin members' lifestyle as it is lived now, and describe how such conditions came about. The Open Secrets series is presented as a springboard to further research and investigation, rather than a definitive description of the MKO ideology. But, from this introduction to the inner world of the MKO, we hope you will agree with the former members of the organisation who contribute to this publication, that it is of vital importance to reach behind the pseudo 'democratic, pluralist and secular' mask which the Rajavis have created to gloss over their cult activities. As each aspect of the cult is described, it will become clear that there is a glaring contradiction between the actual beliefs of the MKO and the image they present to potential political supporters in the west. It should also be clear that serious human rights abuses are ongoing in the Mojahedin cult, for not just a few, but for all members. Fortunately, the governments of those western countries where support is being courted, are in no doubt about the facts surrounding the Mojahedin. The past month has seen intense activity by the Mojahedin, particularly in the United Kingdom and Europe where meetings and demonstrations have been staged regularly, though with a dwindling number of supporters each time. Ostensibly these efforts have been directed toward having the MKO removed from

European terrorist lists. But the MKO's problems are much deeper than this. The British Parliamentary Committee for Iran Freedom headed by Lord Corbett of Castle Vale, has been created in the UK in the same way that the Iran Policy Committee was invented in the USA. The Committee's task is to lobby support for the Mojahedin in parliament. Its recent activities include announcements that: "More than half of the Members of Parliament and 122 Peers have called for the removal of the terrorist proscription of the PMOI [MKO]", and that: "In an unprecedented move in British legal history, 1,300 lawyers called Tuesday on Prime Minister Tony Blair's government to de-list Iran's main opposition group, the Mojahedin-e Khalq (MeK), from the list of terrorist organisations." Though, as usual, no supporting documents have been supplied for such claims. But the real agenda is not removal of the MKO from the lists, they know too well this is impossible. Removal from the terror lists requires the MKO to denounce terrorism, and take a stance on issues like Saddam Hussein and the September 11 tragedy. Instead, the United Kingdom and other European countries are now actively investigating the National Council of Resistance of Iran for inclusion in their lists. This could be why the Committee for Iran Freedom is already acting as mouthpiece for

the Mojahedin in Britain. In the USA, the NCRI has already been listed as an alias for the MKO. As a result, Alireza Jafarzadeh, the erstwhile MKO representative in the USA, who then became the erstwhile NCRI representative, is now introduced as an 'independent Iran analyst'. As Hadi Shams Haeri says to Mojahedin supporters, 'why not join with an opposition group which makes you proud rather than have to appear in disguise the whole time. We wait with interest to see if Dowlat Nowrouzi, Shahin Gobadi and Hossein Abedini take up similar 'consultancy' roles in the near future. As the article by Massoud Khodabandeh 'Let's talk about regime change' reveals, the IPC has been exposed in the US, and key members are being sued for libel after they unthinkingly regurgitated the MKO's lies about former MKO members. We hope that politicians in Europe who are supporting this terrorist group will weigh up whether the recompense – whatever that may be – is worth the long term damage to their reputations. As for the Mojahedin, surely now that both the European Parliament and the UK have reiterated their stance toward the MKO – yes, it is a terrorist organisation - we hope that the poor slaves can take a well earned rest while the Rajavis take time to ponder their futures. ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Misled Martyrs

How freedom fighters turn into terrorists

Misled Martyrs, the latest book by Judith Neurink was launched Thursday 3rd November, 2005. The publisher Contact and Trouw publications introduced the book in a conference at the Rode Hoed in Amsterdam.

Judith Neurink is a well-known journalist who currently heads the Middle East desk of the respected Trouw publication in the Netherlands.

The conference was chaired by Harm Ede Botje, journalist from Vrij Nederland. Mr Afshin Olian, lawyer, journalist and poet, Mr Kees Schaeppman, also a journalist and chair of the Association of Journalists in the Netherlands and Mr Karim Haghi a former member of the Mojahedin-e Khalq organisation were in the panel.

News of the launch of Judith Neurink's book had wide coverage in

the Netherlands and elsewhere including special coverage in TROUW newspaper itself.

UK Foreign Office -

MKO has long history of terrorism

Quotes from Hansard, November, 2005

A debate in the House of Lords on recent comments made by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on Israel was raised by Labour peer, Lord Corbett, a renowned supporter of the Mujahiden-e Khalq terrorist group, who urged the UK government to treat the outlawed group as a "friend."

But Foreign Office minister Lord Triesman rejected the call, saying that the MKO was proscribed under the country's Terrorism Act 2000 and that the government had "no plans to carry out such a

review."

"Its claims to be a democratic party, fighting for a better Iran, are hard to square with its history of violence and authoritarian acts," he said.

A similar call made by Conservative MP Brian Binley, a self-confessed paid supporter of the MKO's alias group, the National Council of Resistance, was also rejected by Foreign Secretary Jack Straw in the House of Commons.

Triesman told parliament the MKO has "a long history of involvement in terrorism in Iran and elsewhere and is, by its own admission, responsible for violent attacks that have resulted in many deaths." He admitted that relations with Iran were "difficult", that there was no "quick or easy resolution," but emphasized that "all means" must be deployed to keep lines of communications open.

"When one looks at the range of options before us, it is a matter of building carefully with those who are our friends in Iran, who are part of the future of Iran, and not finding ourselves in an escalating position where the steps that we take generate more conflict, rather than making an attempt to resolve matters by peaceful and diplomatic means," Triesman told his fellow peers.

Double Standards in UK Criticized

Al-Quds Al-Arabi

November 7, 2005

Following discussion of the controversial UK Anti-Terrorism Law by the House of Commons, a prominent Muslim figure criticized double standards of the government in approaching terrorist groups. This law would enable British law enforcement to keep terrorist suspects under arrest for 90 days. Supporting and encouraging terrorist activities are also considered as crimes.

Some MPs have criticized the content of this law.

Massoud Shajareh, a prominent Muslim leader questioned whether UK police have double standards in approaching the issue of terrorism. Islamic Human Rights Commission, chaired by Shajareh, had earlier asked the UK government to ban a meeting by Iranian opposition group in UK parliament.

National Council of Resistance, political wing of the MKO (listed as terrorist organization in UK, U.S. and EU), held a meeting in UK parliament in which a number of MPs took part.

Shajareh told UPI: "NCRI is the political wing of the Iranian terrorist organization, the MKO which has been banned in the US and Europe. In addition, this council itself has been declared a terrorist group by the US and EU."

"The Terrorism Act 2000 bans supporting any terrorist organization or an organization whose members have also the membership of a banned organization. The punishment for violating this law can be 10 years in prison."

He said the police appeared negligent since it didn't act to arrest the conductors of the meeting according to the law. He said such moves would convince Muslims that such a law has been approved only for political advantages.

"It seems that there are double standards in fighting terrorism. For instance, this question is raised as to why the police ignores the activities of NCRI and allows them to raise money but cracks down on Islamic Freedom Party," he said.

"Do they allow Al-Qaeda, as they do an Iranian terrorist group, to hold a conference in London on the future of Iraq and Afghanistan?" he asked.

Chalabi says Iraq must tackle foreign militants

Reuters

LONDON, November 7

Iraq must do more to stop the country being used as a base for foreign militants seeking to destabilise its neighbours, Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Chalabi said in comments published on

Monday.

In an interview with Britain's Financial Times, Chalabi acknowledged Iran's "legitimate concern" about Mujahedin-e Khalq, an Iranian opposition group operating in Iraq which the United States lists as a terrorist organisation.

He said there were also concerns in Turkey over bases in northern Iraq operated by the banned Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK).

"We should enforce the article in our constitution that Iraq should not be a transit point or base for destabilising neighbours," Chalabi told the newspaper. "We should deal with these issues humanely and fairly, but firmly."

Turkish leaders complain the PKK has a safe-haven in the mountains of northern Iraq from where rebel commanders direct operations into Turkey.

After more than 20 years of conflict, Turkish forces have failed to completely quell the PKK's armed campaign for home-rule in the mainly Kurdish southeast.

On Iran, Chalabi said Tehran had agreed to study his proposal for an inquiry by British, Iranian and Iraqi representatives into recent violence in the southern city of Basra.

Chalabi said Britain raised tension in the area by accusing Iran of helping Iraq militants to plant roadside bombs which killed British troops.

He added that Iran also inflamed the situation with allegations of British backing for militant Arab separatists in south-west Iran, according to the FT report.

Geldof leaves Iran demo over terror list

The Irish Examiner, November 8, 2005

By Ann Cahill, Europe Correspondent

BOB GELDOLF walked away from a demonstration on Iran after hearing that one of the groups involved was on the UN's terrorist list. He was due to speak to a crowd gathered in Brussels where the EU's Foreign Ministers were meeting and discussing growing concerns about the regime. The Live Aid organiser was on his way to Africa and stopped off in Belgium to address the gathering of Iranians against the current government.

But he left after hearing that one of the group's associated with the event, the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran (PMOI), was on the terror list.

There were banners demanding the PMOI be taken off the terror list, calling the recently elected president an assassin and describing Mullahs as terrorists. Geldof, billed to speak for 25 minutes, did not appear to know the PMOI was a proscribed organization. "I would not have anything to do with it if they are on the terror-list. We checked it out before we came," he said.

But after speaking to the organisers, the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), he walked away.

The former member of the Boomtown Rats told the media he believed the Iranian government should be referred to the Security Council of the United Nations "I do not know enough about the Iranian situation and I am not trying to become an expert but it's a dangerous situation and we do not need more wars in that region", he said.

Popularly known as Sir Bob since being knighted a few years ago, he said: "There are executions taking place almost daily; torture we see what is happening to women there and now the proliferation of nuclear weapons."

Organisers of the rally were upset at his decision not to address the crowd of about 500 and said the PMOI should not be on the terror list.

The organisation was condemned by a New York-based Human Rights Watch recently.

In September a group of members from the European Parliament investigating the report said it was misinformed.

The NCRI was the first to say the Iranian authorities were secretly developing a nuclear weapons programme three years ago. ■

REVEALING CONFERENCE IN LONDON

IRNA, November 12, 2005



Leeds-based Iran-Interlink institution was the main organizer of this event. A few days ago, Iran-Interlink published a statement calling MKO leader the criminal ally of former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, and asked for his trial beside Saddam.

Baroness Emma Nicholson, member of European Parliament and member of House of Lords in UK supported the conference; her representative was in the conference. Alain Chevalerias, French journalist and the author of "Burned Alive" as well as Anne Singleton, former member of the MKO and the author of "Saddam's Private Army" and a number of other former members gave speech to the audience.

First, a documentary film on MKO-Saddam cooperation was shown. The film showed MKO's involvement in suppressing Iraqi Kurds and their role as a private army for Saddam Hussein.

According to this documentary film, between 1991 and 2003 (the fall of Saddam), former dictator trusted the MKO rather than his own forces.

According to this film, Iraqi Kurds made no difference between Saddam regime and the MKO and Mojahedin were not allowed to commute in Kurdish regions without escort or weapons; this was because the Kurds hated the MKO.

Alain Chevalerias, French journalist and the member of institution "Research on Terrorism after 9/11", was the first who spoke to the audience. His book "Burned Alive" in French is now being translated to Farsi and English.

"As a journalist, I decided to write this book in June 2002 when Maryam Rajavi was arrested and I saw the outcomes of that," he said.

"At that time, a number of MKO supporters set themselves on fire and I asked myself about this organization. What's this organization that orders its members to kill themselves only because someone has been arrested?"

"Across Europe, Iraq and Iran, I have interviewed current and former members and supporters of the MKO as well as the group's victims and I got that this is a religious cult not a political group," he added.

"Is the MKO a terrorist organization? The answer is simple. A group that uses wea-

A British institution and a number of former members of the Mojahedin-e khalq organization held a press conference in London to reveal its activities and called it a terrorist organization with inhumane internal relations.

pon to get to its goals and considers it a right to kill civilian people is a terrorist group and any such activity in the world is terrorism."

"Is it possible to use this terrorist group against undesirable regimes? Can they be trusted? This is what a part of US administration is doing, is it right?" Chevalerias asked. He replied himself as follows: "If we accept that terrorist groups like the MKO can be used against Islamic Republic, we have indeed authorized the Iranian regime to use terrorists against Western governments to reach their goals."

"I knew many of Bin Laden's supporters and relatives. The way they were brainwashed for suicide operations and the way they thought were very similar to those of the MKO. MKO members in Iraq were not allowed to learn Arabic language because they were not allowed to be in touch with Iraqis. They couldn't see any TV programs except their own programs because receiving information from sources outside the MKO disrupts the process of brainwashing. There is no freedom of thought in this group. All the orders come from higher ranks and lower ranks have to obey."

Quoting International Red Cross officials, he said: "Most of MKO members would leave the group if psychological, military and family-related pressures on them [by the group] are lifted."

"The example of MKO deception, to show the depth of MKO influence among MKO leaders, is reflected to this organizations news reports in which they claimed that Maryam Rajavi went to French Senate by the invitation of the head of Senate. The fact was that she could go to a senate public meeting without any official invitation.

At a time, she stood beside the head of senate and group's photographer took a photo of this scene. Then, they claimed that Maryam had been invited by the head of Senate."

Anne Singleton, former member of the MKO and the author of "Saddam's Private Army" also spoke to the audience.

"For ten years, I was supporter of the MKO and for three more years, I was an official member of this group. It is not a political or military group, but a religious personal cult," she said.

"I sold my house and my car for this organization and gave them my money. I was a computer programmer and I quit my job for this group and joined them."

"I'm neither a political expert nor a university researcher. I'm only one of the victims of this organization and I like to give my experiences to others," she added.

"I was harassed by the group and I was under pressure but in comparison with those who were tortured and killed in Abu Ghraib and other prisons, I was really lucky."

According to Singleton, Mojahedin is a threat to the West because as a hated cult, it has no place in the future of Iran and Western countries that have given shelter to its members should be careful.

"They claim to be democratic, but no one can enter this group by his own will. This is the group that should choose and recruit its members."

"Is it a democratic organization when it encourages its members to set themselves on fire in the streets of London and Paris?" Singleton said: "Mojahedin try to appear different under the title of "National Council of Resistance" while everyone know that this council is only a cover for the activities of the MKO. I'm glad that unlike European countries, the US has designated both the MKO and NCRI."

"This organization never condemned Saddam and his regime and now it's waiting to spread its terrorist activities to all over the world in the case of facing expulsion from Iraq. The Western government should not play with MKO card in their struggle against Iran," she said.

In the event, another film that was taken by hidden camera was shown.

The film shows Abbas Davari, one of MKO leaders, giving intelligence to Iraqi officers on how to attack Khuzestan province.

The film also features MKO members recei-



ving dollars and Dinars from Iraqi officials. The organizers said that they had received the film from Iraqi kurds.

Karim Haghi, one of former MKO commanders living in Europe, talked about his imprisonment experience in the MKO.

"MKO had ties with Saddam against Iran. Now, it wants to have the same relations

with George W. Bush and the US," Haghi Said. "Bin Laden is more honest than Massoud Rajavi because he expresses what he wants, but Rajavi doesn't dare to say his ideas. He always lies to push to his ambitions."

"I devoted myself to this organization since I was 16 but I saw nothing from the group,

except crime and betrayal," he added. He also said that during the conference around 10 members of the MKO gathered outside the hotel and threatened the participants but the police stopped them. Three of them had entered the room and tried to disrupt the program.

20 journalists, photographers and reporters took part in the conference. ■

TENSION IN CONFERENCE ON MKO-SADDAM TIES

Mehrdad Farahmand, BBC Persian Service

November 10, 2005

A number of former members of Mojahedin-e khalq organization, who've formed the "Iran-Interlink" group and act to save MKO remnants in Iraq and to reveal what they call inhumane activities of the MKO leaders, held a press conference on Wednesday (November 10) in London's Ambassador Hotel.

They wanted to give information to journalists about the relations between the MKO and Saddam Hussein and the role of this organization in suppressing Shiites and Kurds in 1991 but the meeting was disrupted with the intervention of a number of people who seemed to be MKO supporters. These people accused the organizers of the meeting of being the agents of the Iranian intelligence ministry. In addition to disrupting the process of the meeting, they threatened and even attacked reporters.

MKO, formed 25 years ago with the purpose of overthrowing the Iranian regime through armed struggle, settled in Iraq in 1986 and attacked Iran with direct support from Saddam Hussein. Despite the fall of Saddam Hussein and the occupation of Iraq by the US, MKO members remain in one of their bases; the group is a terrorist organization in the US and Europe.

In Iran-Interlink's press conference, first a film was shown about the suppression of Kurds and Shiites in 1991 as well as interviews with survivors, victims and Kurd journalists. In addition, former MKO members gave evidences and documents, proving that Saddam Hussein used MKO members to kill Iraqi Kurds.

Another film showed MKO members giving intelligence on Iran to Iraqi officers and receiving millions of dollars in return. The film was produced by former Iraqi secret services.

According to Massoud Khodabandeh, one of the organizers, they had received the films from Iraqi Kurds and experts had verified that authenticity of the films. In addition, the content of the tapes matched the confessions of former Iraqi intelligence

agents.

Then, Alain Chevalerias, French researcher and journalist and the author of a book on the MKO spoke for the audience. Anne Singleton, former member of the MKO and author of a book on the MKO activities gave her speech. When these two authors said they were ready to answer the questions of reporters, some people among the audience started supporting the MKO and prevented journalist from questioning the former members.

These people even insulted the journalists and called them the agents of the Iranian regime. VOA correspondent was even assaulted by MKO supporters when she was leaving the place and she was returned to the building under the protection of police.

These moves caused police to come to the scene and the invitees had to leave the place under police protection.

Security concerns (fear from MKO members' violence in the meeting) forced the organizers to change time and place of the meeting and Baroness Emma Nicholson, UK representative in European Parliament, who was supposed to take part in the meeting was absent.

Although the organizers had tried to limit the event to researchers and journalists (including the correspondent of MKO TV channel), some people joined the meeting with cover names and then disrupted the event.

For instance, a man said he was working for the Congress and US security service but he was supporting the MKO and even attacked reporters. ■

AS THOUGH ALL MY BONES WERE BREAKING ONE BY ONE...

Trouw Newspaper interviews Marjan Malek in the Netherlands

Marjan Malek has recently returned to the Netherlands to join her two daughters. In 2000 she was sent by the MKO to Iran to carry out terrorist attacks where she was arrested and now, after serving her sentence, she tells her story.

She explains: ... "the Mojahedin Khalq Organisation claims to be the sole alternative to the present regime of Iran...but is itself destroying the lives of its members, who have been brainwashed."

Marjan Malek believes that even after leaving the organisation, the effects of brainwashing stay with you for some time.

The interview is part of a book, *Misled Martyrs'* written by the chief editor of Trouw, Ms. Judit Neurink which will be available from Monday [November 3].

... Elahe, 15 years old is explaining, ... "I miss her. It is very difficult to explain. I want to be with her but I don't want to go there." Then she stops and lowers her head.

It is difficult for her to talk about the woman who raised her since she was only six years old, when her real mother was sent in 1997 to the Iraqi camps of the Mojahedine Khalq Organisation. "Can you forget someone

who has cared for you for eight years?" It seems that she is answering this question with her silence.

"I have learned a lot about what my mother has seen and felt in this organisation. I didn't know that they are that bad." She talks emphatically. "I had even heard many good things about them."

From October 2005, Elahe and her sister Almira (10 years old) have joined their mother Marjan Malek (32 years old) who has left Mojahedin Khalq Organisation.

Now her daughters have moved from Zwolle to Arnhem, where they attend their new

school. Elahe is playing shy but manages to say that she wants to be an air hostess.

Why? "Because I like it."

The temporary asylum granted to Marjan brings to an end her painful past. A past in which parents were put under pressure to sacrifice their children for a greater cause!

Massoud Rajavi, the leader of the MKO, needs help to get into power. This is claimed to be the only way to save the people of Iran. For years, Marjan believed this idea until the year 2000, when she found herself in a prison cell in Iran. She could not believe that under the influence of the teachings of the MKO she had been carrying out an operation which could have resulted in the deaths of tens of innocent residents.

She is horrified. This could not save Iran from the mullahs, or bring it even one step nearer.

I visited her in Tehran when she was desperately trying to re-establish her contact with her daughters in the Netherlands. She explains how in 1994 she was recruited by the Mojahedin in a refugee camp.

Sadly, at that time she was in the process of being deported along with her husband and her daughter Elahe, just after the birth of their second child. They were an easy target for the Mojahedin.

The MKO helped her to get a new lawyer and provided the family with a good new story and a new identity. She moved into one of their houses where they live collectively and where she prepared to move to their bases in Iraq. Once there she moved to a camp from where they carry out operations inside Iran.

She explains how the MKO engulfed her and started changing her from within. "In the isolated houses of the Mojahedin," she explains, "they talk to you about the torture and the very bad

conditions of women in Iran". I asked her, how could you believe these stories? You hadn't been out of Iran for long. It seems that her belief grew out of the constant repetition of the story over and over again, as well as the strong belief of the people who surrounded her. Finally, she accepted to believe it. As she accepted to believe that Massoud Rajavi is capable of freeing his country.

"We now had a far greater goal than our children." The organisation was asking for much more loyalty from its members and Malek was under pressure to leave her husband and her children. She later admits that separating from her husband was not that hard because he usually beat her up. "I didn't have the courage to look at my children's photos" she adds. But separating from her daughters was a different thing. For over three years the Mojahedin had been working on me to separate myself from my children. It was too painful. It was as though all my bones were breaking one by one.

She says several times, "I asked myself how can a mother separate herself whole heartedly from her children?" But they would point out others who had separated from their children. I wasn't less than them was I?

My children could not come with me to Iraq. Even if they could have, we would not have been able to see each other easily. They would have been taken to the children's department, run by a few MKO women.

Elahe says: "I hardly knew her. She had very little time for us. She had to gather money for the organisation." Malek would take a file full of photos of what had happened in Iran and like other Mojahedin members she was sent onto the streets to convince the people of the Netherlands to pay money to help the poor Iranian people who are really under pressure...

When Malek was sent to Iraq, her children were given to another MKO mother to raise. Hamdam Emami, 57 years old is not young, but she is a loyal member. Her daughter is already in the Mojahedin and her two sons have been executed for having relations with the organisation...

Malek underwent military training to perform operations inside Iran, and in the year 2000 travelled to Tehran where she was arrested. The Iranian government announced her death during the operation and the Mojahedin with noisy propaganda announced her as yet another 'Sacred Martyr'.

I ask Elahe what she remembered from that time? Was she proud of her mum? That she was a noble martyr? She answers: "I was not proud but very sad." In April 2005, her mother told Elahe about the time that the Mojahedin removed her from all their literature including their book of Martyrs and introduce her as an agent. Elahe says: "I thought that what she was doing was good. She was fighting for our country. I still think so but that operation caused a lot of problems." What problems?

"The problem that she ended up in prison", she replies.

Elahe must have heard from the Mojahedin that her mother was now regarded as a traitor and an agent. In reality, for Marjan, Evin prison had worked more positively than before being in prison. It has been an opportunity for her and her children to renew their contact.

Marjan used to call Elahe frequently on her mobile from Tehran. This has changed and now Elahe's contact with her former foster mother is by telephone. Malek doesn't like these long phone conversations. She clearly believes that the Mojahedin are trying to enter her life again.

"They are working on gathering information about me and that is why I don't want Elahe to spend her Christmas holidays in Zwolle. I will not let them ruin my life."

She is still worried about the effects the Mojahedin could have on her children. She is aware that they may try to send her children to Iraq when they reach 16 years old.

She says: I don't want them to choose the way I went. She is worried that they maintain their contact with the Mojahedin and says that they should lead a normal life. I can understand her fear. Before Marjan returned [to the Netherlands], Elahe had told me that she has contact with children of the Mojahedin. She does not read Netherlands' newspapers and when I asked her about Iran, she could only repeat the Mojahedin's words...

After they were reunited in Arnhem (Malek and her children) Elahe showed not even the slightest of desire to read the newspaper I left, or the book I left them the next time. Her closest friend still is Sanam whose mother and father are in the Mojahedin living in Zwolle... Before anything, Marjan and Gholam (her new husband) need to get asylum from the Netherlands. But they are ex members of an organisation whose name is in the list of terrorist entities in the European Union. The organisa-

tion for its part is trying its utmost to stop them from getting asylum. Not only has Marjan's name been posted on their websites as an agent who is giving false information to get asylum, but also that she is asking for asylum to start work as a spy in the Iranian community.

The loyal members of the Mojahedin have also contacted the IND claiming that in Iran Malek had given information leading to the arrest of some of her colleagues.

Malek says: "I don't even know these people." And about one specific person she explains: "he had gone to Iran about two months before me to carry out an operation.

He was arrested two months before I even got to Iran."

Her future is in the Netherlands... She says: "here the children are doing alright, their studies were not so good before. Before it was impossible to reach Almira, she would wet her bed every night and her foster mother didn't have enough love and affection for them. Before, they were under pressure and did not have adequate clothes and shoes."

Gholam continues: "I think it will take years until they accept me. They have never experienced the love and affection of a normal family. They have been raised in an atmosphere created by the organisation; an atmosphere without love and affection.

But they have got used to me fairly quickly. They now call me Dad."

MASSOUD BANISADR-INTERVIEW WITH RADIO FRANCE

November 19, 2005

Farangis Habibi's interview with Massoud Banisadr, former member of the Mojahedin-e khalq organization:

Farangis Habibi: "Memoirs of an Iranian Rebel" in 516 pages, written by Massoud Banisadr and translated by Farhad Mahdavi, has been published by Khavaran Publications in Paris. This book was first published in English in the UK. In his book, Massoud Banisadr relates 20 years of his activities in the MKO, as a supporter, then a soldier and later a high-ranking member; activities that were accompanied by love, faithfulness, doubt, criticism, depression, anxiety and pain and finally led to his separation from the group. The book puts the reader at a crossroad, which is a passage for the history, culture, individual and mass psychology of a part of Iranians. Therefore, it's a good document for study because it reveals the author's experience of different stages of living in the MKO and at the same time displays the internal relations and affairs of the organization. That's why one can see the details of a mechanism that may be working in many other people, in other places and other times.

Mr. Massoud Banisadr. Your book is full of notes and we have not enough time. Let's start with one of the most shocking notes if you agree, and that's the position of the individual in MKO's internal relations. At one point, you have asserted that the organization said that you had to 'throw out our own legs and feet and walk with those of Maryam and Massoud Rajavi'. What was the meaning for an individual human being in the MKO?

Massoud Banisadr: what I should say is that how the MKO could turn an eastern mystical thought to a political one and apply it in a political organization. As our mystics believe in forgetting oneself and relying on their leaders, the Mojahedin follow the same rule and force people to cut relations with the outside world and focus their emotions and thoughts on the leader. In other words, they should forget their own feet and walk on those of the leader. In the book, I wanted to show how this was done from the beginning of the movement and led to its height in the MKO's ideological revolutions when everybody was encouraged to forget their own personalities. They had to forget all their past and the final stage of

the "ideological revolution" was called "divorcing oneself". You had to forget everything of your life, even the moments you were proud of. Even, you had to criticize yourself for such moments.

Even if one of your relatives was considered a "martyr" in the MKO, you had to have no feelings toward him. In other words, having any kind of relations in the MKO was banned. All relations passed through the MKO leadership's triangle.

Farangis Habibi: the other notable issue in your book, Mr. Massoud Banisadr, is the position of women in the MKO. Women, as you wrote, became superior human beings in a part of ideological revolutions. Are they superior human beings or are they tools?

Massoud Banisadr: this issue should be viewed from within the MKO's system of thought. In that system you are superior when you are not yourself anymore, you forget everything and ask everything from the MKO's leader. So, according to the Mojahedin itself, regarding women's social and historical restrictions, they do not need to try so hard to forget their past and focus on the leader. In other words, they said that women in our society are generally dependent on their fathers or brothers, so they can easily divert this dependence to the leader.

Farangis Habibi: Mr. Banisadr, in this book, you expressed your story without hatred towards anyone, and this is rare among the people who've had political experiences. Why?

Massoud Banisadr: I believe that I would be still in the MKO if I was able to hate. I mean one of the reasons I separated from the organization was this pressure that forced me to learn hatred and act on it. What took me toward the MKO was love; love towards people, country, advancement and people's welfare. But I gradually understood that the issues are moving on hatred toward the regime in Iran and several other things instead of moving on love. The MKO had created a bipolar world. They were one, and the Iranian regime was the other and everybody had to choose one of these two poles. What caused me to leave the group was that I couldn't base my evaluations on only love and hatred. ■

As the standoff over Iran's nuclear program steadily deteriorates into a crisis, Washington's policy on the Islamic Republic is coming under sharp scrutiny. While a group of hardcore neo-conservatives want a decisive confrontation with the Iran, the broader US policy-making community is all too aware of the futility and dangers of this approach.

The case for regime change in Iran has been most enthusiastically taken up by the Iran Policy Committee (IPC), which is largely composed of retired senior military officers and solely administered by a former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operations officer. Benefiting from close links to the Pentagon, the IPC has been tasked by the Iranian opposition group, Mujahideen-e Khalq (MEK), a proscribed terrorist organization, to provide professional lobbying and public relations services. On the other side are those who seek engagement. They won something of a victory on Monday when the State Department announced that the US ambassador to Iraq, Zalmay Khalilzad, had been given permission to meet with officials from Iran. "It's a very narrow mandate that he has," spokesman Sean McCormack said. "It deals specifically with issues related to Iraq."

The IPC is likely to be undaunted, though. Lobbying on behalf of a proscribed and notoriously anti-American organization like the MEK would be controversial enough, but the IPC gives the impression that it has gone beyond advocacy and is now, to all intents and purposes, representing the MEK in the US.

While such sensational gestures generate useful propaganda against Iran in the short term, the doomed fate of the MEK means that individual IPC members are at serious risk of destroying their reputations in the long term.

Regime change in Iran?

A proper understanding of the relationship between the MEK and the IPC requires an understanding of the broader regime-change debate now under way in Washington. While the US built a case against Iraq over its alleged possession of weapons of mass destruction, the neo-conservatives' case against Iran is more complex. President Mahmud Ahmadinejad's recent ill-judged comments on Israel (that it should be wiped off the map), coupled with long-term US concerns over Iran's nuclear ambitions, have enabled the neo-conservative camp to build up a case against Iran that leaves little room for negotiation.

In 2003, Senator Sam Brownback introduced the Iran Freedom and Democracy

Support Act, which was backed by senators Rick Santorum and John Cornyn. After some changes to the bill, now sponsored by Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, it was finally passed on April 13 this year as the Iran Freedom Support Act (HR 282). The act allowed for "financial and political assistance ... to entities that support democracy and the promotion of democracy in Iran and that are opposed to the non-democratic government of Iran". While Brownback had envisaged the fund going to Reza Pahlavi and pro-monarchist groups and the media, Ros-Lehtinen promoted the MEK as the best recipients for millions of taxpayers' dollars.

The act was opposed by many Iranian groups, while the National Iranian American Council gave expression to the argument: "while supporters argue that any step short of regime change is unlikely to bring about change in Iran, opponents argue that making regime change official policy eliminates the possibility of diplomacy and makes confrontation between the US and Iran inevitable". Among those groups which lobbied for the bill were the Institute for Public Affairs, the Iranian American Jewish Federation (IAJF) and the Washington-based IPC.

Iran Policy Committee

The IPC, a think tank established in February by Raymond Tanter, professor of political science at Georgetown University, is supported by several neo-conservative politicians and analysts, including Douglas Feith, Frank Gaffney, Michael Ledeen, Richard Perle, Paul Wolfowitz, Donald Rumsfeld, Condoleezza Rice, Tom Tancredo and Bob Filner.

Ostensibly, the IPC's platform echoes the neo-conservative view that Iran poses a threat to US national security and that regime change is the preferred solution. Leaving nothing to doubt, the IPC's website banner reads "Empowering Iranians for Regime Change". A policy paper released on February 10 extends this view to state that "Iranian opposition groups ought to play a central role in US policymaking regarding Iran". It also perfunctorily adds that "diplomatic and military options" should be kept open.

A review of the IPC's first white paper

reveals language and propaganda that is eerily identical to that used by the MEK, thus leaving well-informed and experienced analysts in little doubt that the paper was in part, if not in whole, written by agents of the MEK in the US. This style is also evident in the IPC's two subsequent white papers released in June and September. The promotion of the so-called "third way", oddly implicating the Shi'ite Islamic Republic in the spread of al-Qaeda-style Salafi jihadism (which is anti-Shi'ite through and through), and falsely accusing Iran of being the central force behind the Iraqi insurgency, are pure MEK disinformation techniques.

Interestingly, the June white paper, entitled "Sham elections and regime change", was primarily a response to a Human Rights Watch (HRW) report that accused the MEK of torturing its dissident members and engaging in other forms of human-rights abuses. Yet again, using language that is the exclusive trademark of the MEK, the IPC had this to say about the HRW report: The IPC appointed a task force on human rights to investigate allegations about the MEK and its related groups and claims against that organization by the HRW. IPC research concludes that the "credible claims" of HRW are actually statements by agents of the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence and Security [MOIS], especially Mohammad-Hossein Sobhani and Farhad Javaheri-Yar. Tehran sent most of those interviewed by Human Rights Watch from Iran to Europe for the purpose of demonizing its main opposition, the MEK. This reads like MEK propaganda. But leaving aside this important detail, what is striking about the IPC is that nobody on its board is in fact an Iran expert, let alone an expert on the bloody history and intricate cult-like ideology of the MEK. It is perhaps not surprising then that the IPC scrupulously avoids a debate with former members of the MEK.

Leaving aside the highly questionable relationship between the IPC and the MEK, the solution offered by the former to the policy differences on Iran is not altogether convincing. In the IPC's first white paper, the authors review the appeasement and military options before concluding that "Washington should consider a third alter-

native, one that provides a central role for the Iranian opposition to facilitate regime change". The problem for the IPC is that the US government instinctively distrusts the MEK, which has a history of anti-Western propaganda, is the only Iranian organization that has admitted to killing Americans, and was for nearly 20 years an unwavering ally of Saddam Hussein. Moreover, the IPC's lukewarm enthusiasm for the use of military force against Iran is, at best, deceptive. Indeed, if the IPC is serious about promoting MEK interests, then it must realize (as the MEK readily does) that only massive US-led military force against Iran could make marginalized exiled groups like the MEK even remotely relevant.

Furthermore, a brief glance at the IPC co-chair biographies reveals why this MEK-connected think tank secretly lobbies for war against Iran. Composed of retired senior military officers, a former ambassador, and Claire M Lopez, former operations officer with the CIA (and the sole administrator of the IPC and its main point of contact with the MEK), these individuals' expertise and career paths are based on the promotion of military options rather than peaceful ones. Moreover, several of the principals are affiliated with the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and its related think tanks.

MEK: A bad investment

The IPC's emergence as the representative of the MEK in the US is directly tied to the proscription of the latter in 2003. Up to August 2003, the MEK was capable of running its own propaganda campaign through the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), the personnel of both being almost identical.

The NCRI was outlawed in the US in August 2003 when the State Department added

the cover organization to the list of terrorist entities as a pseudonym for the MEK. Similarly, the MEK's small military wing in Iraq, the so-called "National Liberation Army of Iran" was bombed, disarmed and dismantled by US forces in April and May 2003. Having lost the patronage of Saddam, the MEK is now looking to the US government and Israel-linked lobby groups in Washington for support.

As part of this push to gain acceptance in the West, the MEK has presented itself as a pluralistic, secular and pro-democratic group which promotes the role of women and supports human rights. Its tools in this exercise have been the feminized image of its head, Maryam Rajavi, in civilian clothes, and the placing of the MEK's long-time US spokesman, Alireza Jafarzadeh, in the Fox News network as an independent analyst on Iran.

But even this was not enough to shift perceptions, and congressional support has been falling off as representatives are made aware of the manipulations which led them to sign up to documents purporting to condemn the Iranian regime, but having in their small print support for the MEK.

The creation of the IPC has arguably been the best publicity asset for the MEK in its efforts to reinvent itself. But no matter how the MEK markets itself, it cannot escape its past. The specter of young, brain-washed devotees burning themselves to protest the arrest of Maryam Rajavi in Paris in June 2003 continues to haunt Europe. Moreover, there is now a determined and organized effort by former members to bring the organization's leaders to account. On November 24, a group of anti-war activists and former MEK members held a press conference in Washington DC, entitled "Saddam's links with international terrorism". The conference showed videos

secretly filmed by Saddam's own security services which evidenced the financial, logistical and intelligence relations between the former Iraqi regime and the MEK.

Additionally, a documentary exposed the MEK's involvement in the suppression of the Kurdish uprising in 1991, immediately after the first Gulf War.

The day before this press conference, the MEK issued a statement alleging that former MEK members had been sent by Iran's Intelligence Ministry to prevent the organization being removed from the US terror list. The following day, the IPC issued a statement repeating these unsubstantiated accusations. Unfortunately for the IPC, United Press International picked up its statement and printed it. It was clear that the IPC had simply rehashed the MEK's statement and had not checked its information independently. Consequently, Tanter and other IPC members are now being sued by those they allegedly libeled.

While promoting regime change in Iran is a legitimate discourse, supporting terrorist organizations with a documented history of anti-Americanism clearly is not. IPC members might want to reconsider their position and decide whether supporting an organization that is nearly universally despised by Iranians of all political persuasions is worth the price of personal infamy. Massoud Khodabandeh is a former member of the Mujahideen-e Khalq, and mainly served in the organization's intelligence/security department. Khodabandeh left the Mujahideen in 1996 and currently lives in the north of England, where he works as a security consultant. He has been active in Iranian opposition politics for over 25 years. He works closely with the Center de Recherche sur la Terrorisme in Paris as an expert on Iran. ■

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES: HOORA SHALCHI

In the name of God

A short while ago, I saw and read photos and interviews of my sisters on [Mojahedin's] Iranefshagar website, so I decided to write a brief answer.

First of all, I should say that seeing the photos of you three dear lovely sisters made me so happy. When I was in the organization, they

didn't allow me to meet you privately. Any meeting with you, with the presence of commanders, took no longer than one hour.

But now I thank God that I could at least see your photos without being disturbed by anyone. I also took your beautiful photos for mom to see your pretty faces after so long a time. I'm also happy that this interview caused you sit beside each other, something that the MKO doesn't want. I know well that you can barely meet to share your sisterly emotions because Rajavi is essentially a big obstacle against

emotions.

I never forget that he opened my letter, which I had written for my 6-year-old girl, and never posted it to Iran.

I never forget that they deceived me on the issue of bringing you to Camp Ashraf.

They had brought you there but didn't allow me to know that. However, they had to inform me because they knew that I will meet you on my way to Iran for conducting an operation. We had not heard of each other for four years and they let us meet only for forty minutes, under the supervision of

high-ranking officials. If I had not revealed that I was going to take you to Iraq, they would have never allowed me to meet you. I always asked for permission to meet you and they always refused. Once, Laya Khiabani, who was in charge of Reception, asked me if I knew why they didn't let me see you. "I don't know. Perhaps, they think that we would exchange information," I said. She laughed and said, "You and your sisters have no information to exchange. They should give you permission to meet them." However, this never happened and I couldn't see you while I was in Iraq.

Once, I had prepared a birthday gift for Rabi'eh and some other presents for all of you. I knew that I would be criticized for doing so, but I asked my commanders to give them to you. A month and half later, I was shocked to see the gifts in my locker.

This is Massoud Rajavi's affection! They don't want families and relatives to have emotional relationships.

Everything should be devoted to Massoud Rajavi.

I should remind you, dear sisters, that I have never had any quarrels with you and I will not. I believe that you are of my flesh and blood. No one can separate us, not even that organization which has always tried to do so.

However, I won't let the organization's dreams come true and won't quit my efforts until I see you out of the cult. I know that they have forced you to talk against your own will. So, I was not bothered by what you said. I am criticizing the organization, which has put you in such a condition because I know you, and I know that we have not had any such affairs in our sisterly relations. This is MKO's method to create disputes inside families in order for itself to escape from replying to criticisms.

In all these five years that you were away from our mother, weren't you allowed to have a phone call for at least a few minutes to ask about your sick mother and your prisoner father? Who has given you this information? It was better for this affectionate organization to let my sisters call their parents and then do the interview. Then, you would have correct information and there were fewer faults. I announce that my father has never been tortured and he can testify to that himself.

What has happened that they suddenly decided to tell you about his situation? You all know that my father is in prison. He can have a phone call to his home for an hour everyday. We can also meet him each week for forty

minutes, without any controls or guards.

A simple comparison between my father here and my sisters in the prison of Rajavi shows the difference. My sisters were banned in these five years from writing a letter, from a brief phone call and we had no information on their status. This situation has made my mother sick. Now, who is the prisoner, my sisters in the cult or my father in Evin?

As I said, I don't want to complain about my sisters because I know that they are the captives of Rajavi. I have always loved my sisters and I say that your family is ready for your return. Now, the Rajavis should answer my sick mother. If they have not imprisoned my sisters, they should allow them to make a phone call to my mother.

No one in the world, except the heads of the cult, bans emotional relationship between members of a family. Apart from this, the organization should answer my little girl.

She has been away from her father (Moahmmmed Karimi Rahjerdi, member of MKO) since she was two and half years old. She is now nine and still asks about her dad.

This girl has no image of her father and can't remember him. She says her father is unfaithful, doesn't like her and doesn't pay attention to her.

You are responsible for cutting these ties. What will happen if a little girl hears the voice of her father from a long distance and feels calm? Why must she always look with wistfulness at other children of her age who are with their fathers and why must she always ask herself where her father is? "Where is he that he can't send a photo and a letter?" she asks. However, she's happy to have a grandfather. My little girl can't understand and analyze that her father is living at a place where "love" is forbidden, even if that love is of the kind a father has towards his little girl. She can't understand that her father can't mention her name and that he can't even think about her. He has to confess to Camp Ashraf's guards if he remembers his little girl. He has to deny everything under the heavy pressure of "purification" sessions and he has to devote all his love to Massoud and Maryam. My little girl doesn't know that Maryam and Massoud have taken her father's heart and that they have left no place for her. My little girl doesn't know that her father is captive in a place where "the art of love" is forbidden. I know how much her father loves her, but he's afraid to express that. All parents love

their children, but their fears force them to hide everything, even these divine emotions.

My little girl sleeps with the photo of her father and wishes to hear his voice. Each year, at her birthday, she expects to have her father beside her. She went on fasting during Ramadan and wished to have her father back. She resorted to the Qoran and prayed for her father.

There are many girls and boys with similar conditions. The daughter of Maryam Arab (Mona), Parivn Firoozan's son (Sepehr) and many others....

Who is responsible for these suppressed emotions? Mr. and Mrs. Rajavi, how do you want to answer God about these children? Why did you break up the families? You know better than I that the way you're following leads to nowhere. You know well that you separated children from their parents only to be able to survive perfidiously under US's flag and to legitimize Maryam's staying in France. How do you want to stand before God and answer? You can't bring back the wasted years of these children, can you? The damage inflicted on these children, because of the absence of their parents, can't be compensated. You should be accountable for this lost generation. You should be held accountable for the suppressed emotions of mothers and fathers.

I can remember that you used so-called "militias" (very young soldiers in MKO) to claim that young forces join the NLA; these militias were even banned from meeting their parents. I will never forget Mahboobeh Jamshidi's daughter, Maryam Jamshidi, 14, who wept each night because MKO leaders didn't let her see her mother. Her mother was in touch with her through e-mail and computer messages. Maryam Jamshidi cried and said that she didn't want a "computer mom". "I want to sit beside her but here I can't meet her," she said. No human being can stand these painful images, but your stony hearts prevented you from allowing their meetings. There were several others like Maryam Jamshidi. These girls, who couldn't feel maternal emotions in MKO, wanted to leave the group but the MKO never allowed separation because in the case of their separation, the MKO was not able to justify the case. These children had a disastrous situation and no one helped them because their parents were also captives of Rajavi. I'm sure that the same conditions applied for "boy militias" in the organization but I have not enough information because I was in

the Women's section.

Meanwhile, Maryam Rajavi's daughter (Ashraf Abrishamchi) and Massoud Rajavi's son (Mostafa) had a very different situation.

I myself witnessed the relationship of Ashraf Abrishamchi with her mother and father. She occasionally disappeared for a month or two. Later, we learnt that she was staying with her father or mother. Maryam spent a month with her daughter because Ashraf should feel the emotions of her parents.

The situation was similar for Massoud Rajavi's son.

At a time when MKO leaders banned family relationships and called it "illegitimate", it was "legal" and "legitimate" for Maryam and Massoud.

Everything "illegal" for members in the organization is "legal" for the leaders. Only the leader should have spouse, but it's forbidden and illegal for others. While mothers in the MKO were not allowed to look at the photos of their children, Maryam was fully authorized. Only the leader should have his children beside himself, and it's illegal for others.

We saw these contradictions and discriminations everyday but we had to ignore them.

Their justification was that "Maryam and Massoud have passed these issues but you have an exploitative view and therefore you shouldn't have a family"! My little girl and I are waiting for my husband to return to the family. I hope to meet my sisters again in an open atmosphere. I am sure that in the near future, the real nature of Rajavi will become clear for you all.

... and you, Massoud and Maryam Rajavi, you should stand before God and answer for the crimes you have committed.

[Biographical Note: Hoora Shalchi was a long time member of the Mojahedin-e Khalq in Iraq. She was arrested in Iran in 2000 alongside Ms Marjan Malek after they carried out a terrorist operation [mortar attack] in Tehran. The two women were tried and imprisoned on terror charges. Both have now been released after serving their sentences.] ■

presence of another member, and vice versa.

- Members who need to go online. They should be a minimum of two people and one should ask frequent questions about the other's need to visit sites or download emails.
- Members who have to go to meetings with politicians, etc. There should be at least one other person present at all time during travel outside the base until return.

There are many other rules and regulations similar to the above which govern the daily minutiae of life in the Mojahedin.

It is interesting that now in some cases it is preferred to send a supporter to monitor a member while outside. This is because more and more frequently, two members would plan together to go to a cinema, sex shop, etc and agree not to tell the commanders. Distant supporters are told that because they have come from the Iraqi deserts, such members need their help until they get used to their new environment.

It seems that not only have these regulations brought no real relief or for that matter "love of the Ideological Leaders", instead they have overwhelmed the hearts and minds of members. During recent years, crimes like "rape and related murder and other crimes" against women in Ashraf camp, which had never been seen in the Mojahedin before the Ideological Revolution, have increased to shocking numbers.

The major problem for the Mojahedin are those who have regular contact with supporters as part of their work. Supporters report that after any long visit by a member to their homes or places of work it is usual for them to receive bills for long hours of connection to sex websites. Many supporters now refuse to allow their children into the presence of MKO members and prefer only to meet them in the streets or in the MKO safe houses in Europe.

Women members are expected not to concern themselves with the minimum of hygiene and personal grooming. As a result, most of the women members who are no longer as young as before suffer from all sorts of mental and physical disorders, including the above mentioned coarsening of beards and moustaches which is mainly due to hormone imbalance or disorder. Women are denied treatments or any kind of make up, bleaching or waxing, etc. - except for Maryam Rajavi and the women she chooses to have looking acceptable. While Massoud Rajavi has been dying his hair for the last fifteen years and all of his, and Maryam's fami-

ly, have had the most expensive cosmetic dental treatment possible, ordinary members are expected to have no more than a backpack to contain all their belongings; that is, all their clothes, books, mementos etc. These backpacks are regularly checked for forbidden items including any trace of contact with, or pictures of, family or friends. At its inception, the daily report accompanied by follow-up "ideological meetings" served the leaders' purpose to keep a grip on the members on one hand and on the other hand provided blackmail material for a rainy day in case any member found the courage to try to escape the cult. It is now, however, increasingly working against the Rajavis as they attempt to whitewash their image as heads of an Islamic Marxist terrorist cult who have used their members to attack the interests of the west as and when needed to pursue their own agenda.

Mojahedin members (which includes around 97% of those claiming membership of the NCRI) are indoctrinated in the Rajavis' anti-imperialist ideology. They are motivated by their promise to destroy world imperialism and replace it with what the Rajavis call "the divine, classless society". It is with this motivation that they submit to the suffocating strictures imposed on them by the Rajavis. Following the fall of Saddam Hussein, such members cannot reasonably be expected to change their ideological direction without a total re-programming of their world view. The Rajavis know this only too well.

However, an explanation is needed for these members, who are very much needed for activities like the self immolations of June 2003 to protest the arrest of Maryam Rajavi, as they see current Mojahedin behaviour in contradiction to everything they have been taught to believe.

The explanation is that "fooling the Americans and their allies" is a tactic. The ideology has not changed, but the path to "the divine classless society" at this point of time, must pass through this tactic, until we are ready to confront "imperialism and the world devours" again. Members are praised for their superior understanding, and the leader is worshiped as the members are taught to realise that they could not have passed this phase of the struggle to save humanity if it had not been because of the ideological leader and the introduction of the "ideological revolution" at the very right time. ■

OPEN SECRETS

Did you know... Why 'freedom of thought' is a sin in the Mojahedin? Why every single member of the Mojahedin is required to write a daily report about every thought which comes to their mind during the day?

With the introduction of the "Second Phase of the Ideological Revolution" in 1989, married couples and children were separated from one another in a bid to divert all personal love and affection towards the Ideological Leaders – Massoud and Maryam Rajavi. The Revolution did not stop at that point however. Soon, unmarried people were also expected to 'divorce' in their hearts and minds everything to do with the opposite sex. They should not allow themselves to think about the opposite sex at any time during the day – even, for that matter, during their sleep and dreams. A sex related dream or, remembering your child or, a passing memory of a girl or boy you knew perhaps as a teenager, were all declared to be signs that a person is "drowning in a world of sexuality", and that therefore they "needed the Leaders' help". The problem outside of Ashraf Camp was that members would meet and talk over the phone with people of the opposite sex, see billboard advertisements, and even sometimes watch uncensored television. Inside Ashraf Camp the refectories were separated, men and women would not sit in the same car, and even the petrol station had separate timetables for men and women so that they would not meet. This resulted in a different level of thoughts about the opposite sex. The Rajavis' compulsory daily report was introduced thus: "once you write down all these 'contradictions' and read them aloud in the meeting at the end of the week, then the collective presence [peer pressure] will shame you sufficiently that you will reduce and will ultimately eliminate these bad thoughts or 'contradictions' to the point that your heart and mind will eventually belong solely to the leader." Once people were forced to write down their 'contradictions', the daily reports began to read along these lines: "I used the petrol pump after sister x, and I felt aroused", or "I saw two birds together in a tree and I had an erotic thought", or "when I sat on the chair that sister x has just left, I felt...". The more that time passed, the more ridiculous the reports became. And the more they wrote, the more they had things to write about. It became clear that most members over the years came to the conclusion that the daily report is something they have to do in order to get

the leaders off their backs, and that what they actually think and do (when they get the chance) is not really what they should write about. After all, the reports should show "progress". If not, you will be accused of resisting "Massoud and Maryam's Ideological Revolution". And of all other crimes only this is absolutely unforgivable. Although no one has claimed, and is unlikely to claim, that any individual can ever achieve this totally pure state of mind (Massoud and Maryam Rajavi declared that from the start they did not have this problem, and that is why they are the ideological leaders and that is why they can remain married without corruption), the process intensified year after year to the point that the daily report has evolved into the 'daily collective meeting'. These meetings are held on a daily basis under any circumstances, even if there are only two or three people together for any task or mission. In the daily meeting, daily reports have to be read out in turn (except for the head of the meeting who must attend a separate meeting with peers in the hierarchy), and the others have to attack the writer, swear at him or her as hard as they can and in their own words "crack" the person by whatever means. If anyone comes down soft on the target, he or she will be accused of having something to hide inside, and of not taking the side of the Leaders in confronting the outside savage world. These meetings nowadays frequently result in physical fighting and abuse. Those who resist are labelled as agents of the intelligence ministry of Iran, who have no claim to any rights and can be treated according to the will of the Ideological Leaders. (In fact, such 'traitors' are ideologically condemned to execution by the Leaders. Actual execution of the order depends on the circumstances, and according to the whim of the Leaders. For instance, sending a 'traitor' to Abu Ghraib prison was equivalent to putting into practice the death sentence, since the victims were unlikely to survive there.) As this psychologically cohesive method combined with other manipulations have been exercised over the years, the behaviour of people in the Mojahedin, including the way they see other non-member people, the language they use and even in some cases the physical

tone of the voice, face and body features and even the day-to-day desires of members have changed. For instance, it is not abnormal any more to see women who have more pronounced body and facial hair growth. The practice of self satisfaction [masturbation - which in Islamic teachings is forbidden] has become something so widespread for both men and women, that it has even been mentioned by Maryam and Massoud Rajavi in the general meeting as a problem which has arisen after banning sex.

The extent of the problem is such that in Ashraf Camp, new regulations for men's dormitories emphasise among other things that:

- No two men are allowed to stay in the dormitory without the presence of a third man.
- In the case of two people being sick, a third man should be chosen to stay with them.
- People are not allowed to change their clothes in the dormitory except behind a screen.
- Rubbing medicine on the back or chest of a patient should preferably be carried out by an older member and supervised by a third man at all times.
- Taking a shower or bath should only take place at certain times of the day and only according to specific regulations.

And for the people outside Ashraf Camp (in Europe, etc):

- Men are not allowed to report to or talk in private to their women commanders except in the

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SURVIVORS' REPORT

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

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