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New U.S. approach to Mojahedin-e Khalq (MKO, MEK) in Camp Ashraf overlooks the victims' human rights

Massoud Khodabandeh, MESConsultants, July 05 2011

<http://mesconsult.com>



Attitudes are slowly crystallising and shifting over what should be done about the MEK, with the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq James Jeffrey introducing a new and positive approach in U.S. dealings with the group in Iraq.

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Washington's Favorite Terrorists

(Mojahedin Khalq, MKO, MEK, Rajavi cult)

.Trita Parsi, Huffington post, June 30, 2011

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/trita-parsi/washingtons-favorite-terrorists_b_887525.html

In the 10 years that I have lived in Washington, I have never seen lobbyists for al-Qaeda parade through the halls of Congress. I have not seen any events on Capitol Hill organized by Hamas.

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New U.S. approach to Mojahedin-e Khalq (MKO, MEK) in Camp Ashraf overlooks the victims' human rights

Cont.p1

But the July 4 Miami Herald article [‘Iranian dissidents in Iraq want refuge in 3rd country’](#), also highlights the danger that various elements are still trying to derive their own benefits from the MEK even though the demise of Camp Ashraf has become inevitable. Of course you would need to ask those involved what they each hope to get out of such a defunct group. Ambassador James Jeffrey, addressing only MEK leaders, has urged them to “dissolve’ their paramilitary organization and become refugees someplace else in Iraq”. In its turn the MEK itself has already threatened to [massacre its own members](#) if any external body interferes in the camp. Jeffrey added that the group “really believe that the U.N. and the United States will protect them forever.” Well, they have good reason to believe that to be so. Trita Parsi’s timely article [Washington's Favorite Terrorists](#) exposed U.S. hypocrisy in dealing with the MEK in Washington. But we may very well see a similar level of support continuing in Iraq. The obvious way this would manifest would be for

the MEK to be taken (en masse) inside a U.S. military base and held there until further notice. This would protect the group from Iraqi attempts to expel them from the country, and also obviate the need for the U.N. to enter Camp Ashraf and rescue the individual residents from their enforced imprisonment by the MEK leadership.

The wholesale transfer of the residents of Camp Ashraf would truly be a human rights disaster. The sooner it is acknowledged that Rajavi is nobody’s representative but his own, the sooner the victims of the MEK will be helped.

From the hardliners in Iran who want to keep their dangerous foreign backed enemy, to the neoconservatives in the U.S. who want to keep the hatred between Iran and the west (as the neocon version of Holocaust denial, the fact that the MEK has killed so many Iranians is what feeds this hatred), to Iraqi internal factions which want to use the MEK for attacking other factions, to Europeans who still believe the MEK are a useful bargaining chip with Iran or can be used to influence the

internal affairs of Iraq. All these have an interest in keeping the MEK intact. None wants the dissolution of the camp or the organisation.

They all want to stop the camp being disbanded because they are using the MEK for their own various agendas.

The problem is that without taking the necessary action to access the individual residents of the camp they are essentially being left in the ownership of the Rajavis and their backers.

In this respect where are the human rights organisations which should be directly involved in helping these victims? What attempts have the U.N. made to actually get inside the camp and have free access to the residents? Human Rights Watch published its ‘No Exit’ report in 2005 which was laudable, but what have they done since then? Amnesty International still prefers to think of the MEK as an entity and ignore the existence of the individuals in the camp.

What has AI said about the internal problems of the residents; the daily violations and abuses of their basic human rights?

Journalism versus Terrorism – Part 1

By: Nejat Bloggers

July 11 2011

Former spokesman of, National Council of Resistance in London – member of parliament in exile according to the Huffingtonpost – has posted 19 articles on the Huffingtonpost since February 2010. Reading through the whole articles, I looked for the salient features. Surprisingly I came across with a common pattern in them that might lead the audience to wonder if Safavi, was pushing the idea of the Foreign Terrorist designated entity, Mujahedin Khalq (MKO/MEK/PMOI) for which NCR is an alias, according to the State Department.[1] In at least 18 articles out of 19 he just mentions the words or phrases: MEK, Mojahedin Khalq, PMOI and National Council of Resistance for more than 340 times.(!) Out of this big number more than 20 times, he claims MEK as “the main organized opposition” that represents the Iranian people against the “regime”. He uses the term “regime” to refer to Islamic Republic government for over 102 times. Out of these 102, about half of them (at least 50 times) he portrays the “regime” by notorious acts including “execution”, “massacre”

,”torture”, “crack down”, “suppression”, describing “the regime” by adjectives like “suppressive”, “inhumane”, “deadly”.

He proposes the allegedly “Iranian”, “popular resistance” as the force to bring “democratic change” and eventually “democracy” in Iran for about 40 times. This “democratic change” will guarantee “human rights”, “freedom”, “women rights” and “democracy” for the so-called suffering Iranian people under the current “regime”, according to Ali Safavi. Besides, he uses the term “nuclear weapon” about 10 times to warn about the “threat” of a “nuclear bomb” made by the “regime”. In the entire articles, out of those 340 that he mentions MKO and its other names, at least 58 times he asserts that “terrorist designation” of the group by the State Department has been a “good will gesture” to the “regime” in Tehran and the result of the “regime”’s propaganda against the group. He calls the group’s opponents in the West as “Tehran apologists” who are an “appeasement” policy regarding Islamic Republic.

Safavi proposes the group’s “third option” which includes support for them to run



their so-called “peaceful overthrow” of “the regime” in Tehran. He uses the verbs like “should”, “must”, “need to”, “can” – boldly used in near 30 statements – to give advice, make recommendation and even order the US administration, particularly President Obama to “immediately end shackling the MEK”. Member of the allegedly parliament in exile mentions the name of MEK’s leader – in hiding now- Massoud Rajavi as the leader of the movement that wants to replace the “current regime” in at least 15 cases. He also introduces Mayram Rajavi (6 times) as the “president elect of Iran’s parliament in exile”. Out of those 21 cases that he mentions the name of the Rajavis, in 11 cases he refers to their speeches, messages and letters to prove their legitimacy, claiming MKO as “a Muslim organization” that believes in a “tolerant and democratic interoperation of Islam”. The essence of Ali Safavi’s writings taken out of the particular patterns he applies to propose his arguments proves the hypotheses that he is promoting the cause of MEK in an apparently moderated media like the Huffington Post. That’s kind of biased journalism.
By Mazda Parsi

The Foolish Embrace of the Mojahedin Khalq (MEK, MKO, Rajavi cult)

Daniel Larison, American Conservative, July 07, 2011
<http://www.amconmag.com/larison/2011/07/06/the-foolish-embrace-of-the-mek/>

The bizarre enthusiasm for the Mujahideen-e Khalq keeps growing in Washington. Trita Parsi describes the terrorist group's intense lobbying efforts to have the group removed from the government's list of terrorist organizations (via Chris Bodenner):

Since early January 2011, the MEK has spent millions of dollars on lobbyists, PR agents and communications firms to build up pressure on Secretary Hillary Clinton to take the group off of the terrorist list. Their argument is that the MEK rejected violence and terrorism in 2001 and as a result should be de-listed.

But this is not true, according to the FBI. A recently disclosed FBI report from 2004 reveals that the group continued to plan terrorist acts at least three years after they claimed to renounce terrorism.

No one should be surprised — not even DC's "unwitting members of Congress" — as the FBI calls the group's supporters on Capitol Hill.

The State Department has documented the MEK's disturbing record: killing Americans and Iranians in terrorist attacks; fighting for Saddam Hussein against Iran and assisting Saddam's brutal campaign against Iraq's Kurds and Shia; its "cult-like" behavior; the abuses and even torture it commits against its own members; and its support for the U.S. embassy takeover and calls for executing the hostages. And let's not forget, the MEK suppresses and holds captive its own members — more than 70 percent of the MEK members in Camp Ashraf in Iraq are held there against their own wishes, according to a RAND Corporation study.

I have marveled at the willingness of numerous former government officials, retired military officers, and elected representatives to embrace the MEK. There's no question that they are motivated by their loathing of the Iranian government, but their hostility to the regime had led them to endorse a group that most Iranians loathe. Michael Rubin has been sharply critical of MEK boosters here in the U.S. for some time now, and he



most recently called out Michele Bachmann for her foolish support for the group, which she refers to as "one of the bravest Iranian dissident groups" and "freedom-seeking." Bachmann is hardly alone in her folly. She has quite a lot of company, as Muhammad Sahimi tells us:

Howard Dean, former chairman of the Democratic National Committee, is one. President Obama's former National Security Adviser Gen. James L. Jones is another. Others include Bill Richardson, former energy secretary and U.S. ambassador to the United Nations; Michael Mukasey, attorney general under President George W. Bush; Tom Ridge, former governor of Pennsylvania and homeland security secretary under Bush; Gens. Peter Pace and Hugh Shelton, former vice chair and chairman, respectively, of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Louis Freeh, former FBI director; Lee Hamilton, former Democratic congressman; Michael Hayden, former director of the CIA;

The Foolish Embrace of the Mojahedin Khalq (MEK, MKO, Rajavi cult)



Gen. Anthony Zinni, former commander of the Central Command; Frances Townsend, homeland security adviser in the Bush White House; and Brad Sherman and Dana Rohrabacher of the House of Representatives. In the past, the U.S. has supported ethnic separatist groups inside Iran in their armed opposition to Tehran, and some of these groups have resorted to attacks on civilian targets. When Jundullah was added to the list of terrorist organizations, it seemed as if that policy of subversion through

sponsoring terrorism might have been abandoned. If the effort to de-list the MEK is successful, it seems more than likely that the group will be used as a proxy to launch attacks against Iranian interests. As Parsi explains:

First, the desire to de-list them in Washington seems partially driven by gravitation towards covert military action against Iran.

Neither sanctions nor diplomacy have yielded the desired results on the nuclear issue, and some in Washington are advocating using

the MEK to conduct assassination and sabotage campaigns inside Iran.

As one former State Department official put it, the "paradox is that we may take them off the terror list in order for them to do more terror."

This will not only help the regime to consolidate power in the name of anti-terrorism, but it will be an unexpected propaganda boost for the regime by convincing most Iranians that the U.S. has sided with a group they understandably regard as an enemy of their country.

France step nearer to putting MKO back on EU list

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the EU terrorist list In so doing she suggests a number of improvements that could be made to procedures so as to ensure an appropriate balance between the need to combat terrorism and the respect of fundamental rights. When, on 15 July 2008, the Council adopted a new decision³ updating the EU list, it nevertheless maintained PMOI on the list. The inclusion of PMOI was based on information provided by the French Government as to (i) the opening of a judicial inquiry by the anti-terrorist prosecutor's office of the Tribunal de grande instance de Paris (Regional Court, Paris) in 2001 and (ii) two supplementary charges brought in 2007 against persons presumed to be members of PMOI. Information to this effect was communicated by the Council to PMOI on the day the decision was adopted. In her Opinion issued today, Advocate General Eleanor Sharpston suggests that the Court dismiss France's appeal.

Consequently, Advocate General Sharpston concurs with the conclusion of the General Court that the Council's decision had been adopted in violation of PMOI's rights of defence. As this was the sole reason for the annulment of the decision by the General Court, the Advocate General suggests that the Court dismiss the appeal. Mindful of the fact that the remaining arguments ought to have no bearing on the outcome of the case, Advocate General Sharpston nevertheless considers it important that they be addressed. Failing to do so would, in her opinion, leave France faced with precisely the same uncertainty that led it to appeal in the first place, an uncertainty. Finally, as regards the withholding of confidential information from the General Court, Advocate General Sharpston takes no issue with that Court's finding that the Council's refusal to communicate the information in question resulted in the General Court being unable to review the



lawfulness of the decision. However, given the absence of any specific provisions in that Court's Rules of Procedure for dealing with information that needs to be communicated to the Court but not to the other party to the case, the Advocate General, nevertheless, does not find France's position unreasonable. In strict accordance with the General Court's Rules of Procedure it was not possible for that Court to offer the Council any assurance that the confidential information would not, at some point, have to be communicated to PMOI. As a result Advocate General Sharpston suggests that changes be made to the Rules of Procedure and principles be outlined so as to allow the use of such confidential information where necessary to combat terrorism whilst simultaneously ensuring respect of the rights of defence and the right to effective judicial protection.

Washington's Favorite Terrorists (Mojahedin Khalq, MKO, MEK, Rajavi cult)

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And I have not seen any American politicians take campaign contributions from the Islamic Jihad.

But the Mujahedin-e Khalq (MEK), an organization with the blood of Americans and Iranians alike on its hands, freely does all of these things, despite being a designated foreign terrorist organization by the U.S. government.

And in a matter of weeks, this terrorist group may succeed in getting removed from the terrorist list -- not as a result of any change of heart -- but as a result of an unprecedented mutli-million dollar media and lobbying blitz.

Since early January 2011, the MEK has spent millions of dollars on lobbyists, PR agents and communications firms to build up pressure on Secretary Hillary Clinton to take the group off of the terrorist list. Their argument is that the MEK rejected violence and terrorism in 2001 and as a result should be de-listed.

No one should be surprised -- not even DC's "unwitting members of Congress" -- as the FBI calls the group's supporters on Capitol Hill. The State Department has documented the MEK's disturbing record: killing Americans and Iranians in terrorist attacks; fighting for Saddam Hussein against Iran and assisting Saddam's brutal campaign against Iraq's Kurds and Shia; its "cult-like" behavior; the abuses and even torture it commits against its own members; and its support for the U.S. embassy takeover and calls for executing the hostages.

But even if the MEK could be believed, the reality is that they are currently on the terrorist list and, as a result, they must be subject to U.S. terrorism laws. Simply put, the laws must be enforced -- without exception.

The State Department's review of their terrorism status, which is due to be completed by August of this year, must be conducted



without the essentially illegal pressure tactics the MEK currently is employing through lobbyists, lawmakers and hired former officials.

First, the desire to de-list them in Washington seems partially driven by gravitation towards covert military action against Iran. Neither sanctions nor diplomacy have yielded the desired results on the nuclear issue, and some in Washington are advocating using the MEK to conduct assassination and sabotage campaigns inside Iran.

Second, de-listing the MEK would spell disaster for the Iranian pro-democracy movement. According to prominent Green movement figures Mohsen Kadivar and Ahmad Sadri: Third, de-listing will put the rising Iranian-American community in a state of shock. In the last decade, an impressive civic awakening has

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Washington's Favorite Terrorists

Cont.p7 occurred in this successful but previously politically silent community, with dozens of new groups being formed with the aim of contributing to the American democracy and providing the Iranian Americans in the U.S. Now, by buying off officials to pry open the floodgates of U.S. financial and political support, Rajavi and her small but vocal minority threaten to simultaneously drown out the voices of the rest of the Iranian-American community, co-opt the voice of Iran's true opposition, and carry the U.S. down the path of war yet again.

Follow Trita Parsi on Twitter:
www.twitter.com/tparsi

Congressman Kucinich to Attorney General Eric Holder: Investigate the case of lobbyists for Mojahedin Khalq (MKO, MEK, Rajavi cult) terror group in Washington

Congressman Dennis J. Kucinich, July 26, 2011



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
www.kucinich.house.gov

July 25, 2011

<http://kucinich.house.gov/News/>

[DocumentSingle.aspx?DocumentID=253479](http://kucinich.house.gov/News/DocumentSingle.aspx?DocumentID=253479)

Kucinich Asks Tough Questions About FBI Investigation of Anti-War Groups "Is it Good Judgment to Direct the Overwhelming Resources of the Federal Government onto Small, Local Groups and Individuals whose Primary Interest is Peace Washington, Jul 25 - Congressman Dennis Kucinich (D-OH) today wrote to Attorney General Eric Holder asking tough questions about the Federal Bureau of Investigation's large commitment of resources to investigate small, local groups of individuals whose primary concern is peace. Congressman Kucinich also asked for an explanation for the apparent differential use of vague and broad criminal statutes.

"A federal prosecutor has tremendous power and resources," wrote Kucinich. "Because of that, he has a concomitant obligation to exercise that power with judgment and discretion. Is it good judgment to direct the overwhelming resources of the federal government onto small, local groups and individuals whose primary interest is peace? Is it good judgment to investigate them under a vague and broad statute whose text and interpretations have changed numerous times over the past decade? Is this really the best use of Department of Justice personnel?"

See a signed copy of the letter here.

http://kucinich.house.gov/UploadedFiles/072511_LTR_to_Attorney_General_Holder.pdf