

Nejat Newsletter

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US using MKO terrorists as bargaining chips, says BBC

London, Jan 18, IRNA

UK-BBC-MKO

Nearly four years after overthrowing of Saddam Hussein's regime, the US are still using some 3,500 MKO terrorists at Ashraf camp in Iraq as a bargaining tool in its relations with Iran, BBC reported. Britain's state-funded broadcaster said the US cannot decide what to do in its hypocritical policy, with some statesmen in Washing-

ton still seeing the MKO as potential allies even though the group is officially branded as terrorists.

expressed regret that the terrorist group had been used as a US source of confrontation against Iran.

"I think failure of the US for six years to make some meaningful overture to Iran is a terrible mistake," Wilkerson told the program.

Kenneth Pollack of the Brookings Institute said that the US and Iran needed to work together to stabilize Iraq

and on nuclear issues and that he did not want the MKO to be used "to muddy trouble waters." The documentary introduced the MKO a "cruel and manipulative cult" that had killed and wounded hundreds of Iranian politicians and civilians for more than two decades.

Former members were interviewed describing the psychological warfare and torture used by the Iraq-based terrorist organization as part of its system of control.

A spokesman for the

MKO front group in London, Ali Safavi, even admitted that all members were asked to divorce to show their devotion to the organization that had led to the break up of their families.

But since Saddam be-

came an enemy of the west, they had become a terrible liability with the new Iraqi government wanting the MKO removed from Ashraf. The report suggested that the US had missed opportunities to make deals with Iran first during its war in Afghanistan and then following its invasion of Iraq. But it now believed that time was finally running out for the MKO and that they would be "probably be used as bargaining chips in a diplomatic game" by the US for better relations with Tehran.

PMOI: a bargaining chip in Iran and US negotiations?

Description:

BBC TWO Report on NewsNight Broadcast on Wednesday 17th of January 2007

PMOI

The People's Mujahadeen - known as the PMOI - are labelled terrorists by the State Department. They were given sanctuary by Saddam Hussein in Iraq in Camp Ashraf - where they still are.

Newsnight has uncovered an extraordinary letter written after the invasion of Iraq in 2003 where Tehran offers to withdraw military backing for Hamas and Hezbollah as well as give open access to their nuclear facilities in return for Western action in disbanding the PMOI. Tim Whewell investigates this organization and whether they may be used as a bargaining chip in negotiations between Iran and Washington.



Financing terrorists is not about speech

<http://www.mojahedin.ws/>

22/01/2007

Financing terrorists is not about speech

THE SUPREME COURT has rightly refused to block the trial of seven Los Angeles residents accused of contributing funds to an Iranian opposition movement that the State Department has branded a terrorist group.

The high court let stand a ruling by the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals that prosecuting the defendants — who are innocent until proved guilty — posed no 1st Amendment problem. As Judge Andrew J. Kleinfeld pithily put it: "Sometimes money serves as a proxy for speech, and sometimes it buys goods and services that are not speech. Guns and bombs are not speech."

In 1997, then-Secretary of State Madeleine Albright designated the

Marxist group Mujahedin Khalq, or MEK, as a "foreign terrorist organization," a designation reaffirmed in 1999. Formed in the 1960s to oppose the rule of the shah of Iran, MEK now opposes the Islamic regime in Tehran and, according to the State Department, engaged in terrorism against Iran between 1997 and 2001.

Under the 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, it's a crime to knowingly provide material support to an organization that appears on the State Department's list. The defendants in the Los Angeles case are accused of soliciting donations for MEK in Los Angeles and of wiring at least several hundred thousand dollars to an MEK bank account in Turkey.

The truth of those allegations is a matter for a jury. What the defendants sought from the 9th Circuit was a ruling that their prosecution violated the 1st Amendment because of flaws in the way MEK was designated a terrorist organization.

Yet, as Kleinfeld noted, MEK's own description of its activities supported the terrorist designation. The designation was on the books when the defendants allegedly contributed to the group. More to the point, as the Supreme Court has recognized in upholding restrictions on contributions to election campaigns, money cannot always simplistically be equated with speech even in a domestic context. The "money is speech" mantra makes even less sense when the money buys guns.

Of course, the State Department should use care in designating a group as a terrorist organization. Such designations can be challenged though not ignored. Individuals accused of providing such a group with material support shouldn't be able to substitute their judgment for the department's any more than consumers should be able to substitute their judgment about a dangerous drug for that of the Food and Drug Administration. Neither case is a free-speech issue.

poster / source : Los Angeles Times

Most MKO Members Want to Return Home, No change in EU terrorist list

IRNA, 26 January 2007

TEHRAN, Sept. 10--Representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to Iran Peter Stuker here Thursday said the Committee has got to know that many members of the terrorist Mujahideen Khalq Organization (MKO) want to return Iran.

Stuker told IRNA on Thursday that unfortunately, due to lack of security in Iraq and loss of some staff members, the ICRC did not deem it advisable to visit the Ashraf Refugee Camp, where the MKO agents are based.

He added that the ICRC representatives would take actions in that connection immediately after restoration of security to Iraq. Families of the deceived MKO members in Ashraf camp staged a sit-in

in front of the ICRC's Tehran office and outside the Swiss Embassy, that looks after the US interests in Tehran, calling for measures to secure the release of their children from MKO captivity.

Meanwhile, the EU does not intend to remove the Iranian grouplet MKO from its terrorist list, EU diplomatic sources said here Friday. The comments followed reports that the MKO is planning to hold a demonstration on Monday in front of the EU headquarters in Brussels to call for the removal of its name from the EU terror list.

"The MKO has been on the EU terrorist list since 2002. I am not aware of any formal moves to do that (to remove). There has been no movement in recent time on this issue," EU diplomatic sources told journalists on condition of anonymity.

ity.

"Some individual politicians have raised questions, but I am not aware of any initiatives to change the names on the terrorist list." EU foreign ministers are to discuss ties with the Islamic Republic during their formal monthly meeting in Brussels on Monday.

The Brussels-based English weekly "European Voice" published a full-page, in what seems to be a paid, advertisement titled "Remove People's Mojahedin of Iran (PMOI) from Terror List."

The ad claims that "100 parliamentarians, political figures call for the rally in Brussels on September 13". Observers here are astonished at the 'duplicity' of Belgian and EU authorities in allowing members of a terrorist group to demonstrate openly.

Iranian opposition MKO retains terrorist label

Iran Mania.com,

January 23, 2007



The terrorist group Mujahideen Khalq Organization (MKO) should remain on the list of banned US and European terrorist groups, the British civil entity Iran-Interlink's Spokesman Masoud Khodabandeh said, IRNA reported.

Talking to IRNA, Khodabandeh also said MKO remains a banned terrorist group although a court in has voted for the release of its blocked assets last month.

"The verdict of this court does not change the illegal

status of this terrorist cult," he said, adding that new rules have been ratified in Europe for controlling the assets of terrorist groups.

Khodabandeh, who is a former MKO member, said the US Supreme Court did not exclude MKO from the list of banned terrorist groups after the court issued its verdict.

According to him, a team of British lawyers, sponsored by the British government, are currently engaged in discussing mechanisms for imposing restrictions and sanctions on international terrorist groups such as the MKO, Al-Qaeda and the PKK.

"The British government on Thursday urged representatives of the House of Commons that the MKO assets will remain blocked in ac-

ording to domestic rules," he said.

"The US and European governments are reluctant to cooperate with MKO transparently. However, in some cases, foreign security officials in contact MKO members and seek their cooperation."

Khodabandeh noted that more than 50 senior MKO members are under Interpol prosecution.

The MKO has been labeled as a terrorist group by the US State Department, the British government and the European Union states.

Iran-Interlink is a non-governmental consultancy organization that renders support to members who have abandoned MKO and their family.

New Document on MKO's Involvement in Kurds' Massacre

CNN Arabic, 23 January 2007

On Jan. 23, 2007, CNN Arabic reported from Baghdad on the details of the 35th session of Anfal Court, which clearly points to the fact that Ali Hassan Al-Majid ordered MKO members to pursue and target Kurds inside Iran.

The report is as follows:

"35th session of Anfal Court was held in Iraq and it's the second session without the presence of former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein, hanged on December 30.

In the previous session, prose-

cutor provided the court with audio tapes of talks between Saddam and Hassan Al-Majid, in which the orders were issued on using chemical weapons against the Kurds.

In the 35th session, new documents were presented on the accusations and the roles of former Iraqi president's allies in attacking the Kurds in 1988 were identified.

What follows is part of the details of the session quoted by Iraqi TV:

- Prosecutor provided the court with a new audio tape in which Ali Hassan Al-majid talks about

chemical weapons against the Kurds and promises to impose more restrictions on them, including the ban on speaking Kurdish.

- Another audio tape revealed that Hassan Al-Majid was planning a new scenario, including chemical attacks on the Kurds, gathering them in specified locations and then targeting them with chemical weapons.

- Prosecutor states that in a part of the tape, Al-Majid asks for pursuing the Kurds by special teams and also targeting them inside Iran by Mojahedin-e Khalq. The tape was not played.

Iran, the MKO and Freedom

the defenestrator .
po box 30922 .
philadelphia, pa .
rosa @ defenestrator.org

Submitted by rosa on
Thursday, December 30, 2006
[international](#)

By Colin Cascia

Note: the MKO is referred to by various names such as MEK or PMOI depending on the source.

Well oiled from the current war, U.S.A.'s propaganda machine has geared up for a possible war against Iran. As U.S. warships and the nuclear aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower wait ominously in the Persian Gulf, the media is launching a war of its own, using their patented method of demonizing Arabs as anti-Semites, misogynists and terrorists. Yet behind the scenes, the US government is collaborating with a group they define as terrorists- a group they cited to prove that Saddam Hussein had connections to terrorist organizations. The Mujahedin-e-Khalq Organization (MKO) identifies

themselves as a Marxist-Islamist guerilla army, but has a long and complex history of violence and betrayal that makes it difficult to understand exactly who and what they stand for. Their recent collaboration with the U.S. intelligence and military blurs their identity ever more.

Send in the Terrorists

In an April, 2006 article from the alternative news website, The Raw

Story, Larisa Alexandrova interviewed several former intelligence officials who implicated the U.S. in what appears to be the initial plans for a war with Iran. One of her sources said, "The US army secured a key MEK facility 60 miles northwest of Baghdad shortly after the 2003 invasion, but they did not secure the MEK and let them basically be because [then Deputy Defense Secretary Paul] Wolfowitz was thinking ahead to Iran."

"These guys are nuts," another former intelligence source was quoted as saying. "[Stephen] Cambone [the Undersecretary of Defense Intelligence] and those guys made MEK members swear an oath to Democ-

members signed a statement endorsing the organization's cause."

"Nuclear" Un-intelligence

According to Green Left Online, some of the US intelligence on alleged nuclear weapons development came from Alireza Jafarzadeh, former spokesman for the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), the semi-legitimate political arm of the MKO. Jafarzadeh apparently provided US agents with drawings of planned underground tunnels where nuclear weapons were to be developed and tested.

Which Side are They on?

I have to admit that as a western radical, at first glance the MKO is enticing. They formed in the 1960's as a people's liberation army, with a mix of Marx and Mohammed fighting against the Shah and, later, the oppressive clerical regime that has made a thousand empty promises to the poor of Iran. However, we shouldn't fetishize or idealize the MKO, in the exact same way that

western leftists in the early 70's idealized the Khmer Rouge, right before they revealed themselves as genocidal psychotics in the vast killing fields of Cambodia.

To their credit, the MKO fought bravely and successfully to free Iran from the Shah and his puppet-masters, assassinating US officials and launching a guerilla war that helped turn the tides of the Iranian revolution. At one point in time the MKO were truly fighting for, and



racy and resign from the MEK and then our guys incorporated them into their unit and trained them."

The sources also indicated that among the US supporters of the MKO are former Attorney General John Ashcroft, Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld; the latter two were responsible for the aforementioned plan to "convert" the MKO into democratic freedom fighters.

"In 2000," Wikipedia's article on the MKO reads, "200 US congress

Iran, the MKO and Freedom (cont)

alongside, the people of Iran and had a good chance of gaining popular support for a full-scale revolution. But that time ended as the Ayatollah outlawed and began to persecute the MKO. It was then in the early 80's during the Iran-Iraq war that they sought the assistance of Saddam Hussein, even as he murdered Iranians with bombs and mustard gas. Hussein armed and funded the MKO during and after the war in an attempt to destabilize Iran- the same strategy the US is now attempting. It failed for Saddam. In fact, Khomeini consolidated his power through the opposition of Iraq and the MKO.

In 1989, the MKO moved their base of operations to Iraq, after being exiled from both Iran and France. They fought for Saddam, aiding him in his brutal campaign against both the Shiites and the Kurds. The instances of Hussein's cruelty have been well documented by the mainstream media, so I won't go into detail, but a quote from a former MKO leader will concisely illustrate their involvement: "Take the Kurds under your tanks and save your bullets for the Iranian Revolutionary Guard."

In the spring of 2005, Human Rights Watch interviewed 12 former members of the MKO, five of whom were held in Abu Ghraib after the MKO turned them over to Saddam Hussein's regime. The interviews revealed MKO practices of "... detention and persecution of ordinary members wishing to leave the organization ..." and "... lengthy solitary confinements, severe beatings, and torture of dissident members." The Iraqi Republican Guard sent one of the men to Abu Ghraib and held him in solitary confinement for over eight years.

A Deadly Hypocrisy

So after all of this the US is using the MKO to support their claims of an Iranian nuclear arms program

and as a proxy-army to clear the way for a US occupation. The MKO, in turn, has no qualms about accepting the support of a foreign aggressor whose war will invariably cost many Iranian lives. This two-faced policy is obviously nothing new. Look no further than Saddam Hussein, Nicole Cescareau, Slobodan Milosevic or Alqueda and Bin-Laden himself and you will find a history of foreign policy rich in hypocrisy and the empire's ability to turn their lackeys into monsters when they become inconvenient.

It is hard to wade through the propaganda of all sides and figure out exactly what the MKO are fighting for. Are they terrorists? A people's liberation army? Are they even Marxists anymore? Although they still identify themselves as Marxist-Islamists, according to Wikipedia one of their demands is a free market economy in Iran. And the Raw Story article about CIA-MKO collaboration refers to them as "a right wing terrorist organization."

Regardless of their ideology, the MKO supported Saddam in his attacks against Iranians and now appears like they will help the US military slaughter more of their own people. One can only imagine how the organization, with their unpopularity in Iran, will go after civilians who oppose them, as they have in the past. Unless the MKO dramatically changes its ways, its tarnished name and key members, it is no longer a viable means for Iranian liberation. The students, workers and youth on the other hand ...

Iranian Freedom

People in Iran are fed up with being underfed. The Iranian Press Service reported on a survey taken in October, 2006 by the state-controlled radio and television network: from a sample of 3000 Iranians, 65% are dissatisfied with Ahmadinejad. This is a dramatic turn around from a

similar survey taken in 2005, which shows Ahmadinejad to have an approval of 60%. The number one reason given was his failure to stabilize food prices. Apparently he has not kept his promise of "putting the petroleum income on people's tables,"

In *Iran Awakening*, her intensely personal account of Iranian history, Shirin Ebadi explains to a Western audience that, "... the Iranian revolution has produced its own opposition, not least a nation of educated, conscious women who are agitating for their rights. They must be given the chance to fight their own fights, to transform their country uninterrupted."

Previously, dissidents, whether leftists, artists or intellectuals, fled Iran to escape repression and/or to emigrate to places where their work would be accepted. Ebadi chose to stay in Iran, to help the nation she loves through the painful and sometimes violent birth of liberty. Many students and opponents of the Iranian government are now doing the same.

In his book *The Clash of Fundamentalisms*, Tariq Ali documents Iranian opposition:

"In 2001 there were 52 street demonstrations against the clerics, one for each week of the year, 370 strikes, one for each day of the year and open skirmishes between the youth and the hated religious police, a bunch of corrupt sadists. For the last two years the Nauroz festival, the pagan new year, which pre-dates Islam, was openly celebrated by young men and unveiled young women who taunted the religious police to do its worst. This is only the beginning, but what it shows is that people learn through their own experiences. These are much better teachers than American bombs."

The Iranian people, not the U.S., not the MKO, not the clerics must determine the destiny of their nation.

Anti-Iran militants return home

Anti-Iran militants return home Collapsed in her son's arms

More than 250 young Iranians, from a group committed to toppling Iran's leaders, are back in Tehran.

By Scott Peterson | Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

Date: 2007-01-25

TEHRAN, IRAN – Clutching flowers, chewing fingernails, and nervously holding their faces in their hands, 31 Iranian families awaited a reunion they thought would never come. They were reuniting with sons who had joined anti-Iran militants, officially tagged "terrorists" by both the US and Iran.

The journey of one of those sons, Hamid Khalkali, is typical: He went to Turkey five years ago for work, but ended up at a military training camp in Saddam Hussein's Iraq. He was recruited by the Mujahideen-e Khalq, the "People's Holy Warriors," or MKO, Iran's largest opposition group, which aims to overthrow the government. It was supported for two decades by Mr. Hussein.

But now Mr. Khalkali is being officially welcomed home. He's one of more than 250 former combatants who have returned home since December - among the first to test Iran's offer of amnesty. Even as hawks in Washington debate tapping the group to help engineer regime change in Iran, a growing disillusionment within the MKO, coupled with a new Shiite-dominated government in Iraq that has little sympathy for it, has thinned the ranks of this once-feared militant group.



Hamid's mother, Mahin Amouie, thought her son was dead. But her grief turned to cautious joy last week when the telephone rang. Giving little information, the caller said: "We want to give you good news - come and get your son."

Until Ms. Amouie arrived at a small amphitheater in Tehran, bearing flowers and talking to other disbelieving families, she says she had no idea that Hamid had joined the MKO. Climbing onto the stage when her name was called, her emotional dam burst when Hamid strode into view. Tears streaming, Amouie collapsed into her son's arms, a scene repeated again and again.

"Oh Lord, I sacrifice myself for you!" Amouie sobbed to Hamid, crushing the armful of flowers as she wrapped herself tight around his neck. "Where have you been? Where have you been?"

While some hawks in Washington wanting to enlist their services, the MKO is designated a "terrorist" group by the US State Department, with some 3,500 members still in Iraq. Hussein used the group as footsoldiers in his war against Iran in the 1980s and later to help put

down antiregime uprisings in Iraq. Quoting US government sources, Newsweek last month reported that the Bush administration is "seeking to cull useful [MKO] members as operatives for use against Tehran," to be trained as spies and sent back to Iran to gather intelligence. Currently, remaining members are under what the US calls "protective custody" at Camp Ashraf, north of Baghdad.

Some 232 crossed from Iraq in two groups earlier this month, under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross. "For us, it's a humanitarian file. We do it for the families," says Loukas Petridis, a Red Cross spokesman in Tehran. "The message the Iranian authorities want to pass to Camp Ashraf is that more than 250 people have come back, and are free - and so far, that is how it has been." The Red Cross first received guarantees of safe treatment from Iran before agreeing to help.

With Marxist roots, Mao-style political indoctrination, and self-criticism sessions that prompt former members to brand the MKO a cult, the group's history includes killing several Americans in the 1970s, supporting the 1979 Islamic Revolution, and seizing of the US Embassy. Losing out in the post-revolution power struggle, the MKO turned against the regime and launched a string of bomb attacks that killed hundreds in the early 1980s. Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, survived an MKO attack in 1981 that paralyzed one arm.

For years the MKO leadership has warned members that they faced certain death or imprisonment if they returned to Iran. In its 2005

Anti-Iran militants return home (cont)

annual report, New York-based Human Rights Watch said that, despite specific new directives in Iran to stop such practices in 2004, "torture and ill-treatment ... are used routinely to punish [internal] dissidents."

Reporting from inside Camp Ashraf last weekend, The Los Angeles Times said the MKO dismisses the defectors as "quitters," and that those remaining "show no interest" in going back.

Most of those now repatriating to Iran have been with the MKO just a few years, and say they were "deceived" with promises of cash and a job when recruited in Turkey.

"It is 100 percent stress, but after four years I want to see my family," says Binyamin Espandani, a young former militant as he waits to join his family. "I went there for an ob-

jective - I wanted my country to stay independent.... But after the US came, the mujahideen were asking Americans for help to topple the government of my country."

Warnings for the families

A semiofficial agency that helps former militants reintegrate addressed the waiting families. "Maybe you expect your sons to [be unchanged from] five years ago, but it won't be the same - some were told [by the MKO] to cut themselves off from you," said Shahin Rabiee, of Anjoman Nejat, or "Rescue Association."

But there were warnings, too, for families that signed a form stating that they received their son "safe and sound," and were now "responsible for him."

"They are not completely innocent.

They could have escaped [from Iraq] easily during the American attack; they had weapons in their hands," psychologist Dr. Sami Ani told them. "So we have to accept that your children were doing something against the security of the country. But they are forgiven.... They ... were brainwashed."

The happiness of homecoming set aside all other concerns. Former militant Hamid Sahapour held his mother's hand and stroked her face while his brother Davoud tearfully leaned on him from the right. "I can't express my joy - there are no words," says Mr. Sahapour. "Before the Americans came, if I said I wanted to leave, they would have sent 20 people to beat me."

This time Hamid's mother, Delaram Vatanha, vows never to let him out of her grasp: "I will not let him go again."

BBC world interview with Anne Singleton

and Gordon Corera about Mojahedin Khalq

BBC world service,



Outlook

26 January 2007

Anne Singleton

Back in the early 1980s, Anne Singleton was a rebel with a romantic streak, entranced by the selflessness, as she saw it, of a group of Iranians who were trying to bring democracy and a secular government to their

country. The People's Mujahideen, as they were known, had helped to overthrow the Shah but had been rejected by Ayatollah Khomeini and his followers and were allowed to seek refuge in Iraq by Saddam Hussein. Anne met some of their members through a boyfriend in the north of England where she lived, and eventually joined

them. Only later did she realise their true nature and she spent the next three years trying to escape their clutches. She is now trying to help other members who want to escape. Outlook hears Anne's story and Heather Payton also speaks to the BBC's Security Correspondent, Gordon Corera.

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Address

E.mail: nejat@nejatngo.com

P.O.Box 14395/679, Tehran

Fax: 88 96 10 31

We are on the Web!
www.nejatngo.com


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The BBC television program on the Communist MEK

Paul Sheldon Foote
2007-1-19



The BBC's January 17, 2007 television program on the Iranian Communist MEK (MKO, PMOI, NCRI, Rajavi Cult, Pol Pot of Iran) included an interview with Lawrence Wilkerson, a top aide to former Secretary of State Colin Powell. Wilkerson revealed that the State Department supported a plan to disband the Iranian communist cult at Camp Ashraf, Iraq. However, Vice President Dick Cheney's office rejected the plan. The television program included also an interview with Congressman Bob Filner (Democrat - California and son of a Communist Party candidate for Congress) who supports this communist cult. Hopefully, the American media will follow the lead of the BBC and examine in depth why a Republican Vice President supports a communist cult. Unfortunately, this is not the first time in American history that American politi-

cal leaders have supported communist monsters. For example, there were members of the American government who supported Pol Pot in Cambodia. America has some responsibility for the killing fields of Cambodia. Some Iranians refer to Masoud Rajavi as the Pol Pot of Iran.

Americans need to continue to vote out of office the neo-conservatives (neo-Trotskyites) in the Democratic and Republican parties who support communist cults.

The following is the Comment of Paul Sheldon Foote on the group

The Iranian Communist MEK (MKO, PMOI, NCRI, Rajavi Cult, Pol Pot of Iran) has a long history of terrorism. In the 1970's in Iran, the MEK murdered American military officers and Rockwell International employees. During the American hostage crisis, to show that the MEK is more anti-Western than the Islamic leaders, the MEK clamored for the murder of the American hostages at the American Embassy in Tehran.

In 1991, these Saddam Hussein-supported terrorists committed major

war atrocities against Kurdish and other Iraqi civilians. Around the world, the MEK has committed terrorist acts, even in New York City.

While this BBC segment contained an interview with Congressman Bob Filner (Democrat - California and son of a Communist Party candidate for Congress), viewers need to know that hundreds of members of Congress (including Republicans) have supported the MEK or have accepted political campaign contributions from MEK supporters. While this segment was a good, brief introduction to the MEK, BBC needs to go into more depth in future segments about the real reasons why many neo-conservatives (neo-Trotskyites), the Iran Policy Committee (staffed by a former CIA employee and former American military officers), and so many members of Congress have betrayed America by supporting this evil communist cult. Viewers can learn more about the MEK by reading Anne Singleton's book, Saddam's Private Army, available from Iran Interlink.