

ParsBrief

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Iran Opposition Group Wants Militia off UK Terror List

March 22, 2005

Dow Jones International News

LONDON (AP)--An Iranian opposition group on Tuesday called on the U.K. government to remove the People's Mujahedeen militia from a list of terrorist organizations. The U.K.'s Foreign Office on Tuesday denied that the status of the Mujahedeen was a negotiating chip between the E.U.-3 and Tehran. A spokesman said that given the group's violent campaign against the government in Tehran, there was nothing to suggest the terrorist label should be lifted.

Teen terror booted

Fri, March 18, 2005

SENT PACKING TO IRAN

By TOM GODFREY, TORONTO SUN

A TORONTO teenage terror suspect has lost a three-year battle to stay in Canada and faces a one-way trip to his native Iran. Piran Ahmadi Poshteh, now 21, is being deported because immigration authorities allege that as a minor he belonged to the terror group Mujahedin-e-Khalq (MEK), whose members are fighting to overthrow the Iranian government.

Anti-MKO Gathering in Paris

Mohammed Reza Shahid, Voice of America
(March 30, 2005)

Interview of Ms. Robabeh Shahrokhi and Mr. Mohammed Hussein Sobhani and Mr. Karim Haghi with VOA

A group of MKO defectors and their families gathered in Paris on Tuesday (March 29, 2005) to protest this organization. Here's some parts from report of VOA's correspondent on this issue:

Nearly 150 MKO defectors and their families gathered today morning before the French Parliament. These people who had come from different European cities held a similar gathering this afternoon in Human Right Square in Paris.

One of the participants was Mr. Mohammed Hussein Sobhani. I asked him about the reason of this gathering.

"We and our friends, who have separated from Mojahedin-e Khalq organization, have gathered here to express our protest against Mojahedin and its terrorist activities. In addition, we want to ask French government to step up the process of a court held to investigate the activities of the leaders of this organization, especially Maryam Rajavi.

The complaint of us, and of many other defectors most of whom have been in MKO and Abu Ghraib prisons, is that their rights had been violated there, they had been solitary prison cells, they had been separated from their families, they divorced their spouses and their children are now orphans. Now, my wife Mrs. Afsaneh Taherian is in Iraq. We have filed action to pursue this issue...

Interview with Ms. Robabeh Shahrokhi (Mother Rezvan)

"I am Robabeh Shahrokhi. I have come from Sweden. I have lost 3 of my children in Rajavi's way. Of course, one was killed by Mojahedin itself in Iraq. I myself was in Iraq for 6 years and my nickname was Rezvan."

Where do you live now?

"In Sweden. I came here 3 days ago."

Why are you here?

"I have come to protest to Rajavi and try to free lost members and families' children"

Who should free them?

"They are captives of Rajavi."

Now that representatives of the UN are there, is Mr. Rajavi still able to keep them?

"Yes, they are captive there, and they can do nothing."

Are they (MKO) armed there in Baghdad?

"No, Americans have disarmed them."

So, how can they keep your children?

"I don't know. Ashraf itself is a prison. I have been there and I know that they watched the camp from inside and Iraqis watched it from outside. Now, Americans do that."

Interview of Mr. Karim Haghi :

“We gave our evidences to the representatives of French Parliament. We had several meetings with them and discussed the issue of families. Apart from the personal will of the members (and whether they want to stay or leave), the issue of families and their relations with their loved ones should be solved.

We also discussed the issue of our case against the organization, which is running in French court. For violating our rights and having been tortured we have taken action. We asked the parliament to step up the process of the court.”

Amnesty International and MEK

Radio Farda, 30th March 2005

The issue of MKO former members trip to the camps of MKO in Iraq in order to visit their families was discussed with the representative of Amnesty International in Iranian Affairs. Mr. Derori Dike in London Says: Amnesty International has discussed the issue with Mojahedin-e Khalq. They say that the visit has taken place but the issue is under investigation.

Amnesty International discussed with Mojahedin the claims of some former members that they were not allowed to meet their loved ones in Ashraf Camp. MKO has guaranteed Amnesty that they (former members) had been able to meet their families. But the investigations are still under way.

Amnesty believes that MKO should let the members meet their families alone and without the presence of Muajhideen so that families are assured that no tapping devices are installed in the place of meeting.

Amnesty has also some concerns and is investigating them “that Mojahedin have abused their own members and if it’s proved it would be discussed with Mojahedin at a right time.”

So far, Amnesty has not informed Americans of its concerns since it believes that there was no necessity for it.

Iran-Iraq Cooperate on Mojahedin

Al-Sharq al-Awsat

Pascal Verde, Iraqi Immigration Minister, referred to the plans of this ministry in a press conference in Baghdad and said: “We are preparing some decisions about foreign refugees in

Iraq. We cooperate with the countries which have nationals in Iraq and ask them to issue public pardon for them so that they're assured that their lives are not endangered.”

“We are also cooperating with Iran about Moajhedin-e Khalq and returning them to their country.”

The US Dissolves Mojahedin

Fars News

In an exclusive interview with Fars News about the will of the US to attack Iran, William O. Beeman, professor at the University of Stanford, said:

“On February 22, Bush said reports on the US planning to attack Iran are stupid jokes. In fact, even the best experts are doubtful about this. My best guess is that if the US has a plan to attack Iran, it won't do it alone. It will probably use Israeli air force or an opposition force like Mojahedin-e Khalq.”

About the presence of MKO members in the US, he said: “there are legal problems with the members of MEK, which has been designated as terrorist organization. What the US government is trying to do is to separate MKO members from the original group and that's why it's called “former MKO”, then they can be supported financially and logistically. No one knows how much the group can be influential but they can be employed as spies and guerillas inside Iran.”

Bolton's Terrorist Tango

Bush pick for U.N. ambassador makes smooth with Iran's MEK

James Ridgeway/The Village Voice

April 10, 2005

WASHINGTON, D.C. John Bolton, President Bush's nominee for U.N. ambassador, will face tough questioning that could derail his nomination when he soon comes before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in confirmation hearings. The latest revelations about Bolton are

that he has freely admitted to willingness to use information against Iran from a group the State Department labels a terrorist organization.

Up to now Bolton, the former undersecretary of state for arms control, has been portrayed as the wild man of the neo-conservative contingent, disdainful of the U.N. in particular and international diplomacy in general. Questions have been raised about his role in providing then secretary of state Colin Powell phony information on weapons of mass destruction for his famous U.N. speech.

More lately, Bolton has been fanning the flames against Iran. Until just recently, the only Bush people favoring a moderate approach to that nation's nuclear ambitions were second-tier members of the State Department. Tony Blair recently persuaded Bush to take the European line and work toward negotiations.

Now Michael Roston of a armscontrolwonk.com points out that on June 24, during testimony before a House International Relations subcommittee, Bolton talked about an organization called Mujahedin-e-Khalq (MEK), which operates openly in the U.S., but which, he agreed, has "qualified as a terrorist organization" in the eyes of the State Department. Officials there have listed the group as such for some time.

Bolton said he didn't have "any inhibition about getting information about what's going on in Iran" from MEK, which has steadfastly objected to being characterized as a terrorist outfit.

Last spring, the State Department stated its case again MEK, saying its members "assisted the Government of Iraq in suppressing the Shia and Kurdish uprisings in southern Iraq and the Kurdish uprisings in the north. In April 1992, the MEK conducted near-simultaneous attacks on Iranian Embassies and installations in 13 countries, demonstrating the group's ability to mount large-scale operations overseas. In April 1999, the MEK targeted key military officers and assassinated the deputy chief of the Armed Forces General Staff. In April 2000, the MEK attempted to assassinate the commander of the Nasr Headquarters—Tehran's interagency board responsible for coordinating policies on Iraq. The normal pace of anti-Iranian operations increased during the "Operation Great Bahman" in February 2000, when the group launched a dozen attacks against Iran.

"In 2000 and 2001," the State Department continued, "the MEK was involved regularly in mortar attacks and hit-and-run raids on Iranian military and law-enforcement units and government buildings near the Iran-Iraq border, although MEK terrorism in Iran declined throughout the remainder of 2001. In February 2000, for example, the MEK launched a mortar attack against the leadership complex in Tehran that houses the offices of the Supreme Leader and the President."

Bolton's position on MEK raises the question of whether the Bush administration is backing covert action against Iran by the group. And if we go to war with Iran, would MEK be to that conflict what Ahmad Chalabi was to our invasion of Iraq?

Bolton's rocky trip to confirmation comes as other Bush stalwarts on Capitol Hill are beginning to run into flak.