

ParsBrief

Number: 18

5. Oct .2005

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List of the returnees to Iran

Nejat Society Reporter: following the return news of 13 defectors of Rajavi's cult who were settled in American camps, it is declared that these members with cooperation of Red Cross on a private flight of that organization via Mehr Abad Airport repatriated and joined their families.

It is notable that six of these former members were captured by Saddam dictatorship since they were deceived by MKO cult. Seven other defectors moved to neighboring countries looking for job and were absorbed by MKO deception.

Ghorban Ali Pourahmadie - Lahijan
Ahmad Saraiee - Golestan
Naser Hussein Pour - Sistan va Balouchestan
Hadi Alibabayie - Tehran
Mohammad Ebrahim Najaf zade - Kashan
Dariuosh Aminy - Kermanshah
Javad Savaedie - Khouzestan
Mohammad Reza Mobinie – Tabriz
Younes Yanpey – Golestan
Esfandiar Batmanie – Kermanshah
Massoud Vahabpour – Gilan
Vali Allah Vahedie – Golestan
Nader Chapchin - Tabriz

Report to Senate Foreign Relations Committee

THE QUEST FOR IRAN'S DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT.

Testimony for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

By Abbas William Samii, Ph.D.

...One side of the opposition spectrum is represented by the Mujahedin Khalq Organization (MKO or MEK) which the U.S. State Department designated a "foreign terrorist organization" in 1997. Still identified as a terrorist organization, the MKO also is known as the National Liberation Army of Iran (the militant wing of the MKO), the People's Mujahedin of Iran, National Council of Resistance, the National Council of Resistance of Iran, and Muslim Iranian Student's Society (a front organization used to garner financial support). The EU designated the MKO's military wing as a terrorist organization in May 2002.

The MKO was created in the 1960s and its ideology combines Islam and Marxism. It was involved with anti-U.S. terrorism in the 1970s, and it initially supported the 1978-79 revolution. In June 1981, it staged an unsuccessful uprising against the Islamic regime; many members were imprisoned while others fled the country. The MKO transitioned from being a "mass movement" in 1981 to having "all the main attributes of a cult" by mid-1987, Professor Ervand Abrahamian writes in his 1989 book, *Radical Islam: The Iranian Mojahedin*. The MKO refers to its head, Masud Rajavi, in religious terms, calling him the rahbar (leader) and imam-i hal (present imam).

From its Iraqi exile the MKO attacked the Iranian regime's leadership: a 1981 bombing killed President Mohammad-Ali Rajai and Prime Minister Mohammad-Javad Bahonar, in 1992 it attacked 13 Iranian embassies, and it is behind other mortar attacks and assassination attempts in Iran. Former President Saddam Hussein granted the MKO refuge in Iraq, and it helped Saddam Hussein suppress the 1991 uprisings of Shia in southern Iraq and Kurds in the north, so it is not very popular in Iraq. The MKO fought Iranian forces in the Iran-Iraq War, and this has discredited the organization among the Iranian public.

In May 2003, after Operation Iraqi Freedom, the MKO agreed to turn over its weapons to U.S. forces, and over time most of them have been restricted to one location, Camp Ashraf. In July 2004, MKO members in Iraq were granted "protected status" under the Geneva Conventions. The Iranian government has repeatedly offered an amnesty to rank-and-file members if they return to Iran, but the amnesty does not extend to the organization's leadership. A reluctance to return is understandable: many MKO members who were imprisoned in the early 1980s were tortured into recanting, and for a few months in 1988-1989 thousands of MKO and leftist

prisoners were executed. Iranian state media sporadically reports on groups of former MKO members who have returned, but it is not clear how they are treated.

Some U.S. commentators have recommended removing the MKO from the terrorist list and using it as an armed resistance movement against Iran. There also are suggestions that MKO personnel should be cultivated as intelligence assets that might re-energize the reform movement in Iran. It is unlikely that MKO members would be trusted, since some reformists fought MKO personnel in the war, others created the security institutions that hunted them down, and most are part of the current political system. Furthermore, information provided by the MKO, which does not have the same objectives as the U.S., is likely to be self-serving and unreliable. Using MKO personnel as a partisan force is appealing, but association with them will discredit the U.S. in Iranians' eyes.

...In conclusion, there are steps the U.S. can take to hasten Iran's becoming a democracy. The belief that there is a pre-existing democratic movement or even an effective opposition group, however, is inaccurate. And although most Iranians undoubtedly favor independence and self-determination, assisting individuals rather than organizations without proper planning will be neither efficient nor effective.

Terrorist Mercenaries

Linaelin

August 03 2005

Remember those terrorists Iraq was accused of harboring and training before the war? They're on Washington's side now.

One of the terrorist organizations that the U.S. accused Iraq of supporting during the run-up to the war, the Mujahedin Khalq (MEK) or the "People's Combatants", has been lobbying House Republicans and Democrats.

More than 300 U.S. legislators from both parties have at one time or other signed petitions in support of the MEK since the invasion of Iraq in March 2003, and MEK spokesmen say they have offered the sect's services to the United States. According to a Guardian story, "Now US ponders attack on Iran" (1/18/2005) "the Pentagon was recently contemplating the infiltration of members of the Iranian rebel group, Mujahedin-e-Khalq (MEK) over the Iraq-Iran border, to collect intelligence. The group, based at Camp Ashraf, near Baghdad, was under the protection of Saddam Hussein, and is under US guard while Washington decides on its strategy. The MEK has been declared a terrorist group by the state department, but a former Farsi-speaking CIA officer said he had been asked by neo-conservatives in the Pentagon to travel to Iraq to oversee 'MEK cross-border operations'."

The MEK started in Iran as an Islamic-Marxist group, and was expelled in 1979 by the Iranian Islamic Fundamentalist Party that took power. They fled to France where the French foreign minister, Claude Cheysson, convinced the MEK leader Massoud Rajavi to work with the Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz and the Iraqi government during the Iraq-Iran War during the 1980s.

Special U.S. Middle East Envoy, Donald Rumsfeld, frequently met with Tariq Aziz in the '80s and sent biological and chemical weapons to Iraq to be used against the Iranians. Later, again with the knowledge and acceptance of the Bush government, these weapons were used by the Iraqi military against the Iranian Army with logistical support from the CIA.

The MEK helped the revolutionary Khomeini regime to take power in 1979. Part of their assistance consisted in burning down restaurants and cinemas. The MEK initiated the idea of taking over the U.S. embassy and holding Americans hostage. Yet within a year, MEK leaders decided that the Khomeini regime wasn't behaving in a "revolutionary" fashion and soon they were plotting to overthrow Khomeini and the Islamic Fundamentalist leaders of Iran.

In 1987, Jacques Chirac, then Prime Minister of France, allowed the MEK to operate outside Paris by signing an agreement with them that they would not kill any Iranians on French soil.

France intentionally dismantled the group in 2002 several months before the U.S. invasion of Iraq in March of 2003."

These sleazy terrorists held a fundraiser for victims of Iran's devastating December 26 earthquake in January 2004!! Members of congress were invited and many attended. They support a group that kills women and children but nothing beats a charity photo op event. Doe, were you there by chance?

Interview

Elahe Iranian Singer and Anne Singleton

"By Anne Singleton, September 2005"

Elahe is one of the most important singers in Iran's history. She has sung and made famous many of Iran's traditional (asil), pop, jazz, and standard hits. Her voice was so liked by Davood Pirnia, the original creator and director of Radio Iran's "Golha" program, that he employed Elahe to manage it for a while. Her voice is on more "Golha" shows than any other singer.

- Would you please briefly describe your singing career for us.

I trained for two years in the classical Iranian singing style. At that time, Davood Pirnia, introduced this style to radio listeners with the popular Golha programme. The orchestra and the singers of this program established this form of classical music in Iran. I was the leading singer for fifteen years that the programme was broadcast. Of course, after the revolution it was no longer possible for women's singing voices to be heard and we were silenced.

- With this background please tell us how you became involved with the Mojahedin organisation.

For a long time I was unable to sing for the people in Iran. One of the ways I could have continued with my singing career was to join with the exiles on the American west coast. But there was so much infighting between them and petty behaviour that I didn't want to join with any of the factions.

Then, in 1994, I was approached by some people who said they were from an Iranian intellectual group in Europe which wanted to stage a concert as a gesture of defiance toward the Iranian regime and to show solidarity with the people inside the country in their struggles for freedom and democracy. They told me they were supporters of the Mojahedin. Of course I had heard of the Mojahedin but I knew little about them. The way these young people described them was as freedom fighters.

They invited me to sing in the concert. I have always felt that my voice, because it was made famous by the listeners of the Golha programme, my voice belongs to the people of Iran and that I should return it to them somehow. So, the Mojahedin became the way to do this. Of course, I wasn't alone and there were several other popular singers who also agreed to sing in the concert.

- Can you describe how they approached people and how they behaved toward you in persuading you to take part in their concert.

I told them that although I was sympathetic to the Mojahedin's stance against the regime, I would not be involved in anything political, so there should only be Iranian flags at the concert, and I would sing some classical songs and nothing else. Now, in all my singing career, I have never had a written contract. My word was always enough. But they insisted on having a contract. I believed they were just amateurs and so I agreed. The contract was for six evening concerts with a forfeit of several thousand dollars if I didn't show up. Since this had never been a problem for me in the past, I agreed. Then they went away and I didn't hear from them again. A month before the concert I still had no news, so I tried to contact them without success. Then a week before the concert it was announced everywhere as a Mojahedin concert in support of Maryam Rajavi!

After the concert, Iranian radio stations started swearing at me because I had sung for the Mojahedin. The Mojahedin themselves paid me only half the money we had agreed and then no more. Radio USA said that I should go on air and apologize to Iranians everywhere. All that happened was that all the rest of the opposition groups, instead of helping me, only pushed me further toward the Mojahedin with the pressure of their criticisms and these uncompromising attacks on me. I didn't have a sympathetic refuge anywhere.

Then the Mojahedin themselves started a campaign of showing great affection and kindness toward me. They pretended to really care for me and that they were concerned about me. In this phase, they couldn't do enough for me. I know now that this is the usual method used by cults to recruit people. At that time, even though I knew it was all lies, there was something seductive and intriguing about their behaviour so I ended up curious to find out more about them.

- Could you describe your perception of how the Mojahedin operates as a cult.

I was invited to join them as a singer, and I had thought they were freedom fighters, but it soon became apparent that they are a cult – an extremely narrow and strict cult.

After the people burned themselves when Maryam was arrested I told them not to contact me anymore.

They are like Hassan Sabbah. No, worse. Sabbah protected his men from their sexual urges by castrating them, but he never asked them to burn themselves for him. Rajavi has no mercy. He places himself above everyone. The Rajavis have their own luxury lifestyle with the best homes, clothes and food while everyone else has to suffer degradation.

No friendships exist inside the Mojahedin, they are extremely harsh with even their supporters. The commanders order them about this way and that on nonsensical work. They have two faces, one is the good public face they show to the outside world, the other is all swearing and harshness and anger.

Most of all I hated what they did in Iraq with Saddam. I hate what Iraq did to my country in that war. I discovered in that relationship that Rajavi has no limits – he really doesn't care who he allies himself with, friend or foe. I asked Maryam once about their work with Saddam. She told me: 'if Saddam hadn't lost the war and had captured Iran. When we had taken over in Iran we would have rewarded Saddam and given him Khuzestan'!

One thing that was very interesting to observe from close up is that both of the Rajavis are obsessed with power. I remember one of the NCRI members was talking to Massoud Rajavi about what the Mojahedin would do once they arrived back in Tehran. Rajavi, with a glint in his eye, told him: 'When we go to Iran it will take a few days before we reach Tehran. On the

way we will kill one million Bassij forces and one million Pasdaran and..., then we'll just see what happens.'

There are some interesting dynamics between the leaders. It is obvious that Maryam wants power and is prepared to push Massoud aside to achieve this. Also, her ex-husband Mehdi Abrishamchi wants her to replace Massoud. Why not? When Maryam came to Europe in 1993 her husband had an affair with her second in command, Fahimeh Arvani back in Iraq. Everyone knew about that, poor woman.

If the USA supports them now and pushes them into Iran, they will be worse in Iran than Saddam was for the US in Iraq. They performed intelligence work against their own country in a time of war. I met an Iranian nurse recently and she wept as she told me about the war. She said the Azmayesh factory constructed metal sheets to use in the war to shelter from attack. 30,000 Iranian soldiers were there. But the Mojahedin gave the intelligence to the Iraqis, who then bombarded them. Between 70-80,000 men lost their lives because of the Mojahedin. That's why I know they are more ruthless than anyone can believe.

- Did you know the Mojahedin before you met them.

I had heard of them, everyone had. But I didn't know them as I do now. I thought they were freedom fighters. We hadn't heard about the crimes they committed with Saddam. And especially we hadn't heard anything about how they behave inside the organization.

Nowadays I have seen more than enough with my own eyes, and if I say nothing else, it is to warn others not to go near them. They are criminals and traitors. When I call them criminals I'm not exaggerating. I was once visiting them in Paris. Of course, they go all out to be hospitable and look after us. But there was a young woman there who was working alongside us that I remember well and with good reason!

One evening I was really tired but felt too anxious to sleep, so when I went to my room I took a sleeping pill and settled down to rest. After a while I heard a noise in the room and, half-awake I lifted my head to look. I saw the young woman standing with her hand in my handbag. I was so drowsy I didn't know if I was dreaming or not and drifted back to sleep.

When I woke in the morning I discovered she had stolen my passport, my Green Card and around one thousand US dollars from my bag. Yet there she was in front of me. When I confronted her about it, one of the women commanders stepped in and sent her away. But they never returned my things.

Another time I was persuaded to visit them in their camp in Iraq. It happened that back home my shoes had been giving me some discomfort, so I had put a piece of paper in one of them to ease the pain. While I was having dinner in the garrison, I slipped my shoes off to be more comfortable and the paper must have been visible. Without warning the woman sitting next to me grabbed my shoe, took the paper out and ran away. For a moment I was amazed and

perplexed. What ...? Then I realised what had gone on. They suspected that someone in the camp had passed me a secret message to take out of the camp. In that moment I knew everything I ever needed to know about them. I knew that people inside were desperate to leave. I knew that they would do anything in their power to prevent that happening, and I knew that all the stories I had heard about their prisons and torture of their own people were all true. It was truly disturbing.

I have seen more than I needed to. I have seen that they do many illegal things. But you know, the thing they do worse than all this, which isn't even illegal is to play with people's minds and hearts.

I joined with them because of the people of Iran and all the time I tried hard to change them and to inform them about the realities both of the world and about themselves. It was as though they could not see anything but their own lies. I even tried to get Maryam Rajavi to change those hideous clothes she wears. When I first met her she was wearing a military uniform. It was completely inappropriate for what she wanted to do. Then, after I suggested she dress more attractively, she spend thousands of dollars on outrageous pink or yellow clothes, handmade from upholstery fabric! She doesn't have a clue and no one around her dares to criticise or even suggest she does things differently. It was only me who got her out of that uniform.

All the time I was with them singing in their concerts, they told me, don't talk about Iran only talk about Maryam. But I had no interest in her. I didn't work with the Mojahedin, I was an opposition voice, a thorn in their flesh. I sang because I wanted to return my voice to Iranians.

- How did the Mojahedin behave toward you when you wanted to dissociate yourself from them?

It is true that once anyone gets into the claws of the Mojahedin they get trapped there, like in a cat's paw, and every time they try to escape the paw comes down on them again, sometimes with claws extended, sometimes with softness. But nevertheless it's a real trial to get away. One of the ways they used to trap people like me was through debt. They never paid us fully for our work even though we had agreements. They were always promising to pay next week, next month, next time.

One of the veteran NCRI members spoke to me in confidence some time ago, he said, 'Elahe, why don't you get out of here. People like me can't leave because we are totally dependent on the Rajavis for all our needs. We don't have a penny, but at least you have a home and independence, and family. Leave now while you have the chance.' I was really saddened by this.

I visited Maryam in Paris one day and I told her: 'Look, the cage you have put me in is not even golden, it's wooden. I can't see the people and they can't see me'. All she could do was

just stare at me. I asked them to pay me the money they owed me for all the concerts I had performed for them which I had not yet received.

Whenever I asked for the money which they owed me, which I have to say was a considerable amount, they kept telling me they can't pay. A short time after the start of the war in Iraq I saw Mohammad Mohaddessin and he told me: 'Look our people in Iraq are stuck and we have no money'. Then four days later, the French police raided Maryam Rajavi's home in Paris and along with all her garments and computers, they found eight million dollars in cash. Imagine. The next time I saw Mohaddessin he blushed with embarrassment. But I still didn't get my money.

Last year, I decided that I had had enough. I wrote a formal letter of resignation and faxed it directly to Maryam. But for a year they haven't announced my decision and it appears they don't want to accept it. They kept phoning me, saying OK, come and get your money. Once they said I should go to see Maryam in Paris to get my money. When I got there, they had laid on an extravagant dinner party apparently in my honour. They invited many of their French neighbours in Auvers-sur-Oise and even Danielle Mitterand came to dinner. All the time, Maryam kept trying to sit next to me so she could get some photographs or film me with her. But I knew what she was doing so I evaded her. Again, I left without my money.

In fact I was afraid too. I know that even now they use intelligence surveillance against people that they suspect are against them. They use phones in that way. They ring someone up and pretend to be someone else so they can get information from that person and record what they have to say. They don't just do it with Iranians, they do it with westerners too, with human rights workers and government places. It's not just Iranians. I also discovered that they have plans for 'accidents' for people. Right now I am worried. They are capable of anything. They have a widespread network in European countries and they could easily and quite discreetly harm me or my children. I am still afraid of what they could do to me or to my children.

- Do you think being linked with the Mojahedin has changed how people view you?

I believe that history will be the judge. We have all made mistakes in our lives, we all have our ups and downs, especially now because Iran's recent history has been of change and upheaval for many people and we have all had to do our best to cope with this. What I am certain of is that my legacy is my voice and that for years to come people will enjoy my voice and my songs. These belong to Iran and to the world of music. The Mojahedin will also take their place in history regardless of my involvement. I believe history will judge them to be the despicable liars and traitors that I and others know them to be.

- Finally, how would you describe the MKO's appreciation of art?

Art for the Mojahedin is like anything else. If they can exploit it they will do so. It has no other meaning. They use anything and everything for their own aims whether that is people or art. Just as they use and destroy people, they use and destroy art. And, I should add, the artists too.