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A group of 15 Liberty residents fly to Albania

Nejat Society, June 9, 2015

The first group of the new series of Camp Liberty residents to be relocated in Tirana. The United Nations office in Baghdad is pursuing the transfer of the new series of Liberty residents whom the Albanian government has accepted. Today, the first group is to be transferred to Tirana, Iran Interlink reported. The group consists of 15 Liberty residents. The Cult leaders have assigned Ms. Habibeh Thavali as their commandant who is supposed to monitor them in order not to defect the Cult. The government of Albania that had received 210 MKO members in 2013, accepted to receive another 210 individuals under the request of the US government. In November 2014, 115 Camp Liberty residents relocated to Tirana.

Mojahedin Khalq supports Daesh, plans terrorist training camp in Albania

Iran Interlink, reporting from AlSabah AlJadid, Baghdad, June 24, 2015

The following is a summary of two articles published by Iraqi newspaper AlSabah AlJadid which reveal the Mojahedin Khalq's support for Daesh with which it finds common cause in attacking Iran. And the MEK's plans to replace its former terrorist training camps in Iraq with a new camp in Albania. This base would be open to any terrorist group for military training and planning and preparation for terrorist operations in Iran and abroad according to what is required.

MEK takes 500 members to Albania to build a new terrorist training camp like Camp Ashraf. The MEK is trying to get support in the West for its fundamental aim of opposing Iran. The MEK wants to be used in the forefront of anti-Iran activity. As usual, the organisation – which still has around two thousand members inside Iraq in Camp Liberty near Baghdad airport –

has announced its political platform during the annual ceremony which took place a week ago in the French capital Paris.

The MEK's endeavours are not straightforward or easy because the main protagonists in this scenario, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States of America, are busy with complex negotiations in connection with Iran's nuclear power programme and signals indicate the two sides are near to agreement of a final formula.

In this respect, the MEK is racing against time to rally American parties to oppose the agreement, particularly a bipartisan group led by Newt Gingrich.

In a letter to President Obama and candidates for the presidency, Gingrich along with 38 political and military personalities including French politician Bernard Kouchner, explained their vision of an American strategy in dealing with various issues in the Middle East. The letter stressed that the way to combat these problems in their opinion, is to recognise that insecurity and instability in the region is caused by Iran.

This indicates that some in the West are being encouraged to revive the MEK and place it at the front of political developments, perhaps in anticipation that the US-Iran part of the negotiations fail.

It is noteworthy that the Democratic candidate for the US presidency, Hillary Clinton, has succeeded in persuading Albania to accept a few hundred MEK members on humanitarian grounds on condition that the US received 28 members. The number of MEK in Albania could rise to five hundred. But informed sources in the French capital said that Albania is on the verge of a political storm because the MEK has bought land and property in Tirana and the government there fears the MEK will create a camp similar to the former Camp Ashraf in Iraq. This would be a base for military training and planning and preparation for terrorist operations in Iran and abroad according to what is required.

Daesh and the MEK

In an interview published by AlSabah Aljadid newspaper, Adnan al-Sarraj, Head of the Iraqi Centre for Media Development, said:

There are many terrorist organisations which seek to destabilise Iraq and undermine the will of its people. In particular, soon after the emergence of the Daesh terrorist gang, the Mojahedin Khalq announced it would join forces with Daesh and support it directly and indirectly. The MEK committed many crimes under the Baath Party's rule and used despicable and dirty methods against the Iraqi people. It is trying today, through alliance with Daesh, to implement a number of actions which will destabilise the security situation of Iraq and stir up sectarian strife between various groups in Iraq.

... Daesh is looking for ways to expand its hostile influence on Iraq through secret and public alliance with others whose aim is to implement the destruction and divisions caused by terrorism using the most heinous crimes and the dirtiest bloody and brutal tactics against the whole of Iraq. In this respect it is not surprising that the terrorist MEK is the single most important of these groups since both groups share the same evil goal which is the destruction of Iraq and the integrity of the country, without caring what will follow such tactics or about the humanitarian rights of the people or any bloodshed caused by such an assault.

Iranian resistance group MKO to move to Albania

Judit Neurink, Rudaw, June 24, 2015

ERBIL, Kurdistan Region – The Iranian resistance and political group People’s Mujahedin of Iran, or Mojahedin-e-Khalq (MKO), which been operating from Iraq since 1986, is moving its members to a new base in Albania to continue the struggle against the Iranian government, according to Albanian media.

In past years, the MKO, led from Paris by Maryam Rajavi, has sent groups of members from their present location near Baghdad to Albania, where the group has acquired land and properties.

A group of 15 of the group’s leaders reportedly went there recently to set up a base.

The Iraqi newspaper Assabah Aljadeed is citing sources in Paris who claim the alleged plans are leading to a political storm in the Albanian capital, Tirana.

“The Albanian government fears that the camp will turn into something like Ashraf Camp previously. A base for military training, planning and preparation for military operations in Iran and abroad,” the paper reported.

Ashraf Camp, in Diyala province, was MKO’s main base in Iraq. In the 1980s, thousands of MKO members joined former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein to fight in the Iran-Iraq War against their fellow Iranians. They were given weapons and bases, notably Ashraf Camp.

After the Gulf War in 1991, the MKO helped Saddam put down the Kurdish uprising just north of the group’s main base.

The US invasion in 2003 led to the group being disarmed, and hundreds of disenchanted members defected. The remainder stayed at Ashraf Camp and forged close ties to the militant Sunni tribes of Diyala province, some of which were working with Al-Qaida in Iraq against the Americans and the Shiite-majority Iraqi government.

After repeated threats from the Iraqi government to forcefully evict the group from Iraq, and a number of incidents between MKO-members and Iraqi military, the United Nations intervened. The 1,000 or so remaining members were relocated to the former US base Camp Liberty near Baghdad airport.

From there, a new home would be sought for the aged members, most of whom now are in their 50s and 60s.

In 2013, at the request of the then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Albania agreed to take in over 200 of MKO members on humanitarian grounds. Since then, some 400 members have moved from Iraq to Albania. The total number of MKO members in Albania is expected to reach an estimated 500 members.

Interlink, an organisation of former MKO-members in London, warned against the plans for the camp in Albania.

“MKO will make a new enclave there that is outside the law, where they will be rearmed and invite people in for training,” said Massoud Khodabandeh, director of Interlink.

Part of the deal arranged by Clinton was the removal of MKO from the US list of terrorist organisations.

Now, with politics changing after the nuclear deal between Iran and the US, the MKO is scrambling to find new friends, according to Khodabandeh.

He said there have been reports that the MKO even offered the Saudis to help fight against the Shiites in Yemen.

Khodabandeh said that while various routes to Turkey, Syria and Iraq are under scrutiny, “terrorist commanders from any mercenary group can slip beneath the radar and seek training and logistical support in Tirana.”

“What better location to establish a clandestine terrorist training camp than in Albania? It is in Europe, but not in the EU and therefore not so open to scrutiny by the international community. It is a Muslim country but is also notorious for corruption and mafia-like gangs,” he said.

“The message is [that] the MKO have branched out and are open to do business with any terrorist group.”

At the same time, the situation for MKO in Iraq is getting increasingly precarious due to the Iran-linked militias that Baghdad has allowed to take up arms against ISIS.

To add to this potential crisis, the families of some MKO members have protested outside Camp Liberty, claiming the group’s leadership is stealing their spouse by moving them to Albania.

A group of these spouses said the MKO told its members to make Molotov cocktails for fear of attacks by the Iranian militias.

According to the spouses, MKO fears an attack would come under the cover of a visit by families members.

Even though the Iraqi Ministry of Human Rights and the Red Cross have requested that MKO allow family members to visit, they have so far not been allowed in.

Some of these spouses have reportedly not seen their loved ones since they joined the MKO.

Please reconsider your decision to participate in Mojahedin Khalq cult gathering (letter to
Bujar Nishani)

The Iran Ghalam Association, June 6,2015

President of the Republic of Albania – Bujar Nishani

Dear Mr. President,

Information received from inside the Mojahedin Khalq Organisation (MKO, MEK, NCRI) HQ in France suggests that you and some of your colleagues have been invited to participate in the Mojahedin Khalq gathering on June 13 in Villepinte, Paris. We urge your good self, as the Prime Minister of Albania, to reconsider your decision to participate in this gathering.

It is certainly not in the interest of the people of Albania if you as the Prime Minister of the country be deceived by the traps of a Presidenti albaniaviolent terrorist group led by such likes as the infamous Massoud and Maryam Rajavi.

Dear Sir,

Should we really believe that your office and advisors have not brought to your attention the violent history of this terrorist cult? Have they not informed you that while the Mojahedin Khalq is supposed to be an Iranian organisation, 90 percent of the seats in their annual gathering in Villepinte (Paris) are filled by a rented crowd from Poland, the Czech Republic and African heritage refugees?

Are you aware of the grave violations of human rights committed by MEK/PMOI leaders inside the MEK/PMOI, including in Camp Liberty? Do you know that children under the age of 16 have been recruited and used in military operations by MEK/PMOI? Have you heard that MEK/PMOI members are forbidden to contact or meet their families for many years?

Haven't you heard and read reports of the abuse of women members in MEK/PMOI, including sexual harassments, women being forced to divorce their husbands, children being forcibly separated from their parents?

Are you not aware of MEK/PMOI interference and meddling in the internal affairs of Iraqis and the political arena of the country in post-Saddam Iraq? Do you know that one of the main reasons for attacks against Camps Ashraf and Liberty in Iraq which have resulted in many deaths and casualties is due to the meddling and agitation by MEK/PMOI in Iraq? Don't you think that your presence in the MEK gathering in Villepinte (Paris) would be interpreted as an open invitation for this cult to interfere in the internal politics of Albania?

We would like to specifically bring to your attention the end of Mr Vidal-Quadras, Mr Casaca and Mr Struan Stevenson, and advise you not to tie the future of your political activities to the Mojahedin Khalq cult.

At the end we urge you again to announce your decision not to participate in the Mojahedin Khalq annual gathering in Villepinte (Paris) and in the condition that you decide to participate in such a performance, surely the people of Iran and the democratic opposition to the Iranian government would interpret your action in line with the hated Mojahedin Khalq cult.

With many thanks and regard

Iranian Pen club

MeK Modern Muslims, Bedfellow of Islamophobes

Soraya Sepahpor-Ulrich, Face book, June15, 2015

Soraya Sepahpor-Ulrich, an independent researcher and writer with a focus on U.S. foreign policy and the role of the lobby, commented on Rudy Guiliani's speech in the MKO's propaganda show in Villepint, Paris :

This bastard is not only a supporter of terrorists, but is an Islamophobe, yet he is supporting the terrorist cult of MEK (must be getting a ton of money from Israel) who are, or pretend to be Moslems - headscarf and all. When running for president, this whore made the threat of Islamic terrorism the centerpiece of his campaign. He brought two neocons on board with him as advisors; Daniel Pipes and Peter King, senior Republican Congressman on the House Homeland Security Committee who is of the opinion that there are "too many mosques in this country". Podhoretz also joined Giuliani (now with McCain), as did John Deady who resigned after it came out that he said the following of Giuliani: "He's got, I believe, the knowledge and the judgment to attack one of the most difficult problems in

current history and that is the rise of the Muslims. Make no mistake about it, this hasn't happened for a thousand years, these people are very dedicated and they're also very, very smart in their own way. We need to keep the feet to the fire and keep pressing these people until we defeat or chase them back to their caves or, in other words, get rid of them." Renowned Evangelical Pat Robertson gave Giuliani his endorsement. So this is the whole supporting terrorists. Please make everyone aware of who this man is and the cult he supports.

Anti-Iran Deal AIPAC Spin-off Relies on Iranian Ex-Terrorist Group

by Eli Clifton and Ali Gharib, Lobelog, June 21, 2015

When the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) declared war on the nuclear accord between Iran and world powers signed last week in Vienna, it put its money where its mouth is. AIPAC, Washington's most influential pro-Israel lobby reportedly plans on spending \$20 million over the next two months urging Congress to vote against the deal. But its efforts at a full frontal attack on the accord, inked by the P5+1 (the US, China, France, Russia, the UK, and Germany) and Iran is leading to some politically awkward alliances.

As part of its efforts to kill the deal with a congressional vote, AIPAC launched a 501c4 advocacy group called Citizens For A Nuclear Free Iran. The group, according to The New York Times, was "formed with the sole mission of educating the public 'about the dangers of the proposed Iran deal,'" said spokesman Patrick Dorton. The Times reported that the \$20 million budget would go to ad buys in as many as 40 states as well as other advocacy. Now that the campaign is taking shape, the AIPAC spin-off appears to be relying on a typical, if troubling, ally of American groups and individuals opposed to diplomacy with Iran. Namely, two items on the website of Citizens for a Nuclear Iran, one of which was later removed, featured an exiled Iranian opposition group called the Mojahedin-e Khalq (MEK).

The MEK makes a cameo appearance in the television ad crafted by Citizens For a Nuclear Free Iran, the well-financed AIPAC spin-off, as well as on a now-removed news items on the group's "Press Room" webpage—indicating that Nuclear Free Iran recognized a PR misstep by promoting the group.

MEK Footage in TV Ad

The ad Citizens For a Nuclear Free Iran is splashing across television screens the country over—which the group posted to YouTube on Friday—incorporates b-roll footage from a

press conference held by the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), which the State Department deemed the MEK's "political wing" (earning it a corresponding terrorist designation).

The footage in the Nuclear Free Iran ad shows Alireza Jafarzadeh, a longtime Washington-based MEK apparatchik, at the National Press Club using a pointer aimed at a satellite photograph. It's not clear which press conference the footage is taken from (the MEK frequently holds these sorts of events). As Jafarzadeh gestures at the photograph, the slickly produced ad's voiceover says, "Military sites can go uninspected" and the words "Over 50 military sites" flash onto the screen.

"We were not aware of this matter, though the statements and b-roll footage are in the public domain," said Ali Safavi, who works with the NCRI, when asked about the commercial.

The MEK's most prominent act since the 1981 bombing of Iran's Islamic Republic Party headquarters—killing 73 party officials—was its 2002 public exposure of the Natanz uranium enrichment facility and Arak heavy water production plant for plutonium extraction. Although the MEK claimed its clandestine network in Iran had unearthed the nuclear facilities, The New Yorker reported in 2006 that Israeli intelligence had passed the information about the sites to the MEK.

Since exposing Natanz and Arak, the MEK has periodically drummed up publicity for other purported blockbuster revelations; many turn out to be busts. This winter, as nuclear talks with Iran talks heated up, the MEK released a report they claimed exposed a secret Iranian enrichment facility. The report garnered much credulous press from right-wing media and even a mainstream outlet or two. But a blogger at the liberal site Daily Kos quickly noticed that the photograph the MEK claimed was a steel door to the secret facility had been ripped from the public website of an Iranian company that sells safes.

According to the Sunlight Foundation's Political Ad Sleuth project, Citizens United for a Nuclear Free Iran has already inked 247 contracts to air the ad, some of which went into effect last Friday.

Promoting MEK's Leadership Views on Iran Deal

Citizens for a Nuclear Free Iran's dalliance with the MEK, however, didn't end at drawing footage from one of the opposition group's press conferences. In the "Press Room" section of Nuclear Free Iran's website, the group late last week reprinted an item from the right-wing Israeli news organization Arutz Sheva that promoted the MEK's views on the nuclear deal. The Arutz Sheva piece is headlined "Iranian Opposition Leader in Exile: Deal Bad for Iranian People"—a headline that carries over to the Citizens for a Nuclear Free Iran website—and

paraphrases quotes from an interview with Maryam Rajavi, the co-leader of the MEK (her husband, Massoud, the other co-leader, has not been seen publicly in a dozen years). In the interview, according to Arutz Sheva, Rajavi condemned the deal and, in the words of the pro-settler news outlet, “called on the international community to work to replace the Islamic religious regime in Iran.”

On Sunday, Citizens for a Nuclear Free Iran pulled the Rajavi article from its “Press Room” page. No explanation was given, and a query on the issue to Citizens for a Nuclear Free Iran went unanswered.

New Group's Advisor Backs MEK

Pulling the article from its website may indicate that Nuclear Free Iran realized the potential public relations problems associating the group with the MEK could bring.

With bizarre Islamo-Marxist guerrilla roots, the MEK and its affiliates were listed as terrorists by the US State Department thanks to years of violence, including attacks against Americans and the Shah's government in Iran in the 1970s and, after falling out of favor with Iran's revolutionary clerics, the Islamic Republic. But the designation was lifted in 2012 as part of a deal to try to extricate remaining MEK members from peril in Iraq, where the group had fought alongside Saddam Hussein but was disarmed in the 2003 American invasion.

The MEK's multi-million dollar lobbying campaign to get removed from the terror rolls gave it a newfound prominence in Washington. Its ardent anti-Iranian regime stance, robust lobbying operations and hefty political donations have kept up their favorable relations with many hawks on Capitol Hill—despite the group's reputation for cult-like behavior and past human rights abuses against its own members. (For more background, see our February feature in *The Intercept* on the MEK's history and influence in Washington.) Rajavi and her followers use their contacts in Washington to relentlessly push for overthrowing the Iranian regime—and making this goal official US policy.

Rajavi counts among her supporters one of Citizens for a Nuclear Free Iran's advisory board members: former Democrat and former senator Joe Lieberman. Lieberman has made several appearances at MEK events, including this June when he appeared at a MEK confab in Paris. Lieberman told the audience there that the US “should be working closely with your resistance group”—making, in other words, regime change into an official US policy.

A spokesman for Citizens for a Nuclear Free Iran did not respond to request for comment about whether it supported an American policy of regime change in Iran.