

ParsBrief

Number 94

December 2016

1. The Secrets Behind Auvers-sur-Oise
2. 6 Years ago Today: CIA, Mossad and MEK Assassinated Iran's Top Nuclear Scientist Majid Shahriari
3. National Security: Could Maryam Rajavi blackmail her friends in high places – Rudi Giuliani, John Bolton and Newt Gingrich
4. Giuliani admitted ties to Mojahedin Khalq, MEK, Rajavi cult Terrorists
5. EU-Iran Relations in the Trump Era
6. The MEK and Its American Fans



The Secrets Behind Auvers-sur-Oise (French HQ of Mojahedin Khalq, MKO, MEK, NCRI, Rajavi cult)

Press TV, December 6, 2016

The terrorist group of “Mojahedin-e-Khalq Organization,” also called “MEK” or “MKO,” which is featured among some countries’ lists of terrorist groups is being protected in a small town only 30 kilometers from Paris, in Auvers-sur-Oise; this has resulted in neglect of public interest and freedom of speech. During the years, the organization has been responsible for a lot of terrorist acts against innocent Iranian citizens both in Iran and abroad. Press TV presents its investigative documentary about the MEK headquarters in France at Auvers-sur-Oise in Ile-de France, near Paris. The life that surrounds this strange place, the movements in and out of the compound as well as the links between the organization and the neighborhood are all depicted in this informative documentary. The so-called Iranian resistance exiled in France has tried its best to look like a pacific organization in the neighborhood where they have been since the 1980s but in the recent years neighbors and human rights organizations have started asking questions of what this place is all about. On the 26th of January 2014, the French Association called “Peace” organized a demonstration against cults in France. They denounce in Auvers-sur-Oise the presence of the MEK terrorist group and the support they receive from the mayor of the town.

6 Years ago Today: CIA, Mossad and MEK Assassinated Iran's Top Nuclear Scientist
Majid Shahriari

Philip Giraldi, IRI Center, November 29 2016

This November 28th is the sixth anniversary of the assassination of leading Iranian nuclear scientist Majid Shahriari, whose death represented a particularly disgraceful episode in the attempts made by Israel's Mossad intelligence service to interfere with and damage Iran's peaceful nuclear research program. Shahriari, who reportedly had no connection to any possible military applications in his research, was the most prominent of the four Iranian nuclear scientists and technicians who were killed by terrorists between 2010 and 2012. He was a leader in the development of Iran's atomic power research and development program and was internationally respected for his expertise in quantum physics and neutron transport.

Within the international intelligence community, it has been generally understood that Mossad planned and prepared the killing of Shahriari and the others, attacks which were almost certainly carried out by associates of the radical Marxist group Mujaheddin e Khalq (MEK).

The assassinations were based on the false premise that Iran had a nuclear weapons program that could be disrupted by killing the scientists and technicians involved. Two comprehensive studies by the American government's Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) conducted in 2007 and 2012 determined that no such program existed and that Iran had never taken any serious steps to initiate such research. Israel was also aware that there was no program. Nevertheless, the Israeli government, sometimes working in collusion with the American CIA, took steps to interfere with Iran's existing and completely legal and open to inspection atomic energy program by identifying then killing its scientists and introducing viruses into its computer systems. This was in spite of the fact that Iran was fully compliant with international norms on nuclear research and it was a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which Israel, possessing its own nuclear arsenal, had refused to sign.

As a result of last year's signing of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) between Iran and the so-called P5+1 consisting of the United States, Russia, China, France, Britain, and the European Union, any remaining concerns that Tehran might even

be considering the development of a nuclear weapons program were greatly diminished. Iran has since that time been in compliance with the agreement, possible nuclear proliferation has been avoided, and, apart from the fulminations of certain anti-Iranian politicians in the United States, the signatories to the agreement have expressed their complete satisfaction with the outcome. It is now up to Washington to live up to its part of the agreement by easing remaining restrictions that are being imposed against Iranian financial institutions and regarding the purchase of some commercially available dual use technologies.

But in spite of the relative stability provided by the JCPOA, the meticulously planned and executed death of Shahriari must not be forgotten, if only to remind the world of the ruthlessness which Mossad and other intelligence agencies often pursue their targets even when those they victimize do not really constitute actual threats. Majid Shahriari was killed one morning as he was driving into work in Tehran. He was in a Peugeot that was making its way slowly through the heavy rush hour traffic when a motorcycle pulled up next to him as it weaved its way among the cars. The motorcyclist attached a bomb to the Peugeot's window before he drove off and detonated the device by remote control from a distance. Shahriari died in the blast and two other occupants of the vehicle were injured. At the same time, another car in another part of Tehran was attacked in the same fashion, though the couple inside realized what was happening and managed to get out. They too were injured.

Majid Shahriari left behind a scientist wife and two young children. It should be observed that even though MEK was the likely perpetrator of the attacks, the technical aspects of the operation were far beyond its limited capabilities. First of all, it was necessary to identify the scientists who were to be targeted, no simple task as the Iranian government and atomic energy agency would have taken steps to restrict such information. Only a major foreign intelligence service would have had the capability to penetrate secure government communications to learn who the scientists were and where they lived, to permit an attack to be planned and executed. Both CIA and Mossad would have had such capability and both are also known to have contact with MEK, a relationship that was and still is particularly close in the case of the Israelis.

After identifying the targets and working out a plan for connecting with them it would have been necessary to engage in extensive surveillance to make sure that the approach and timing would work flawlessly. That would require time, training, and money to support the activity, exactly the sort of thing that a state sponsored intelligence agency would be good at. Then it was necessary to devise the bombs to be used to kill the targets. This was no

simple matter in practice because the bombs that were put together were highly sophisticated and designed to kill all the occupants of the vehicle. They were shaped charges that directed the blast into the car and they also incorporated small metal projectiles that would fill the target vehicle with a lethal spray.

Among intelligence agencies Israel has the best deserved reputation for being an organization that favors the use of assassinations, so the suggestion that it was behind the killing of Shahriari and several of his colleagues as well as the attempted assassinations of others fits neatly into the Mossad modus operandi. The United States, also no friend of Iran, almost certainly provided support to other programs like the creation of the Stuxnet virus that crippled Iran's scientific computers, but would likely balk at the assassination of civilian scientists. Israel would have no such misgivings and has, in fact, killed civilians in all the countries that surround it.

Majid Shahriari certainly should be remembered for his exemplary work as a scientist, but his assassination should also be a reminder that Israel makes up its own rules and its ruthlessness in dealing with its neighbors should be clearly and candidly recognized for what it is.

–

Philip Giraldi is a former CIA Case Officer and Army Intelligence Officer who spent twenty years overseas in Europe and the Middle East working terrorism cases. He holds a BA with honors from the University of Chicago and an MA and PhD in Modern History from the University of London. In addition to TAC, where he has been a contributing editor for nine years, he writes regularly for Antiwar.com. He is currently Executive Director of the Council for the National Interest.

National Security: Could Maryam Rajavi (Mojahedin Khalq) blackmail her friends in high places – Rudi Giuliani, John Bolton and Newt Gingrich

By Massoud Khodabandeh; Director at Middle East Strategy Consultants, The Huffington Post

This post is hosted on the Huffington Post's Contributor platform. Contributors control their own work and post freely to our site. If you need to flag this entry as abusive, send us an email.

As the reverberations of the American election echo and ripple across America and around the world, some of its repercussions are already being felt – demonstrations, racist attacks, global market and currency fluctuations, the Russian reaction and more. But as President-elect Trump considers who to appoint to the most influential positions in his Administration, the hopeful candidates may want to consider repercussions which may arise from their own backgrounds.

In particular, Rudi Giuliani, John Bolton and Newt Gingrich. Putting aside their weak personalities as well as their individual neoconservative agendas, the common thread which links these names together is their decade long support for the Mojahedin Khalq terrorist organisation (also known as Saddam's Private Army or Rajavi cult).

Newt Gingrich bows to Maryam Rajavi

It is certain that neither these three hopefuls nor the MEK believed they would make a comeback. Rudi Giuliani, John Bolton and Newt Gingrich are not Republican favourites. But apparently, with the election of Donald Trump, their time has come. The MEK also didn't think Trump could win and therefore advertised for Hillary Clinton in their websites.

Rudi Giuliani with Maryam Rajavi

In American politics, such things can be quickly glossed over, dismissed as political strategies. But Donald Trump does need to take this past into consideration. What Rudi Giuliani, John Bolton and Newt Gingrich do not know is that the MEK have a full record of all their meetings, dialogue and discussions. After being tutored by Saddam's Intelligence service the MEK learned to film and record every conversation with an external person, particularly people like Rudi Giuliani, on every occasion whether in the US, Paris or Europe, even during dinner gatherings. This means that every time they hosted speakers and supporters in Paris or America these meetings were recorded. The MEK is now in possession of hundreds of hours of audio/video recordings as well as emails and phone calls of individuals like these three who have been mingling openly over the past decade with people they took to be ordinary oppositionists, but were in fact trained agents of the MEK and Saddam. The recordings can be edited and published by the MEK to suit the time, need and place.

The MEK's hope was, of course, that by recording these private conversations they could be used in future to pressurise or even blackmail individuals if needed. They perhaps didn't have any hope then that these individuals would reach such high office. As such this is a national security concern for the US. No one knows what is in the tapes and no one knows how these three, who have done everything for a fee in the past, would be able to stop the MEK from exposing them.

These three entered into paid lobbying for a group such as Mojahedin Khalq knowingly (perhaps not envisaging a day which they could be back in the game) accepting the end of their careers as officials. If they are now brought back and appointed to key positions, US policy could simply be taken hostage by a notorious terrorist organisation such as the Mojahedin Khalq.

Even if these three gave assurances that the paid support they gave to Maryam Rajavi and her terrorist cult Mojahedin Khalq has been done purely on straightforward lobbying grounds, no one can be certain that a decade of recordings and document gathering by the MEK would not end up producing enough leverage to highjack the national security of the United States and or its allies across the globe.

President Trump (and security advisors) simply can't afford to take such a risk with the future of the country.

Rudy Giuliani belongs in prison (Giuliani admitted ties to Mojahedin Khalq, MEK, Rajavi cult Terrorists)

Jacob Sullum, Newsweek, November 29 2016

IF CLINTON BELONGS IN PRISON, SO DOES GIULIANI

Rudy Giuliani speaks before Republican U.S. presidential nominee Donald Trump at a rally in Cincinnati on October 13. Jacob Sullum writes that there is a strong case to be made that the former New York City mayor, who reportedly is in the running for secretary of state in the Trump administration, committed multiple federal felonies by assisting Mujahedeen-e-Khalq (MEK), an Iranian opposition group that the State Department listed as a terrorist organization until September 2012.

MIKE SEGAR/REUTERS

During the presidential campaign, Rudy Giuliani argued (correctly) that Hillary Clinton could be charged with a federal felony for mishandling classified information through her sloppy email practices as secretary of state even if she did not intend to break the law.

But there is also a strong case to be made that the former New York City mayor, who reportedly is in the running for secretary of state in the Trump administration, committed multiple federal felonies by assisting Mujahedeen-e-Khalq (MEK), an Iranian opposition group that the State Department listed as a terrorist organization until September 2012.

“My ties to them are very open,” Giuliani, a former U.S. attorney, recently told The New York Times. “We worked very hard to get them delisted.” But under the broad understanding of the federal ban on “material assistance” to terrorist groups that the Supreme Court upheld in 2010, that work was pretty clearly a crime punishable by up to 15 years in prison.

The “material support” statute, 18 USC 2339B, prohibits the provision of “training,” defined as “instruction or teaching designed to impart a specific skill”; “expert advice or assistance,” defined as “advice or assistance derived from scientific, technical or other specialized knowledge”; “personnel,” which means any person, including oneself, who works under the organization’s “direction or control”; or any other “service,” which is not defined at all. In *Holder v. Humanitarian Law Project*, the Supreme Court said the law covers volunteer work aimed at helping listed organizations resolve their grievances through nonviolent means.

While such advice and advocacy would ordinarily be protected by the First Amendment, the court said, “the government’s interest in combating terrorism” justifies the speech restrictions imposed by the ban on material support.

Notably, the Supreme Court refused to read the law as requiring an intent to further a terrorist organization’s illegal activities. As long as someone knows he is assisting a “foreign terrorist organization” (FTO), it is no defense to say he only meant to promote its lawful activities. Giuliani, who “worked very hard to get [the MEK] delisted,” obviously knew the group was considered an FTO.

Nor is it necessary that someone providing material support to an FTO receive compensation in return, although Giuliani apparently was paid handsomely for his speeches on behalf of the MEK. According to the court, the difference between protected and prohibited advocacy is not whether money changes hands; it’s whether the advocacy is “performed in coordination with, or at the direction of, a foreign terrorist organization.” By announcing that “my ties to [the MEK] are very open,” then, Giuliani is effectively confessing to a crime.

I am not saying Giuliani should go to prison for his efforts to rehabilitate the MEK. The State Department’s list is arbitrary and shaped by political considerations, the MEK had a strong argument that it should no longer be considered an FTO, and in any case peaceful advocacy of lawful activities should never be treated as a crime. Knowingly providing material assistance to an FTO (which Giuliani did) is not necessarily the same as knowingly providing material assistance to terrorism. For the sake of fairness and freedom of speech, the law’s mens rea requirement should be stronger.

The same goes for 18 USC 793, which Clinton arguably broke by allowing classified information to be removed “from its proper place of custody” through “gross negligence,” a felony punishable by up to 10 years in prison. A conviction under that law should require more than negligence, because it should not be possible to accidentally commit a crime. That is the main reason James Comey gave for declining to recommend charges against Clinton: Although the law does not require criminal intent, justice does.

But Giuliani was not willing to cut Clinton any such slack. As far as he was concerned, she violated the letter of the law, so she should have been prosecuted. It did not matter whether she realized she was breaking the law.

By that same reasoning, Giuliani should be prosecuted for providing material support to a foreign terrorist organization. It does not matter that he did not view the MEK as a terrorist group; it’s enough that the State Department did. Nor does it matter that he did not intend to promote terrorism, since the law does not include any such mens rea requirement.

If Hillary Clinton belongs in prison, so does Rudy Giuliani.

Jacob Sullum is a senior editor at Reason magazine and a nationally syndicated columnist.

EU-Iran Relations in the Trump Era

By Eldar Mamedov , Lobelog , November 12, 2016

One undeniable benefit of the historic nuclear deal, or Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), is that it opened the channels of communications between Iran and the EU beyond the narrow issue of the implementation of the agreement. As the high-level political consultations between the EU and Iran on November 8-9 in Brussels have shown, the bilateral agenda now includes economic cooperation, discussions on regional issues, notably Syria, and even a nascent dialogue on human rights. Thus, the Brussels meetings have provided a suitable opportunity for both Europeans and Iranians to compare notes on the election of Donald Trump as the US president and what it means for the survival of the JCPOA and broader normalization of EU-Iran relations. What emerged from the conversations shows a considerable convergence of views.

Despite Trump’s pre-electoral pledge to renegotiate the deal that he deemed to be “disastrous,” both Iranians and Europeans have adopted a wait-and-see approach. To illustrate how the electoral rhetoric may not match the real actions in office, Iranians pointed to the quiet removal from Trump’s webpage of his statement vowing to ban

Muslims from entering the US. Another glimmer of hope, from the Iranian perspective, lies in Trump's repeated expressions of willingness to work with Russia in Syria and the broader Middle East on the ultimate goal of defeating the so-called Islamic State (ISIS or IS). Since Tehran's already works closely with Moscow to achieve these priorities, it would be very hard for Trump to square the circle by simultaneously cooperating with Russia and antagonizing Iran. According to this most optimistic reading, Trump foreign policy's uncertainty holds out some possibility of a more restrained and realist course—as opposed to Hillary Clinton's predictably hawkish policies that might have undermined the nuclear deal even without consciously seeking such an outcome.

There is, however, a danger of some neoconservatives moving closer to Trump and setting his administration on a more aggressive course than his campaign pronouncements suggested. Already some notorious uber-hawks, such as New Gingrich, John Bolton, and Rudy Giuliani, are slated for top jobs in the Trump administration, including the crucial secretary-of-state job. All three have deep ties with the Iranian dissident cult MEK, on the US terror list until 2012, bitterly opposed to the current Iranian government and advocating regime change in Iran. Although the Saudis, Iran's archrivals in the region, cast their lot with Clinton, they may now be busy trying to figure out how they can “buy off” Trump. And one of Trump's top donors, Sheldon Adelson, a casino magnate with strong pro-Likud views, has threatened Iran with a nuclear strike.

This uncertainty has prompted analysts like Ariane Tabatabai from the Center for Strategic and International Studies to call on the EU to be more assertive in safeguarding and implementing the deal and act as a check on America. The EU might do exactly that. Federica Mogherini, the EU foreign policy chief and chair of the Joint Commission tasked with overseeing the implementation of the JCPOA, explicitly emphasized the multilateral character of the Iran deal, codified by a UN SC resolution. Since Iran, according to the International Atomic Energy Agency, complies with its commitments on the deal, there is absolutely no incentive on the EU side to renegotiate the deal.

Furthermore, the EU's own interests have been pushing it to invest in its relations with Iran. The EU is closer to the Middle East than the US and is directly affected by the turmoil there in the shape of a terrorist threat and irregular migration. Whether it is the Syrian war or the flow of refugees from Afghanistan, Europeans realize they have to deal with Iran. They also see it as a potentially lucrative market for their businesses. The traffic of officials and businesspeople between Tehran and European capitals is heavy these days. On October 25, the European Parliament (EP) adopted a forward-looking report on relations with Iran. The Council of the EU, the main foreign-policy making body representing the

bloc's 28 member states, is preparing to adopt its new guidelines on relations with Iran, which are expected to overlap significantly with the EP report.

More broadly, there are signs that the election of Trump is already stimulating some hard thinking about the EU's strategic autonomy. Plans to create a "defense union" are likely to gain further momentum. Of course, transatlantic relations possess a certain inertia that will likely persist. This link is long-standing and deserves to survive the Trump presidency. However, the EU is unlikely to follow the US in doing something as self-defeating as revoking or even re-negotiating the nuclear deal with Iran. What could, however, put the EU in an indefensible position is if Iranian hardliners sabotage the implementation of the deal as a response to American non-delivery on its commitments. It is only to be hoped that cooler heads will prevail in Tehran in the face of possible provocations from the Republican-led White House and Congress.

There is, however, a wild card on the European side as well—Europe's own right-wing populists, such as the leader of the French National Front Marine Le Pen. Her election as France's president can no longer be ruled out. Le Pen and her Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENF), a far-right group in the EP, generally sticks to a superficially friendly line on Iran, regularly lambasting Iran's foes such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar. This, however, is part of a general backlash against the French elites, known for their close relations with the Gulf despots, rather than an expression of support for Iran. Le Pen is known for her staunch support for Israel. In the European Parliament vote on the Iran report, she and most of her colleagues from the ENF group abstained. Should Le Pen, who professed her enthusiastic support for Trump, be elected as the president of France, the Iran deal might suffer another blow.

In a world of growing uncertainty, the current leaders of the EU and Iran must do their utmost to ensure that the Iran deal survives the complicated politics of some of its parties. The stakes could not be higher: the fate of a working agreement that not only defused a potentially devastating conflict but also opened a way for re-engaging with one of the key countries in the Middle East.

Eldar Mamedov has degrees from the University of Latvia and the Diplomatic School in Madrid, Spain. He has worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia and as a diplomat in Latvian embassies in Washington D.C. and Madrid. Since 2007, Mamedov has served as a political adviser for the social-democrats in the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament (EP) and is in charge of the delegation for inter-parliamentary relations between the EP and Iran.

The MEK and Its American Fans

Daniel Larison, *The American Conservatives*, November 27, 2016

Dan Benjamin reviews the history of the Mujahideen-e Khalq (MEK) and its support from many American former officials and politicians:

Even more unsettling was the sheer creepiness of the group. While Maryam Rajavi was presiding over enormous conferences with American political celebrities and seas of smiling, waving people in Paris, at Camp Ashraf, the MeK leadership treated its people appallingly. Visitors, including from the U.N., painted a picture of relentless intimidation, shaming and coercion of the inhabitants by camp leaders [bold mine-DL]. The MeK, which is often described as a cult, had a long history of requiring that its members divorce and remain celibate. Now, its leaders were resolved that the group would remain together and none of the members would be relocated individually or in small groups—the Ashraf group was a bargaining chip that the leadership was cynically using for future leverage.

One of the more troubling things about American MEK supporters is their willingness to whitewash the group's past as well as its present-day behavior. They aren't content to work with an avowedly bad group against a common enemy, but feel compelled to pretend that the group is upstanding and noble. At an appearance in Paris last year, Giuliani called the cult leader Maryam Rajavi a "hero," which either suggests that his understanding of heroism is extremely poor or that he will say anything to get paid.

It is hardly the first time that supporters of regime change in another country have aligned themselves with a disreputable group to pursue their goal, but the sheer dishonesty or credulity required to present a totalitarian cult as a group dedicated to freedom and democracy is nonetheless remarkable. This is perhaps the most insidious part of the MEK boosterism we have seen over the last few years: endorsing their makeover as a "secular, democratic" group and pretending that a group that has virtually no support inside Iran is the country's "real" opposition. This is not only false, but it also does a real disservice to the Iranian opposition in Iran that wants reform rather than regime change. It also demonstrates contempt for and hostility to the people of Iran, since this same group is responsible for killing so many Iranians when it was serving Saddam Hussein. Above all, it

attempts to promote the lie that a policy of regime change is supported by Iranians in order to lend that dangerous and destructive goal the appearance of some legitimacy.