

## MOJGAN PARSAI

Four years ago Mojgan Parsai was appointed by Massoud Rajavi to head the Mojahedin organization, replacing the previously appointed female head, Beheshteh Shadroo. As nominal head of the MeK, Parsai officially occupied the highest position after the Rajavis in the cult's hierarchy.



Former MKO head Fahime Arvani (left) with Mojgan Parsai

After the fall of Saddam and disarmament of the MeK by US armed forces in Iraq, Mojgan Parsai, a former student in the USA, was assigned as a 'US friendly face' to be the high level contact with the US forces in Iraq. Rajavi ordered her to persuade the Americans to return the MeK's arms to them and recognise the MeK as a military force. A mission which from the outset, of course, was doomed to failure. The effect of this failure, however, was an ever increasing desertion from the camp by people who had woken up to reality and saw no hope in remaining in the cult. Up to the present time, more than 500 members have been successful in getting themselves out and a further 400 have taken refuge with the US forces. According to reports from the escapees, over 60 percent of the remaining people would leave immediately if only the flag of the Red Cross (or any other humanitarian orga-

nisation) would be flown in the camp and they knew that there is a place of safety to escape to. Over the past few months the wave of disaffection among the members has accelerated, and the MeK has desperately placed all kinds of obstacles in the way of people reaching US army representatives in the camp. Most notably, fabricating lies about ill-treatment by the Americans should anybody 'fall into their hands'. There are a significant number of people in Camp Ashraf who have some connection with the USA (having been students or refugees or residents in the USA before recruitment into the cult). These people have become aware of a new initiative by the US Army and the Red Cross in Iraq to help find a place of refuge for disaffected members, and have approached American representatives hoping that they could perhaps be once again accepted in the USA. According to reports from inside the

MeK, one of these people was Mojgan Parsai.

She reportedly approached American forces in Camp Ashraf to seek asylum in the USA, where she had formerly been a student. It is reported that she passed organizational information to the Americans in exchange for her freedom.

Unfortunately news of her behaviour was leaked and has reached Maryam Rajavi.

Parsai was immediately relieved of her responsibilities and no-one has had news of her since this event. Maryam Rajavi has consulted with her close advisors about the possible punishment Parsai should receive. In these meetings Rajavi has emphasised that her punishment should be appropriate to her rank and should be an example to any other commanders who may thinking the same way. From experience and according to the normal standards of the MeK, this punishment could not be less than execution under very slow physical and psychological torture.

Following exposure of Parsai's disappearance and fears for her safety in Camp Ashraf, the Mojahedin have tried to disguise this fact and pretend that she is still active in her duties. In response to widespread concern as to her welfare, the MKO published a written statement, apparently signed by Mojgan Parsai. However, the organiza-

# EDITORIAL



After meeting Elahe, my question was not how she managed to survive the years of her encounter with the Mojahedin organization, but rather how the organization managed to survive its encounter with her. She is gloriously warm, expressive and sociable. And she pulls no punches when it comes to describing her experiences and insights into the Mojahedin. Lest anyone think that her stance has come about after leaving them, I remember around ten years ago accompanying Bahman Etemad, who was at that time the NCRI representative in the UK, on a visit to Elahe. Although I took no part in the conversation, I was struck even then by this feisty and ebullient woman, and had a warm feeling in my heart for her as someone who would not be cowed by the machinations of the MKO cult.

And I was right. Although we did agree that anyone who has been involved with the Mojahedin in any way, at any level or to any degree will become a nervous wreck at some

Our Personal Experiences item this month is an interview with one of Iran's foremost and popular classical singers, Elahe. After listening to many samples of her music on the internet [using Google], I have, as have millions of Iranians before me, fallen under the spell of her enchantingly beautiful voice. The opportunity to meet with and interview this wonderful lady was one of those rare and happy opportunities for which, out of all the interviews I have conducted, I have been the most grateful and which I have enjoyed the most.

point in the process. If the Mojahedin can abuse the dignity and integrity of such a high standing and independent woman, then how much worse for those who have no such position from which to take a stand. Unsurprisingly, the Mojahedin themselves have been out of the news for some months now. The organization tries to rear its ugly head by making accusations against Iran in the ongoing nuclear power saga. But by doing so, it only shows that it has completely lost its way. While western interests may be served by political wrangling with Iran over this issue, the real problems of the people of Iran continue to be centred around the economy, their standard of living, and freedoms of expression and human rights inside the country. Any opposition with its finger on the pulse would have been raising

these issues in international forums. Instead the Mojahedin organization desperately hangs on to the coat tails of western powers, doggedly echoing their agenda and hoping for a crumb of attention to keep it alive. Fortunately, the MKO's abandoned combatants in Iraq no longer look to their leaders for salvation and are little by little coming round to the real choice they face – that is, whether to go home to their families or whether to go home to their families. Yup, that's about all the choice they face. Their problem in making that choice? The MKO leaders have told them that if they contact their families, the Iranian regime will torture and execute their mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, and any relatives they can get their hands on. Sinister isn't it. ■



*Rajavi with her protoges Mojgan Parsai en Zahra Merikhi*

## Mojgan Parsai

tion has failed to show Parsai in person either on TV or among the residents of Camp Ashraf, which renders this written statement highly suspect. The simple demand of all those concerned for Mojgan Parsai's life is that she be visited by representatives of a human rights organization without the presence of the MKO so that her well-being can be ascertained.

Notably, the appointed MeK head previous to Parsai was Ms. Beheshteh Shadroo. She was also a student from the USA and according to reports from inside the MeK, her situation is not any better than that of Parsai.

Another example of such treatment is Mr. Mehdi Eftekhari who was the com-

mander of the clandestine operation which enabled Massoud Rajavi to run away from Iran in 1981 after his failed coup attempt. Eftekhari has been under constant physical and psychological pressure for the past eighteen years. He lost his mental balance under torture around ten years ago, but Rajavi always refused to accept his condition and has continued to use him as an example of what would happen to anyone who does not obey his commands to the letter. A further example is Ali Zarkesh, second-in-command after Massoud Rajavi who refused to submit to the 'ideological revolution' (and the marriage of Massoud Rajavi with the wife of Mehdi Abrishamchi). He was subsequently

demoted to the rank of foot soldier and was later shot and killed by Massoud Rajavi's bodyguard. Maryam Rajavi has already seen the effect of disaffected members reaching Europe and exposing her and her husband's war crimes and crimes against humanity. She is now doing all she can to stop the same thing happening in the US and is putting all her energy into preventing the people who have had some links with the US from making contact with US representatives in Camp Ashraf. She is also planning to use Ms. Parsai as an example of what will happen to any high commander who tries to contact the American forces in the hope they may be rescued from the cult. ■

## NEWS IN BRIEF



*Zahra Merikhi, MKO's new military head in Europe*

### **Terrorist MKO appoints new military head in Paris**

**August 23, 2005**

The proscribed terrorist organization, Mojahedin-e Khalq, which is currently under the protection of the US army in Iraq, has removed its military head and appointed a new commander from Saddam's Private Army in Paris to head the group.

On 9th August 2005, Mr. Massoud Khodabandeh published an appeal under the title 'Charged with Treason by Rajavi: Plea to Save the Life of Ms. Mojgan Parsai'.

This was an open letter to Professor Raymond Tanter, Co-chair of the Iran Policy Committee which was founded by the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organisation (MKO or MEK) in the USA to lobby government. The news of Mojgan Parsai's demotion and subsequent disappearance had already been published from various sources, including Awaa Association, an Iranian opposition organisation in Germany. Mojgan Parsai had previously been appointed by Rajavi as the 'First Responsible of the Mojahedin-e Khalq organisation.

On 17th August 2005, the Mojahedin issued an immaterial announcement using the name of Mojgan Parsai in order to refute the news. This only brought more suspicion as to the actual whereabouts Ms. Parsai, and many organisations expressed serious concern including Iran Interlink which issued a statement under the title 'Update on pleas to save the life of Mojgan Parsai'. On 19th August 2005 news filtered out that the Mojahedin were about to replace Mojgan Parsai with one of its military commanders from the time they were helping Saddam Hussein to massacre Iraqi Kurds and Shiites in March 1991. Again, Iran Interlink among others, announced their serious concern about Ms. Parsai, and issued statements and appeals.

Today, 23rd August 2005, the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organisation (listed as a terrorist organisation in the USA, Canada, EU and UK) has issued a public statement from its headquarters in France confirming this replacement. We express our utmost astonishment that this supposedly

proscribed terrorist organisation has openly and officially announced the replacement of its military head Mojgan Parsai (who is currently under the protection of the American army in Iraq but who has not been seen or heard from since her demotion), by Zahra Merikhi, who has been active in Paris since her escape from Iraq during the fall of Saddam in March 2003.

We are also alarmed to find that by this replacement, the terrorist Mojahedin-e Khalq Organisation has now moved its headquarters from Camp Ashraf in Iraq to the place of residence of Maryam Rajavi in Auvers sur Oise in the suburbs of Paris. While we remain concerned about the safety and wellbeing of the former appointed head, Ms. Mojgan Parsai, we urge the European Union and the US government to treat this proscribed organization as they treat other terrorist organizations and persons. The neglect in dealing with this behaviour inside a country anywhere in the free world could not be more damaging to the seriousness of eliminating terrorism across the globe. Surely the world is watching the authorities of western countries to see their response to the open and public announcement of the new appointment of a military head of a terrorist organization inside a western country.

### **MKO admits using child soldiers**

**August 24, 2005**

Mr. Hadi Shams Haeri who has been trying to rescue his son AMIR, now 23 and daughter NOSRAT, now 19 years old, over the past 8 years, faced a surprise this month. The MKO in Ashraf camp issued statement along with their pictures in which they trashed their father in every nasty way possible accusing him of being a torturer of the Iranian Intelligence Ministry. This is while Mr. Haeri has been incarcerated in the prisons of both the Shah and the Islamic Republic, and has over 40 years of political opposition experience. While many opposition groups and personalities outside Iran expressed their disgust over yet more of this behaviour by Rajavi the cult leader, Mr. Haeri himself welcomed the news as at least he was able to see recent photographs of his children. The MKO admitted in its statement that these two had been abducted from Germany when they were only 15 and 11 years old respectively.

They were transferred to MKO Ashraf camp where they have been forced to fight for Saddam Hussein until the disarmament of the group by coalition forces in 2003. Iran Interlink welcomes the new confession by the leaders of MKO as this is yet further proof for the courts that the MKO used child soldiers in Saddam's private army. This also provides further evidence with which Mr. Haeri can approach the American army (now in charge of MKO camp and individuals held in Iraq) to investigate the allegations. There is also fresh hope that AMIR and NOSRAT can now be returned to their family.

### **Seday-e Ashena Radio**

**August 30, 2005**

Incoming Reports indicate that 5 MKO members, escaping Camp Ashraf, have hidden in northern Iraq.

Since the ouster of Saddam, this is the first mass escape from the MKO. The plan of some high-ranking officials of the MKO, including Mojgan Parsai, to escape from the MKO has failed.

MKO is a notorious group in Iraq and Iraqi groups and tribes are pressing the government to expel them. They (MKO) have remained in Iraq under the protection of US forces; they're called prisoners and they suffer difficult mental and physical conditions, therefore, similar acts are possible.

### **Mojahedin on brink of collapse**

**While the Iraqi Government insists on putting the leaders on trial, the Mojahedin's camp is melting faster than ever.**

**August 30, 2005**

The exodus of voluntary repatriation by members of the outlawed Mojahedin Khalq Organisation is rapidly accelerating. The latest arrivals according to the Nejat Association reporter in Mehrabad Airport in Tehran are:

Samad Eskandari from Zanjan

Ghader Rahmani from Orumieh

Jahanshah Seyed Mohammadi from Kermanshah

Karim Mohammadi from Kermanshah

Iraj Salehi from Mazandaran.

On the evening 23rd August 2005, these people arrived at Mehrabad International airport on a Red Cross Chartered flight from Iraq. The total number of repatriated ex Mojahedin is estimated at about 500 and the ones who are awaiting are over 400 people. Over 700 ex Mojahedin have already escaped to European countries where they have denounced the organisation and have asked for political asylum. Another report confirms that five disaffected members succeeded in escaping the from Mojahedin's Camp Ashraf in Iraq and according to other unconfirmed reports, they have already reached the Kurdish regions of Iraq where they have taken refuge. Although many have managed to escape the cult's camp in recent months, this is the first time that a group of people have successfully organised and escaped together from this notorious camp.

The disintegration of MKO has accelerated after the recent decision of the Iraqi government as well as US forces in Iraq that there should be a swift and thorough effort to deal with the remains of this Saddam backed terrorist organisation.

The Iraqi government although in favour of disintegration and repatriation of the members of this group, insists on the trial of the leaders for their collaboration with Saddam in the massacre of Iraqi Kurds and Shiites in 1991 as well as other war crimes and crimes against humanity.

## Jaam-e Jam TV, Iran

August 30, 2005

Iraq's president Jalal Talabani has emphasized the quick expulsion of the members of terrorist MKO from Iraq. According to IRIB, in a meeting with Iranian chargé d'affaires in Baghdad, Mr. Talabani said the MKO was the common enemy of Iran and Iraq, adding that: "We have also suffered from the terrorist crimes of this group. So, Iraqi government is tough in pursuing their expulsion from Iraq."

## Nejat Association

August 31, 2005

After the US disarmed the MKO and realized that most of MKO members want to leave the Organization, they established a camp near Camp Ashraf and settled defectors-whether those who had escaped MKO or had left it with the assistance of Americans- in that camp. MKO, entangled in a crisis,

resorted to dirty tricks to stop members from leaving. For instance, Americans' interpreter in interviews was a woman called "Paria". MKO bribed her with gold and jewelry and asked her to change the translation of defectors' words (that is, to distort the reality) so that Americans open an unreal file for them. Defectors were not aware of this since they didn't know English. But the time came for a former member who had lived in the US for years and had come to Iraq (MKO) from the US.

During the interview, American general (State Department's interviewer) asked if he was tortured by the MKO. He realized that "Paria" changed his words and said: "MKO treated me very well but I want to go to my own life"! He became angry by this distortion of reality by her and started himself to tell the truth in English. Americans fired her as soon as they found that she was not honest and employed another interpreter called "Fatima" (apparently from Afghanistan). ■

# MKO'S REVELATIONS ARE ALL LIES

## Safa Haeri/Iran Press Service

August 20, 2005

<http://www.iran-press-service.com/ips/articles-2005/august-2005/mko-lies-20805.shtml>

**LONDON, 20 Aug. (IPS) "All the information the Mojahedeen provides the western media is pure lies and fabricated to discredit the Iranian regime and help the United States and Israel to put more pressures on Iran", a former senior member of the outlawed, Baghdad-based Mojahedeen Khalq Organisation (MKO) told Iran Press Service.**

Referring to recent press conferences held by the MKO spokesmen in various capitals, including Paris, Vienna, London, Berlin and Washington "revealing" secret nuclear sites or the number of centrifuges undeclared to the international nuclear watchdog, the source said the MKO has no information about Iran's sensitive military projects and what they tell the media is what the CIA feeds them.

"Iranian military-oriented installations are kept very secret, with very limited people except the technicians and scientists having access to them. An Iranian Stalinist-Islamist organization financed, equipped, trained and supported by the former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein during his war against Iran and after, the MKO (a.k.a, MEK, National Council of Resistance of Iran,

NCRI, People's Mojahedin of Iran, PMOI), is now playing the same role at the hands of the American so-called neo-cons at the Pentagon as an instrument of both political and military pressures on the ruling ayatollahs, analysts said.

"Iranian military-oriented installations are kept very secret, with very limited people except the technicians and scientists having access to them, people that are under regular control by experts. Considering the activities of the Mojahedeen as spies and infiltrators, anyone suspected of the smallest and remote links with them is immediately arrested", the source, a former high-ranking intelligence and security officer with the group added.

The group, now under US protection in their camps in Iraq, is on the American

and European lists of terrorist organizations, but its political branch, the Council of Resistance, is active in major capitals of the world and became a darling of the Western press after it revealed the existence of a heavy water reactor in Arak and the uranium enriching installations in Natanz, both situated in central Iran.

However, the satellite images of the sites put on internet by an American specialized firm a day after confirmed that the information was provided to the group by some Pentagon sources keen to get the MKO out of the terrorist list, giving it the image of a group that has reliable sources inside Iran. This was confirmed latter by the CIA after President George W. Bush personally praised the MKO for the information it provides to the international



*Mohaddessin and Jafarzadeh reveal all*

community about Iranian military-oriented nuclear activities “hidden” by Tehran.

“We had all these information and have reported them to the Administration”, the CIA source had said, frustrated at the leak of sensitive intelligence documents to the terrorist group.

In fact, while Iran had defaulted by not reporting the construction of the installations to the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), but they were quite visible since the construction in both Arak and Natanz were on the ground and not under ground.

“Except the information on Natanz and Arak the group disclosed, documents that were given to them by the Americans, all other material the Mojahedeen gave to the media are open secret, most of them from the Iranian press, like the name of companies and firms that works for the Defence Ministry and are known to the IAEA”, pointed out Mr. Mas’oud Khodabandeh, a former senior officer of the group.

Actually, Iranian nuclear negotiators, including Hojjatoleslam Hasan Rohani,

the former most senior supervisor and coordinator of Iranian nuclear projects explained that under the Iranian safeguards agreement as it then existed, the Iranians were not obligated to tell the IAEA about any of that activity until they began processing “source or special nuclear materials” for introduction into those gas centrifuges.

The other reason Iran started to build some of the sites secretly was of fear of facing sanctions by the IAEA and the international community.

Hence, American, Israeli and some European nations’ accusations that Iran is secretly making atomic weapons by diverting nuclear technologies aimed at peaceful and civilian purposes.

“Every time the IAEA had a meeting of its Board of Governors debating Iranian nuclear issue or Iranian and European negotiators met, some unidentified European diplomats revealed new, hidden Iranian activities and at exactly the same time, MKO spokesmen organized press conferences to repeat the same information”, one senior Iranian negotiator told Iran Press Service.

The Mojahedeen collaborated with Ayatollah Khomeini to overthrow the former Shah of Iran.

As part of that struggle, they assassinated at least six American citizens, supported the takeover of the U.S. embassy, and opposed the release of American hostages. After being expelled from France in June 1986, the group, assisted by Saddam Hussein, formed the National Liberation Army and launched its most significant incursion in June and July 1988, when they coordinated an advance into Iran with Iraqi forces. During the same offensive, Iraqi units in other sectors of the front used chemical weapons against Iran. “On 17 June 1992, Mas’oud Rajavi, the egocentric supreme leader of the organisation and a Mojahedin delegation visited Saddam Hussein. In his statement, Rajavi said, “Iranian national movements and their masses strongly denounce the Iranian regime’s alliance with U.S imperialism, world Zionism, and regional reactionaries to launch aggression against Iraq, participate in the blockade on it, and interfere in the domestic affairs of this safe, steadfast country in the interests of colonial schemes and conspiracies”, according to a State Department report on 1994. Except the information on Natanz and Arak the group disclosed, all other

material the MKO give to the media are open secret.

Not only the group engaged in Iraq's war against Iran and killed thousands of innocent Iranians, not only the group collaborated actively with Iraq's secret services in the slaughter of Iraq Kurds and Shi'ites and took part in Iraq's attack on neighbouring Kuwait, but is also killed many of its own members, as reported by the New York-based Human Rights Watch.

"Human rights abuses carried out by MKO leaders against dissident members ranged from prolonged incommunicado and solitary confinement to beatings, verbal and psychological abuse, coerced confessions, threats of execution, and torture that in two cases led to death", the HRW said in one report published last year.

Surprisingly, however, the MKO has some supporters in Congress and this is evidently the result of a long lobbying effort. The effect of this lobbying effort is primarily seen in the repeated claims that some large number of members of Congress have signed on to some statement endorsing the MKO.

In 1990, the Council of Resistance, made of several grouplets most of them existing on letter heads, "elected" Mrs Maryam Rajavi, the third wife of Mas'oud as Iran's president and started a new wave of terrorist operations inside the country.

"If some one in Iran has reliable information about the regime's secrets on nuclear or military activities and for whatever reason he wants to pass them to outside world, he would certainly not give them to a completely discredited group like the Mojahedeen, but would give, or sell them to Western intelligence agencies", added Mr. Khodabandeh, who deserted from the MKO some years ago and is now active in exposing the true face and nature of the Organisation on his internet site "Iran-interlink.org". ■

## MEK TRAPS POWs IN CAMP ASHRAF

August 8, 2005

**Reports indicate that early in June this year, General Miller (commander of coalition forces in Iraq) sent a letter the MKO which said that the Iraqi government wanted to interview nearly 400 Iran-Iraq prisoners-of-war who were in the MKO.**



In the letter, General Miller said that these POWs should be under coalition control for 10 days to be asked, without the presence of MKO agents, why they had stayed in Iraq and whether it was voluntarily or not.

After receiving this letter, Mojgan Parsai and Mehdi Barai gathered all these POWs together and by psychological manipulation [brainwashing] forced them to sign petitions addressed to Human Rights Watch and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

These petitions, which had been prepared before, say that "the Iraqi government wants to put us under pressure to get political information and intelligence about the MKO from us. The war between Iran and Iraq finished several years ago and the issue of POWs has been resolved earlier in interviews with the Red Cross

and the remaining POWs have remained willingly.

In response to this petition, the Red Cross sent a letter to coalition forces. Reminding coalition forces of the 1992 interview with these people, the Red Cross asked the forces to interview them in the framework of the Geneva Convention and that there shouldn't be any political questions about Mojahedin.

The Coalition forces accepted this condition and asked the MKO to produce the POW members, but again the Mojahedin opposed this and said that then these members would be forced to leave the group.

The coalition forces have even accepted this condition and has asked that these POWs be brought for interview at stated hours and on daily basis. In the end, Mojahedin have accepted this issue. They allocated the building

of transportation unit (at the entrance of Ashraf Camp) for this business. Then, in a desperate tactic, the MKO leaders and commanders sent women members to visit the POWs before the interviews to influence them by acting emotionally and asking the men "not to leave them"!!!

The interviews started from July 9, 2005 and each day a number of POWs go to the interview room while they are under the effects of brainwashing by the MKO.

Unfortunately, as before, these methods by the MKO lead to unsafe interviews.

However, despite all the efforts of the MKO, several POWs ask each day to leave this terrorist group and reports indicate that several people have entered the US-run camp.

It should be noted in 1992 when the Red Cross wanted to interview POWs, Mehdi Abrishamchi said that if they want to leave they'd better not to tell that to the Red Cross because there'll

be political problems for the organization. He asked them to tell the officials of MKO if they want to leave and the MKO would pave the way for their travel to Europe and would support them wherever they are!! But after the interviews by Red Cross, those who expressed their desire to leave were labeled as "quitters", "saboteurs" and "mercenaries". They were punished with jail sentences and the MKO went on to abuse them for years. ■

## WHO IS BEHIND THE ABDUCTION OF TWO MEK MEMBERS IN BAGHDAD?

### Ahmad Al-Basri/Iraq Papers

[http://www.iraqpapers.com/8\\_20\\_5\\_ablasri.htm](http://www.iraqpapers.com/8_20_5_ablasri.htm)  
August 28, 2005

**Mojahedin-e khalq Organization claimed on 4th of August that two of its members, Hussein Pouyan and Mohammed Ali Zahedi, have been abducted in Karadeh Street in Baghdad. This comes at a time when the members of this group have pledged not to leave their camp (Ashraf) near Baghdad. MKO says Special Forces of Iraqi Interior Ministry and Badr Brigade are responsible for the abduction.**

Following the publication of this claim, coalition forces condemned the abduction in a statement and asked Iraqi security forces to pursue the case. In addition, US forces took measures to find the members of this organization, which has been listed as a terrorist organization by US State Department and is granted protected status under Geneva Convention.

Now the question is: Who is behind the abduction of the two members of this organization?

To answer this question, we should search among the enemies of this organization and also those who benefit from this operation. There's no doubt that its major enemies are: first, the "regime of Mullahs"

(expression used by the MKO) and second, Iraqi people who have experienced the crimes of this organization. The assumption should also be considered that groups like Badr (Iran-oriented group) and Baathists can take advantage of this.

Is it the work of the Iranian regime, which has been accused by the MKO? Does Iran benefit from kidnapping these two men?

Abduction by Iran is unlikely since it's against the Iranian interests. If it's proved that Iran has been involved in the operation, then it can be said that all charges against Iran (on its interference in Iraqi affairs) are true. On the other hand, Iran has issued public pardon for all MKO members who have not committed any crimes

against Iranians.

That's why more than 400 members of this organization voluntarily, and by the assistance of Iran, coalition forces and Red Cross, returned to Iran and this process has continued to date.

Moreover, the abducted members were low-ranking members and had no special information so there's no justification for their abduction.

Is it, as the MKO claims, the work of pro-Iran Shiite groups?

Badr forces released a statement denying responsibility for this event, despite MKO's involvement in crimes against Iraqi Shiites and involvement in suppressing the uprising of 1991. The only people who take advantage of this operation are Baathists and



remnants of the former regime. These people hope to achieve their goals by abduction, hostage taking, assassinating diplomats and foreign journalists.

Their main motives for such an operation can be listed as follows:

1. Creating division between Iraqi new government and coalition forces on one hand, and between new government and Iranian regime on the other.
2. Using this operation to prove that Iran is interfering in Iraqi affairs. To prove that Iranian revolutionary guards and secret agents move around in the streets of Baghdad and other cities; and also to attribute terrorist operations to Iran.
3. Creating horror and fear among MKO members- in coordination with the MKO itself- to prevent members from returning to Iran.
4. Serving this group as an old ally and trying to remove its name from terror list and also to focus the attention of international organization on this exile group.
5. Creating division among Iraqi groups and blocking the government's efforts to establish peace and security in Iraq, since the survival of this group and that of Baathist groups is dependent on resumption of violence and chaos.



## PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

### Elahe - Grand Dame of Iranian Singers

**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 mullahs' 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 sym-



pathetic 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 apologise 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 cam-

paign 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 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 exhusband Mehdi Abrishamchi wants her to replace Massoud. 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 organisation.

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?**

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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?**

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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. ■

## **SURVIVORS' REPORT**

Association for the Support of Victims of Mojahedin-e Khalq ©2005

### **Editor**

Anne Singleton

### **Contact details**

Iran-Interlink  
PO Box 148, Leeds LS16 5YJ  
United Kingdom  
Telephone +44 113 278 0503  
Email [info@iran-interlink.org](mailto:info@iran-interlink.org)  
Website [www.iran-interlink.org](http://www.iran-interlink.org)