



IRAN LIBERATION

Special Issue

News Bulletin of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Council of Resistance of Iran

September 2011

Washington D.C. - August 26, 2011

Thousands rally outside the U.S. State Department: Delist PMOI (MEK), Protect Ashraf



Maryam Rajavi waves to supporters as she addresses the rally via a satellite link from Paris.



Rep. Patrick Kennedy (at the podium). From left: Louis Freeh, Col. Wes Martin, John Sano, Gov. Ed Rendell and British MP Brian Binley.



Bipartisan US lawmakers voice solidarity with the rally of Iranians

Page 6



McClatchy Newspapers

"Thousands of supporters of Iran's leading opposition group rallied outside the State Department on Friday, calling on the agency to take the group off its list of terrorist organizations."

Page 7

The Washington Post

Iranian dissidents gather high-profile support

"Politicians, former national security officials and thousands of others gathered outside the State Department on Friday to call for the removal of the Mujahedin-e Khalq from the list of foreign terrorist organizations."

Page 7

Iranians from 41 states urge delisting of PMOI (MEK)

Iranians from across the U.S. staged a rally in Washington D.C. outside the State Department on 26 August, 2011 urging immediate removal of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK), Iran's main opposition movement, from the State Department's list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTO). They also asked for ensuring protection of the organization's members in Camp Ashraf in Iraq.

A number of prominent personalities and senior officials delivered speeches in the rally and asked the U.S. government to live up to its commitments regarding 3,400 Ashraf residents. They reiterated that no delay in removing the MEK from the FTO list is permissible.

Patrick Kennedy, U.S. Congressman (1995-2011), and son of the late Senator Edward Kennedy, moderated the event.

Speaking at the rally, the Member of British the Parliament Brian Binley announced the support of 4,000 parliamentarians from across the globe, including a significant number of members of the British Parliament and House of Lords, for delisting the PMOI from the U.S. FTO list.

Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, the President-elect of the Iranian Resistance, addressed the rally via a satellite link from Paris, France.

Patrick Kennedy

Member of U.S. House of Representatives (1995-2011)



**“To my friends
in the State
Department in the
building behind us,
who continue to hold
fast to an old policy
that is supported by
Tehran: You are on
the wrong side of
history.”**

The future of Iran is right here in front of me: You! You young people are the voice of your fellow countrymen who are being oppressed and persecuted by the mullahs in Tehran, but you are their voice.

To the families of the martyrs and the families of those who are in Ashraf I want to say -- on behalf of all of my friends who care about human rights -- that we have not forgotten you, and your cause is our cause, the cause of democracy and human rights.

To my friends in the State Department in the building behind us, who continue to hold fast to an old policy that is supported by Tehran: You are on the wrong side of history!

To Nouri Al-Maliki: Your brutal and deadly assaults on Ashraf will land you in the international criminal court where you will be held accountable.

**“Dr. Martin
Luther King was
labeled a lot of
things during
his fight for
freedom; many
of his detractors
and critics called
him names.
Sounds familiar?
They called him
names and they
labeled him,
a communist,
MEK was labeled
a communist;
MEK is labeled a
terrorist.”**

To the mullahs in Tehran while all of us are waiting for the storm of hurricane Irene bearing down on us, you the mullahs in Iran have much bigger storm clouds gathering around you. The winds of change are blowing stronger than ever and the tide of democracy and freedom is engulfing you. There's a new day dawning for the future of Iran and the terrorists in Tehran better wake up and take note that the Arab Spring is in the air. And to my Iranian-American friends: Keep up the struggle for human rights.

A few blocks from here there is a new monument in Washington DC dedicated to Dr. Martin Luther King. Dr. King was labeled a lot of things during his fight for freedom; many of his detractors and critics called him names. Sounds familiar? They called him names and they labeled him, a communist, MEK was labeled a communist; MEK is labeled a terrorist. Dr. King knew that injustice anywhere was a threat to justice everywhere.

So let's look at history. People tried to

undermine Dr. King by calling him names. They are trying to undermine you by calling you names.

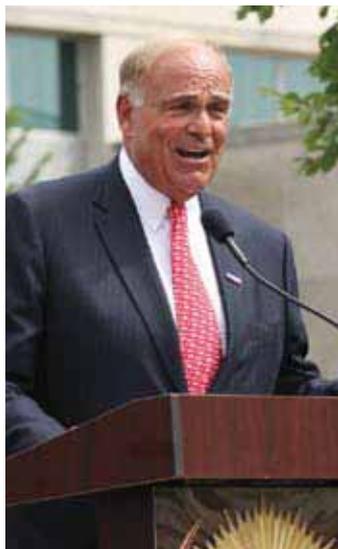
Right now as we speak we're seeing change throughout the Middle East. But how are we going to have permanent democracy and freedom while Iran remains a threat to the whole region and a threat to democracy and peace itself?

You are taking on the worst of the worst. Assad is awful, Qaddafi was awful, they're all awful, but Ahmadinejad and Khamenei have a special place in the rogue gallery of dictators in the Middle East. So, keep up the fight and know that each of you is making a difference and that this is the time to demand the world pay attention to democracy throughout the Middle East, and make sure all of the Middle East is free from repression and tyranny.



Ed Rendell

Former Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, and
Governor of Pennsylvania (2003-2011)



We are here today for two reasons. One is to ensure that the residents of Camp Ashraf get the protection they deserve in the US. And secondly to see that we can delist the MEK today. And those things are related, but let's take them one at a time.

To me it's a disgrace that the United States of America went back on its pledge. A pledge that was signed by us and by every single member of Camp Ashraf when they gave up their weapons, that we would protect them. Did we protect them back in 2009? No. Did we protect them this year? No. In fact American troops were called off

the scene before the attacks took place. The American democracy, this great democracy, reneged on its word when its troops were called to retreat and not protect the residents of Camp Ashraf, and worse, many of the members this year were killed by Iraqi forces using weapons supplied to them by the United States of America and vehicles supplied to them by the United States of America. That has to end. It is time for us to live up to our promise to the residents of Camp Ashraf.

We have a sworn duty, a duty as Americans, a duty as a country to live up to our word. So, Mr. President, Ms. Secretary, lets move now to either tell the Maliki government we're taking back the responsibility of protecting the residents of Ashraf or that the UN with NATO support will oversee Ashraf and make sure that no one gets touched again.

The two issues are related because what did the Maliki government say to try to excuse their reprehensible actions in Ashraf? They said well, they're on the United States Terrorist List, they're on the FTO

“Madame Secretary! Mr. President! The FBI, the CIA, the US military, the base Commander of Ashraf. What more evidence can we give you?”

list. Well, first of all, that doesn't excuse slaughtering innocent people, including eight defenseless women but let's look at the second issue. Should the MEK be on the list as a foreign terrorist organization? Is there any evidence to support the MEK being on that list?

Madame Secretary! Mr. President! The FBI, the CIA, the US military, the base Commander of Ashraf. What more evidence can we give you? But the good news is there is still more because our brethren in the United Kingdom, our good friends

in the European Union, the wonderful nation of France, they have all looked at this same issue and they have said there's no reason to keep the MEK on a terrorist list and they have all delisted the MEK.

The evidence is overwhelming. The time is now! The White House and the State Department must ensure that the evidence is followed. The White House and the State Department must ensure that justice prevails. The White House and the State Department must ensure that the basic principles of the American democracy are followed. The White House and the State Department should follow the world community. Delist the MEK and do it now!

Message to the rally by

Maryam Rajavi

President-elect of the National
Council of Resistance of Iran



(Excerpts)

It has been more a year since the ruling of the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington, which ordered the State Department to review the terrorist listing of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK).

The terror listing in the U.S. is openly used as a justification to legitimize such bloodletting, both by the cruel mullahs in Tehran as well as their proxy government in Iraq. Therefore, the Iranian people are asking the United States, 'Why are you not annulling the license to kill our children?' Today, this disgraceful listing separates the two camps of the regime's supporters on the one hand and those defending freedom and democracy in Iran on the other.

On the one hand is the camp inspired by the mullahs themselves, which includes those serving and siding with religious dictatorship, those who justify the massacre of political prisoners, defend the Iranian regime's nuclear drive, oppose sanctions against the ruling religious fascism and broker appeasing the central banker of terrorism; they all endeavor to maintain the PMOI on the list. With their Iranian or American passports in hand, they are the ones who have for all these years justified the suppression of the Iranian people while uploading the proverbial ammunitions for the destruction of Ashraf and massacre of its residents.

In reality, they are the plainclothes agents and paramilitary Bassij forces abroad, billed as "experts," "activists," and "academics." This is the camp that is defending the religious fascism.

On the other side, consider the camp that is defending freedom and democracy in Iran and defending Ashraf. Thousands of parliamentarians and human rights advocates in the Arab world and in Europe, joined by a large number of members of the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate, forming a great global voice in defense of the freedom-loving Iranian Resistance.

In the U.S., especially over the past year, everyone was able to see that under the most intense pressures, members of Congress exhibited great courage in their defense of Ashraf and in rejecting the terrorism label.

Dozens of the most honorable former senior officials serving in the country's administrations over the last two decades have taken a clear stance in the course of their multiple international conferences in Washington, Brussels, Paris, Berlin, London and Rome, leaving absolutely no credibility for this listing.

We have seen how the mullahs' regime and the insignificant factions directed by Tehran utilize cruelty and insolence to attack and avenge these dignified personalities. But, these officials have shown extraordinary courage by placing their credibility and political reputation in support of this Resistance.

The evil forces that have laid a siege on your sisters and brothers in Camp Ashraf seek to destroy and annihilate Ashraf and its freedom-seeking residents. But, you have spread the flames of Ashraf in your gathering and hoisted its flag. Hold onto this flag more powerfully, because this is the banner of freedom and democracy in Iran.

Clearly, the U.S. bears special responsibility for ensuring the protection of these residents on the basis of its agreements with every single one of the residents in Camp Ashraf.

As stressed by members of Congress, the U.S. government would be responsible for any future humanitarian catastrophes in Ashraf.

We urge the U.S. to listen to Congress and the resolution passed by the House Foreign Affairs Committee and leave aside the idea of displacing Ashraf residents within Iraq. We call on the U.S. to support the European solution instead of this dangerous idea which will have no results other than a humanitarian catastrophe.

Similarly, we want the United Nations to rise up to its irrevocable obligations in ensuring the protection of Ashraf.

“In the world of the law, non-response to a court becomes contemptuous at a certain point.

It is time for the Secretary of State to act and to act decisively and importantly to delist the MEK.”



Louis Freeh
Former FBI Director

Who is it that opposes the proposition that the MEK is not a terrorist organization? Well, there are a couple of contenders: there is the regime in Tehran, and there's a serious listing, I call it a mis-listing, in the US Department of State. Have you heard one former respected, or unrespected government official anywhere in the United States or any place else get up and say publicly that the MEK has terrorist tendencies? Is it a coincidence that no one of that tenure has approached you? No, of course not. No one except the regime in Tehran has taken the opposite position.

The Court of Appeals, which you've heard about, over a year ago told the Secretary of State that they had violated the due process rights of the PMOI, the MEK, by not giving them access transparency, and the court found that the sources that the Department of State was using to argue that this group belongs on the FTO list were unqualified, uncorroborated and not credible. We have not heard anything in response to that decision by the Department of State except they're reviewing it. Well, review becomes an abuse of process after a certain point. In the world of the law, non-response to a court becomes contemptuous at a certain point. It is time for the Secretary of State to act and to act decisively and importantly to delist the MEK.

Every moment this organization is classified by the United States government, the United States of America as a terrorist organization, gives the brutal regime in Tehran the license to arrest, detain, torture and kill its' own freedom fighters at home and the people in Ashraf who are boldly leading the freedom fight outside of its borders. This license to kill will only abate, will only be removed once that the listing stops. That has to be done, and has to be done now.



John Sano
Former First Deputy
Director of Central
Intelligence Agency
National Clandestine
Service

The main perpetrators of the continuing pressure to keep the MEK on the foreign terrorist organizations list is the Ministry of Intelligence and Security, the MOIS, in Iran.

I have experience in dealing with them, and I am familiar to a degree with some of their methods. The MOIS is not restricted in its efforts to undermine the credibility of the Iranian opposition. They view the MEK quite clearly, as a severe threat to the continued existence of their regime.

The MOIS conducts, what we call in the intelligence business “false

“The MOIS conducts, what we call in the intelligence business ‘false flags’ in other words they pose as someone other than their true affiliation.

They have posed as members of the Green Movement most recently.”

flags” in other words they pose as someone other than their true affiliation. They have posed as members of the Green Movement most recently, they have posed as members of the MEK, and they do that so that they can stir up problems, so that they can stir up difficulties for host nations, around the world. Create bad publicity for the MEK and blame it on the MEK.

I've looked at the declassified intelligence that was used throughout the past several years to maintain the MEK on the FTO. Everything I saw in those reports based on my nearly 30 years of experience none of them indicated to me, even as director Freeh has pointed out, none of that indicated even a very slight degree that there was any credibility to the terrorist linkage to MEK, none. So why are we still doing it? Why are we still keeping them on the list? It's appeasement.

Appeasement never works, and what Tehran see's in the United States is kindness and it is time to be strong and it is time to stand up and do the right thing. Delist the MEK.



Brian Binley
Member of British Parliament

“For the U.S., to uphold a listing which my country described as ‘perverse’ is unacceptable.”



It's a privilege to be with you. Could I also say what an honor it is to speak on the same platform as the great men you've listened to this morning, and the gentlemen you will listen to if I only stick to five minutes. What a privilege to stand in the capital of this great democracy; to be able to speak to you as free individuals in a democratic society. Salam Camp Ashraf! We are with you! Let me tell you that I represent about 400 parliamentarians from what I consider to be the "mother of parliaments," the British Parliament. And can I say to you that they stand with you too.

You may know that I was one of the 35 parliamentarians who put his name amongst others to the petition to remove the PMOI from the British prescribed list. It was a battle that we succeeded, and we succeeded because one of the most senior judges of our land said that prescription was "perverse." It was one of the most remarkable statements made in a British court—to call a decision of government "perverse."

Now let me tell you that for a nation that I've always looked up to, the great United States of America, to uphold a listing which my country – the legal jurisdiction of my country – described as perverse is unacceptable of this nation.

So let me say to Mrs. Clinton, and I pray to the almighty that she listens to these words: My parents were around in 1939 when it became vital that we stood up against the Nazi attack on our society and yours. I was there when I saw the troops go to Iraq. But I did not see those troops give their lives in support of a government which supports Iran. But what I say to Mrs. Clinton is send a message to that government. Send a message to al-Maliki: We in free and democratic societies will not put up with what you're doing. Let her, as a first step, de-proscribe the MEK.



Colonel Wesley Martin (Ret.)

Former Coalition's counter terrorism commander in Iraq and US commander for protection of Ashraf

The rumor is the people of Ashraf are being held against their will. Just like before we stood up here today I took a walk through the crowd and met with many of you, that was always done in Ashraf

and the shaking hands; if anybody wished to leave, all they had to do was keep hold of my hand and they could walk out with me. Yet every member of Camp Ashraf stayed because that's where their mission was, they were very loyal to it, they were not being held against their will.

The rumor is being spread the MEK has no influence in Iran. If that is true then why is Khamenei and Ahmadinejad spending so much effort trying to keep the MEK on the list and trying to get Maliki give them the MEK.

“Let's get the MEK off the terrorist list; they never should have been there in the first place.”

When our founding fathers built the Constitution they put the legislative branch of the government first, because that represented the will of the people, the executive came second to carry out that will, State Department wasn't even mentioned in the Constitution, and the judicial branch was mentioned was stated

third is to ensure that justice was done.

Yet the State Department has ignored the Congress. Recently at congressional hearings they were too busy to even send a representative and they are now six months overdue in complying with the judicial branch. It's like they have become the law upon themselves and we've yet to see the State Department aggressively condemn the attacks of 2009 and 2011. If you want to see who the terrorists are watch the videos; they're the ones wearing Iraqi Army uniforms killing innocent unarmed people.

We have three actions for solution. One: let's get the MEK off the terrorist list; they never should've been there in the first place. Two: let's have the MEK secured by US forces and I'm willing to put a uniform back on and head back over there and lead those forces, and let's move the Mojahedin out of Iraq to a secure location.



Bipartisan US lawmakers voiced solidarity with the rally of thousands of Iranians in Washington, D.C. outside the State Department

Among those who sent messages of solidarity were: Senator John Boozman (member of Senate Trade, Science and Transportation Committee); Senator Claire McCaskill (member of Senate Armed Forces Committee); Rep. Bob Filner (Ranking Democrat in House Veterans' Affairs Committee, Co-Chair, Iran Human Rights and Democracy Caucus); Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (Chair of the House Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigation, Co-Chair, Iran Human Rights and Democracy Caucus); Rep. Judge Ted Poe (member of House Foreign Affairs Committee); Rep. Mike Coffman (member of House Armed Forces Committee); Rep. Judy Chu (member of Judicial and Terrorism Subcommittee); Rep. Ed Towns (ranking Democrat in Government Oversight Committee); Rep. William Lacy Clay; Rep. Daniel Lungren and Rep. Tom McClintock. Excerpts from some of the messages are presented below.



Dana Rohrabacher
(R-CA)
Member of Congress



Bob Filner
(D-CA)
Member of Congress

"We join you in calling on Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to immediately complete her review of the MEK status - as ordered last year by the United States Court of Appeals in Washington, DC. We echo the sentiments of prominent former U.S. officials such as General James Jones; Governor Tom Ridge, General Hugh Shelton, Mayor Rudy Giuliani, Governor Howard Dean, Judge Louis Freeh, Judge Michael Mukasey, General Michael Hayden, as well nearly 100 co-sponsors of H. Res.60 who have called on her to remove the MEK from the U.S. FTO list.

We warn that failure to do so immediately places the lives of the 3,400 unarmed Camp Ashraf civilians in grave danger and prevents peaceful and acceptable settlement of these political refugees to any democratic nation."

Senator John Boozman (R-AR), Member of U.S. Senate

The House Foreign Affairs Committee unanimously adopted an amendment to H.R. 2583, the FY 2012 Foreign Relations Authorization Act, which would urge the government of Iraq to uphold commitments to the United States for ensuring the continued well-being of those living in Camp Ashraf and prevent their involuntary return to Iran or forcibly relocate from Camp Ashraf. This includes, but is not limited to, the physical security and protection of all residents from any oppression. I commend you all on your dedication and courage and I will continue to closely monitor the treatment and conditions at Camp Ashraf.



Edolphus "ED" Towns (D-NY)

Member of Congress

Myself, and members of the United States Congress are with you. I join you and my colleagues in Congress in calling on the Department of State to act. The United States cannot ignore its promise to protect the people of Ashraf nor should it give Iran or Iraq any pretext for more suppression.



Lacy Clay (D-MO)

Member of Congress

You are here to ask why the Secretary of State has not yet ordered the removal of the residents of Camp Ashraf and the MEK from the list of terrorist organizations. It remains a source of wonder and deep regret that the MEK was ever placed on that list by a previous American administration.



Tom McClintock (R-CA)

Member of Congress

I join you in calling for Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to expeditiously complete the department's review of the MEK as ordered by the Federal Court of Appeals. Any further delay would be irresponsible, will endanger the lives of the people in Ashraf, and embolden the dictators in Iran and their friends in Iraq.



Mike Coffman (R-CO)

Member of Congress

To remove residents of Ashraf and the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (MEK/PMOI) from the U.S. terror list - just as our European allies have done ... we must convince Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and President Barack Obama to listen to the demands included in House Resolution 60 as soon as possible.



Daniel Lungren (R-CA)

Member of Congress

I am happy to be among about 100 co-sponsors of House Resolution 60. The resolution asks our government to do what the United States Court of Appeals has also suggested: to remove residents of Ashraf and the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (MEK/PMOI) from the U.S. terror list - just as our European allies have done.



Judy Chu (D-CA)

Member of Congress

You are asking that our government do what the Court has ordered it to do: that is to put forward a decision regarding the unfair FTO designation of the MEK. The United States Congress is with you. I join you in calling for Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to listen to the demands included in House Resolution 60 as soon as possible.



Expression of Support with the International Campaign to Delist PMOI

Dr. Saleh al-Mutlak, Deputy Prime Minister,
General Secretary, Iraqi National Movement al-Iraqia

August 25th 2011



We had previously discussed the negative impacts of PMOI designation with the US ambassadors, but now there is no doubt left that this blacklisting has provided the justification for bringing harm and injustice to defenseless people inside Iran and abroad and has impeded our efforts to help the residents of Ashraf and save them from aggression and misconduct, believing that they deserve a treatment as political

refugees protected under Geneva's Fourth Convention and the international law. We call on the US to do what has long been overdue and suggested by a judicial decision to lift the terror tag from the PMOI. I once again commend your determination and believe that you will prevail.

The Washington Post Iranian dissidents gather high-profile support

August 27, 2011 (Excerpts) - Politicians, former national security officials and thousands of others gathered outside the State Department on Friday to call for the removal of the Mujahedin-e Khalk, an Iranian opposition group, from the list of foreign terrorist organizations. Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" blasted from large speakers and doves and clouds of confetti flew into the air as former congressman Patrick J. Kennedy (D-R.I.) introduced the group's leader, Maryam Rajavi, to speak by video link from Paris.

"I salute your protest and gathering, which symbolizes an uprising for the freedom of the Iranian people," said Rajavi, speaking in Farsi. The controversial group, usually called by the acronym MEK, is made up of exiled Iranian dissidents who organized in the 1960s and now are mounting a political and legal campaign to end their designation as terrorists. The group violently opposed the rule of the shah and initially supported the Islamist regime that came to power in 1979, but they became disillusioned with the theocracy and eventually fled amid growing hostility.

Some went to Europe, and others went to Iraq, where they built a heavily fortified base, called Camp Ashraf, northeast of Baghdad. The U.S. designated MEK a terrorist group in 1997 after blaming it for attacks on Iranian government institutions in which dozens were killed, including Americans working in Tehran. Kennedy said the group does not now commit acts of terrorism or pose a threat to the United States. He and others hailed the group as a legitimate alternative to Iran's repressive government.

"How much worse can we do than the mullahs in Tehran now?" Kennedy asked. "Does it make sense to shackle the primary opposition group internationally? You may not like them. They may not have a lot of support. . . . But we ought to be on the opposite side of what Tehran favors as a matter of principle."

Retired Army Col. Wesley Martin said: "The opposition in Iran has been sent to the gallows

or prison. [MEK is] the only external organization with influence."

A growing number of high-profile figures support removing the MEK from the list of terrorist groups. Those who have spoken in support of the move include retired Army Gen. Hugh Shelton and retired Marine Gen. Peter Pace, both former chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; retired Marine Gen. James L. Jones, who was President Obama's national security adviser; and former Vermont governor Howard Dean.

Lawmakers from both parties have criticized the Obama administration for not moving swiftly to clear MEK's name or to facilitate a move to a country outside Iraq...

After the 2003 invasion, MEK members were offered American protection in exchange for giving up their weapons.... About 3,400 members still live at Camp Ashraf, where there have been clashes with Iraqi government forces.

Speaking at the event Friday, former FBI director Louis J. Freeh called for American support for the group as U.S. troop levels decline in Iraq. He

said abandoning MEK to Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, whom he accused of collusion with the Iranian regime, could lead to a massacre "worse than Srebrenica," a reference to a notorious 1995 atrocity during the war in Bosnia.

"I think the U.S. should be willing to take at least some of these people, because we have agreements with them," said Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (R-Calif.), who in most cases is a hard-liner on immigration issues. He said the group had provided intelligence on Iran to the United States...

Many other officials, including Freeh, have received money for speaking at events supporting MEK. Freeh said he received no compensation for attending Friday's event.

"The issue is whether the group should be on the list," he said. "Are these people being paid to say something they do not believe in? Absolutely not."

MEK says it receives money largely from wealthy Iranian American families who support its cause, but it does not disclose the names of donors.

A huge crowd of Iranian-American demonstrate in front of the US Department of State



A huge crowd of Iranian American demonstrators protest during a rally in front of the US Department of State on August 26, 2011 in Washington, DC. The group was demanding the removal of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran from the list of terrorist organizations by the State Department.



Protesters hope to end terrorist label for Iranian group

McClatchy Newspapers

WASHINGTON, August 26, 2011 (Excerpts) — Thousands of supporters of Iran's leading opposition group rallied outside the State Department on Friday, calling on the agency to take the group off its list of terrorist organizations. Former Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell and several other politicians addressed the mostly Iranian-American crowd, which gathered at midmorning in support of the People's Mojahedeen of Iran, commonly referred to by the initials of its Farsi name, MEK...

"The evidence is overwhelming," Rendell, a Democrat, told the demonstrators Friday as he called on the State Department to delist the MEK. "The time is now."

Demonstrators — decked in the MEK's blue and yellow — heard a similar message from Patrick Kennedy, a former Democratic congressman for Rhode Island.

"The future of Iran is right in here in front of me," Kennedy said. "Your cause is our cause, is the cause of democracy and human rights."

The State Department is reviewing the MEK's designation, but no final decision has been made, spokesman Mark Toner said last month at a news briefing. Reached late Friday afternoon, a department spokesman declined to comment about the day's protest.

The rally brought Iranian-Americans to Washington from across the country. Hoora Mostashari, 50, flew in from Orange County, Calif., to protest what she sees as American appeasement of Iran's leaders.

"It's a failed policy from Neville Chamberlain until now," she said, in reference to the former British prime minister who favored appeasement over confrontation with Adolf Hitler.

