

DEMOCRACY BETRAYED

A Response to U.S. State
Department Report on
the Mojahedin and the
Iranian Resistance

*The National Council of Revolutionary of Iran
Foreign Affairs Committee*

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FOREWORD

Some five months have passed since the publication of the State Department's controversial report on the People's Mojahedin of Iran, a member of the National Council of Resistance. In this short period, the report has been completely discredited. Iranians reacted strongly, protesting its contents. The Mojahedin and NCR officially rejected the findings, and many members of Congress expressed outrage. The media ran a number of articles and commentaries by distinguished American experts, discounting the report. Perhaps most damaging was the hasty enthusiasm of the mullahs, who fired Scud missiles at a base of the Iranian Resistance just a week after the report came out.

An impartial report was, of course, not expected. Prior to publication, the State Department had stubbornly refused to hear the views of the Iranian Resistance, despite congressional insistence. Barely three weeks after publication, Gary Sick, one of the Department's main sources, suggested that the U.S. appoint Assistant Secretary of State Robert Pelletreau, head of Near East Bureau which prepared the report, as special envoy to Tehran's rulers. His proposal left no doubt that the authors espouse the same policy that brought about the Irangate scandal: appeasing the Khomeini regime.

During this period, the role of the religious dictatorship in exporting terrorism, subverting peace, and arming, dispatching and directing extremists and fundamentalists in the region has been further exposed. Clearly, this has meant another policy failure for the authors of the report, proponents of appeasement, and those still searching for "moderate" factions within the tyranny of terror.

A number of recent developments indicate that the policy of

appeasing the mullahs does not hold water in the international community, and is losing its traditional advocates in the U.S. as well. Palestinian and Israeli leaders have both emphasized that the Khomeini regime has emerged as the greatest enemy to peace and stability in the region. NATO's Secretary General also commented on the dangers of Khomeinism, noting that "fundamentalism is at least as dangerous as communism was" to the European Union. Scandinavian countries rejected the regime's envoys. The Islamic Conference Organization condemned extremism, stressing the need to confront it, at the Organization's Summit in Casablanca. [Meeting in Manama, Bahrain, the Gulf Cooperation Council expressed its concern about the dangers of fundamentalism.](#) Chancellor Helmut Kohl and other senior German officials echoed the same concerns. Reynaldo Galindo Pohl, the Special Representative of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, issued two reports in November and February, and U.N. General Assembly adopted a resolution in December, condemning Tehran's persistent human rights abuses and export of terrorism. Newt Gingrich, the U.S. House Speaker, spoke of the need to replace the Khomeini regime, while in the Senate, a bill was proposed to impose comprehensive sanctions against Tehran. Secretary of State Warren Christopher spoke out on the need for change in the "rogue state." These point to the isolation of a policy prevailing in the State Department's Near East Bureau that favors the criminal rulers in Tehran and opposes the Iranian Resistance,

The experience of the past 16 years has demonstrated that for historical, social and political reasons, change in Iran is possible only through the Iranian people and Resistance. Anything else is but a mirage. This is so clear-cut, that even those who do not approve of the Mojahedin acknowledge it. In its February 6th issue, *Time Magazine* wrote: "There is, though, an initiative the U.S. should take to maintain pressure. It should consult again with the People's Mujahedin, an important group opposed to the Tehran regime that the State Department has ignored since 1987. The Mojahedin are no angels. . . . Still they are thorns in Tehran's side and have helped exacerbate public discontent within the country. If the U.S. is as serious about Iran as Warren Christopher insists, it will not hurt to talk to this enemy's enemy."

The Iranian Resistance has long endeavored to establish democracy, independence, peace and stability in Iran. Some 100,000

people have given their lives for this cause. This Resistance cherishes the friendship of all those who respect the right of the Iranian people to resist. Fortunately, many in the international community and U.S. sympathize with our views. There are, however, others who subscribe to policies such as the one responsible for the 1953 coup against Dr. Mossadeq, who are nostalgic about the shah's era, or still live in the cold-war era of the '70s. They are behind the times. Meanwhile, the Iranian Resistance has a vast popular base and international recognition. We will not wait for the State Department to change its mind before bringing change to Iran.

In light of the developments of the past four months, perhaps there was no need for a detailed response to the State Department's report, particularly since the NCR's Foreign Affairs Committee had just published a book in September, *Appeasing Tehran's Mullahs*, which responded to the State Department's accusations. The report, however, was an unprecedented collection of any and all allegations fielded by the Khomeini regime, the shah's retinue and the pro-Moscow communists. The present book elaborates on the Iranian Resistance's positions and views on the issues mentioned in the report. We hope that it provides a better understanding of the Iranian Resistance and Mojahedin, and in opening up this debate to the public on the roots of this hostility. It is our hope that it will contribute to a constructive discussion of a proper policy towards the regime ruling Iran.

In the course of preparing this book, all of the sources cited by the State Department and many other books and articles were consulted. We spoke privately with many experts in the U.S., Europe and Middle East. We have tried to stick mostly to the sources and experts the State Department has cited. Needless to say, citing these sources does not necessarily imply our approval of their views. We also interviewed a number of the Mojahedin's officials. Sections of the book dealing with the Mojahedin have been prepared in cooperation with them, under their responsibility.

National Council of Resistance of Iran

Foreign Affairs Committee

1 March 1995

PREFACE

In an official declaration in December 1994, signed by all its 235 member organizations and personalities, including the chairs of its 18 committees, the National Council of Resistance of Iran described the U.S. State Department report against the People's Mojahedin of Iran as "worthless" and "abounding in distortions and contradictions." It said the report, submitted to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives on October 28, 1994, amounts to a rehash of the State Department's baseless allegations against the Iranian Resistance since 1985, dating back to the Irangate scandal and dealings with the Khomeini regime.

Stressing that despite congressional urging and emphasis, those preparing it had stubbornly refused to hear the views of the Mojahedin and other members of the NCR, the declaration underscored the following points:

1- The report is released at a time when the clerical regime is beset by internal and external crises. There are no prospects for the regime's viability and survival as the crisis of *Marja'iat* (leadership) escalates, discontent among different sectors of society incessantly mounts, and popular protests and violent uprisings expand. In contrast, the National Council of Resistance and the National Liberation Army of Iran are prepared to overthrow the Khomeini regime and establish liberty and popular sovereignty. The Iranian people's enthusiastic support, in and out of Iran, for the Resistance's President-elect, Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, during the week of national solidarity, the July 21 worldwide demonstrations and the *Mehregan* celebrations, testifies to this fact.

Under such circumstances, lacking an alternative to their liking,

the advocates of the same policies that led to the shameful 1953 *coup d'état* against the nationalist government of Dr. Mohammad Mossadeq, who reject an independent, free, democratic, advanced and modern Iran, have published this report in a bid to appease the religious tyranny and retard the rapid pace of developments favoring the democratic and popular alternative. It is not without reason that for the most part, the report repeats vituperations by the remnants of the Shah's regime and proponents of the current one.

2- It must be stressed that only the people of Iran are qualified to decide on the merits, or lack thereof, of the political alternative to Khomeini's illegitimate regime. Although the ruling religious, terrorist dictatorship has denied the Iranian people the chance to go to the ballot box and elect freely, they have nonetheless extended the highest degree of trust and support to the Iranian Resistance. If it were otherwise, the National Council of Resistance would have had no roots among the Iranian people and definitely been destroyed. In that case, there would have been no need for 41 pages of distortions and slanders. How can one describe a Resistance as lacking in roots and credibility, and dependent on a country smaller than its own, and yet deem such an onslaught against it by the State Department of the sole super power in the world as urgent and necessary? Is it not a fact that they have assessed the clerical dictatorship's overthrow and the assumption of power by this very Council, as definite?

Like Dr. Mossadeq, the greatest "sin" of the NCR and its President, Mr. Massoud Rajavi, has been to uphold and strive for independence, democracy and human rights. It is not surprising, therefore, that this report describes the Mojahedin and the National Council of Resistance as "fundamentally undemocratic" and says that "they are not a viable alternative to Iran's current regime."

3- The National Council of Resistance is committed to transfer power to the people's representatives within six-months of the regime's overthrow through direct, general elections for a National Legislative and Constituent Assembly. The NCR guarantees the "individual and social rights of the people, as stipulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, all general freedoms, including the right to hold assemblies, freedom of speech and beliefs, the press, parties, syndicates, councils, religions and denominations, and the freedom to choose one's occupation." It emphasizes "political and social equality among all citizens and abolishes all privileges on the basis of gender,

creed or ideology." It declares "all citizens equal before the law and underscores complete social, political, cultural and economic equality between women and men." These ratified documents have been published frequently and are readily accessible to all. That those preparing the report chose not to refer to them, only reflects their bias and the report's lack of credibility.

4- The National Council of Resistance vehemently rejects and condemns the report's false and erroneous statements about the NCR, its history, past and present members; the unfounded allegations against its President; and the redundant charges of lack of democracy within the Council. The NCR reiterates: "Mr. Massoud Rajavi is the Council's President and spokesman. As such, his views and stances must be regarded as the culmination of the Council's deliberations and decisions." The NCR's *modus operandi* and decision-making process are based on formally announced democratic guidelines and bylaws, fully implemented by its President in the 14 years since the NCR's foundation. Mr. Massoud Rajavi has founded a lasting coalition in our history which is the nationalist and democratic alternative to this terrorist regime. Thus, it is only natural that he would be the first target of accusations by the enemies of our liberation movement. Precisely for this reason, this slander and these insults and accusations are considered as an attempt to destroy a movement and constitute a declaration of enmity toward the entirety of an enchained nation and its combatants of freedom.

5- The National Council of Resistance emphasizes that such reports and the policy of appeasement that placates the ruling mullahs only embolden them to persist in internal suppression and export of terrorism and fundamentalism to other countries. Due to the presence of a nationwide and just Resistance and its military arm, the National Liberation Army, however, the current Iranian situation is vastly different from the time of the 1953 *coup d'état* and the Irangate era. Nothing can prevent this regime's overthrow and the victory of a democratic and nationalist Iran. In this path, the National Council of Resistance of Iran welcomes the friendship of all nations, governments, forces and personalities who respect the just rights of the Iranian people for democracy and independence.

INTRODUCTION

A Policy Isolated

Section 523 of the 1994-95 Foreign Relations Authorization Act, adopted in April 1994, called on the President of the United States to prepare and submit a report to Congress on the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran. To ensure the impartiality of the report and preclude prejudgment, the bill urged those preparing it to consult and talk with the widest range of people possible.

Before the State Department's report was published on October 28, however, it had already been discredited. The Department had disregarded the congressional requests, and refused to hear the views of the Mojahedin and National Council of Resistance. Nor had it consulted with Iranians residing in the U.S. Members of the House of Representatives said the malevolent approach did not comply with the spirit of the law. In a bipartisan initiative, 110 members of the House and the Senate had written in early September to the Secretary of State, emphasizing the need for direct dialogue with the representatives of the National Council of Resistance and Mojahedin. In their letter, they had concluded, "The report will be of little value without such consultation."

Dozens of major newspapers, political magazines and local papers published analytical articles, criticizing the State Department's approach to the Mojahedin. *The New York Times* ran an editorial entitled "Listen to All Iranian Voices." On Capitol Hill, members described the report as a gift to the Iranian regime. *The New York Times* wrote that the report had drawn ire in Congress. *The Washington Post* noted that even prior to publication, the report's value was already being questioned because of the way in which it had been prepared.

The dictatorship ruling Iran was the only party to welcome the

report, calling it a sign of America's awakening to the truth of the mullahs' statements about the terrorist nature of the Mojahedin. Quick to take advantage of the circumstances, only a week after the report came out, the mullahs attacked an Iranian Resistance base on the Iran-Iraq border with three Scud-B missiles. Observers described the State Department's report as a green light for the assault. Although the U.S. Department of Defense confirmed the regime's firing of missiles, the State Department kept silent on this flagrant violation of international law.

The State Department claims that the report is the outcome of six months of research and consultation with numerous government agencies, academics and experts. But the evidence suggests otherwise. The allegations contained therein are identical to those stated in the Department's July 26 letter to Representative Robert Torricelli. In November, the Department sent a letter to congressmen, purportedly reporting on the outcome of its research, but the text was a reproduction of the same July 26 letter.

The sources of the report are very limited and selective. It contains some 40 cases of outright fabrication, distortion and contradiction. To arrive at their desired conclusions, the authors doctored or created events according to their needs.

The real question is why the State Department has adopted this malevolent approach to the Mojahedin and Iranian Resistance. The Department claims that it opposes the Mojahedin and Iranian Resistance because they are undemocratic, use violence against the regime, are present in the form of the Resistance's military arm at the Iran-Iraq border, carried out certain actions in the 70s, etc. These allegations surfaced for the first time in 1985. As revealed later, they were part of the Irangate swap with the religious dictatorship ruling Iran.

The Iranian Resistance has examined each and every one of the accusations, both in the past and in this book. It has provided sufficient documents and has clarified historical events, proving that the allegations are false.

Representative Torricelli has commented that the State Department has an excuse, and a real reason for its attitude. The accusations are only excuses. The reason is that the Department does not wish to offend the clerics. It is injudicious for the United States, or any other country or political party, to base its policies on events

alleged to have happened 20 years ago, and whose falsity has been confirmed by documents and evidence. Significantly, while the State Department uses these excuses to justify its opposition to the Iranian Resistance, State officials repeatedly invite the Iranian regime to engage in dialogue, although they acknowledge it is responsible for the deaths of hundreds of American marines in Beirut.

A better understanding of the Mojahedin requires a better understanding of their ideology, which is based on a democratic and progressive interpretation of Islam. The Mojahedin believe that the key characteristic distinguishing humankind from animals is free will. Because man is free, he can accept responsibility and be held accountable. In this light, democracy and commitment to freedom are not mere political ideals, but ideological principles, guiding the Mojahedin's conduct, despite many ups and downs and complex circumstances.

Although they soon established themselves as the opposition to the new regime after the fall of the shah, the Mojahedin insisted on non-violence in their political struggle to promote democracy. Only after all means of peaceful political activity had been eliminated, and the Khomeini regime had opened fire on the demonstration by half a million people in Tehran on June 20, 1981, did the Mojahedin rise up. The Department's December 1984 report acknowledged these events.

The Mojahedin believe that just as the Americans had a right to take up arms for their independence, and the French had a right to resist against Hitler, the people of Iran, too, have a right to take up arms against a regime condemned 33 times by the United Nations for its violations of human rights and terrorism. This right is recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the U.S. Declaration of Independence.

All members of the National Council of Resistance are in agreement on the essential need for democracy. The program of the NCR promotes individual freedoms, equality of the sexes, rights of ethnic and religious minorities, a free market economy, and support for the establishment of peace in the Middle East and stability in the region. The 235-member coalition of democratic Iranian forces and individuals is committed to political pluralism. The Council will administrate Iran for no more than six months after the overthrow of the mullahs' regime, during which time it will hold free elections

and transfer power to the people's elected representatives. The NCR program stresses that "freedoms are not restricted up to the point of armed struggle against the legitimate and legal system of the country." The ballot is the only criterion for political legitimacy, the NCR believes.

There is no basis to the claim in the report that the NCR's decision-making process is undemocratic. Nor is there any substance to the accusation that the NCR's decisions to no longer cooperate with certain individuals and groups reflect an undemocratic nature. In the world of politics, joining or seceding from a party or coalition is routine. More importantly, the cases mentioned in the report involve persons or groups expelled for violating the NCR's constitution. All debate in these instances was made public.

The State Department also cites the NCR's refusal to cooperate with remnants of SAVAK and groups like the Communist Tudeh Party -an ally of the regime and a KGB operative in Iran- concluding that the NCR has been rejected by Iranian political forces. The National Council of Resistance has always emphasized that it is a coalition of *democratic* forces. The State Department's suggestion that the NCR should cooperate with forces that are detested and rejected by the people of Iran is outlandish.

The NCR and Mojahedin's conduct over the years best attests to their commitment to their declared principles. This demand for democracy from the Resistance by persons inviting the mullahs to engage in a dialogue is but a ploy against democracy and human rights in Iran.

The Department's objection to the presence of the Resistance's military arm, the National Liberation Army of Iran, on the Iran-Iraq border strip is another excuse for its malevolent position. The Iranian Resistance's independence during the Iran-Iraq war, the Kuwait crisis, and other regional and international incidents disproves all allegations.

The State Department knows full well that the Khomeini regime will not be ousted without a fight, and the Iran-Iraq border region is the only location suited to an army with that aim. If resistance is the legitimate right of the people of Iran, maintaining an armed, organized military force is obviously a prerequisite to any serious resistance movement. Therefore, those criticizing the Iranian Resistance for having an army on the Iran-Iraq border strip are, in

fact, trying to discredit resistance itself. In other words, they advocate compromise with the mullahs, but dare not say so outright.

Choices

An examination of the U.S. State Department report on the People's Mojahedin of Iran reveals that its main argument with the Mojahedin is neither democracy, nor use of violence, nor the presence of the Resistance's military arm on the Iran-Iraq border, nor the Mojahedin's past. At issue are two different policies towards the mullahs' regime.

For a number of years, there has been a trend in the United States which has invested in the reformation of the mullahs' regime. On this basis, it advocates a policy of appeasing the mullahs and opposing an independent, democratic alternative. A few decades ago, essentially the same policy preferred the shah to Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadeq and engineered a coup which toppled his nationalist government and installed dictatorship in Iran.

American public opinion, and the mullahs' international terrorism, flagrant human rights abuses, etc., make the clerics difficult to defend. Appeasement advocates thus try to distort and tarnish the image of the independent, democratic alternative, the NCR. In the absence of a "suitable alternative," they believe, *Realpolitik* will dictate rapprochement with the religious dictatorship. Use of the reprehensible tactic of character assassination against NCR President Massoud Rajavi, is but part of this larger plan. The ploy, of course, is nothing new. During the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln, one of America's most revered presidents, came under attack from both sides of the political spectrum, and was described as a dictator, insane, and unfit to be president. Franklin D. Roosevelt, one of the five greatest American presidents, was characterized as a communist and anti-republican. General Charles de Gaulle, the leader of the French Resistance and France's most renowned President, was also accused of being a despot by his enemies.

There is, however, another approach, which views the past policies of appeasement as counter-productive. The mullahs' regime does not represent the people of Iran. It exports terrorism and insecurity to the region, and endeavors to acquire nuclear technology. The correct policy, therefore, is firmness and the solution is the establishment of democracy. This view is supported by the American public and was

endorsed in a declaration by a House majority in 1992.

Over the past year, the Tehran regime has been engulfed in political and economic chaos, and further weakened by a leadership crisis. The Resistance has escalated nationwide, and the National Council of Resistance has elected a woman President for the transitional period and prepared itself for the post-Khomeini era.

Having no alternative to their liking, the appeasement advocates published this report to discredit the Resistance and undermine the prospect of the regime's overthrow. The report represents a bid to prevent change in Iran and placate the turbaned tyrants. Today, however, there is significant congressional and public support for democracy in Iran. In addition, the existence of the Resistance movement itself makes things very different than they were during the 1953 coup and 1985 Irangate affair. As the National Council of Resistance has declared, "Nothing can prevent this regime's overthrow and the victory of the democratic and nationalist alternative in Iran. In this path, the National Council of Resistance of Iran welcomes the friendship of all nations, governments, forces and personalities who respect the just rights of the Iranian people for democracy and independence."

I

A Discredited Report

The U.S. State Department finally submitted its long-awaited report on the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran to the House Foreign Affairs Committee on Friday afternoon, October 28. Made public by the Foreign Affairs Committee on Monday, October 31, the document was accompanied by a letter from Ms. Wendy Sherman, Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs.

Unfortunately, the report was a lengthy reiteration of old allegations against the Iranian Resistance, and had nothing new to offer. The State Department made the same accusations during the Irangate affair in 1985, as part of a goodwill gesture to the Khomeini regime to free American hostages in Lebanon. Almost a decade later, the Department has basically added new paragraphs to an old report against the Mojahedin.¹

The report is characterized by innumerable discrepancies, falsifications, and distortions of simple, unambiguous facts, past and present, as well as by a lack of new sources and selective use of old ones. The overall impression is one of unprofessionalism. The Department claims many government agencies participated, but the finished product is questionable as a freshman term paper, much less a State Department review. The Departments of Defense (including the Defense Intelligence Agency and the four military services), Justice, Treasury, and Transportation; the National Intelligence Council; National Security Agency and the CIA are among those named. The Department also claims to have consulted a wide range of Iranian opposition groups and Iranian expatriates, including Mojahedin sympathizers, to have obtained the views of prominent American academic specialists on Iran, and to have contacted experts

in non-governmental organizations and think-tanks. Finally, the authors claim to have reviewed many of the Mojahedin's publications from the 1960s through October 1994.²

In this chapter, we do not intend to refute all of the baseless accusations. Other chapters are devoted to extensive responses to individual charges. This chapter addresses solely the method of preparing the report, and certain blatant discrepancies and fabrications. Regrettably, these discrepancies may only be interpreted either as revealing the authors' unfamiliarity with the simplest issues in Iran, or as serving specific political interests.

The Method

1- The State Department refrained from conducting a dialogue with the subject of the report, namely the Mojahedin Organization. Such talks are prerequisite to a fair, impartial study.

2- Despite claims to the contrary, a large cross-section of the Iranian opposition was not consulted. The National Council of Resistance, widely recognized by the international press and many experts as the most prominent Iranian opposition group, has 235 members. The State Department did not consult with any of them. A number of the NCR's members live in the United States and are easily accessible to the Department.

3- The assertion that the Department contacted many Iranian expatriates is also untrue. On July 22 and 23, some 3,000 Iranians marched in front of the White House³ and another 3,000 Iranians demonstrated in Los Angeles.⁴ They expressed support for the National Council of Resistance and called for a dialogue with the NCR to facilitate an impartial report. Representatives delivered copies of the demonstration's resolution to the White House and other government agencies, including the State Department. The Department has disregarded these resolutions.

4- In the six months preceding publication of the report, thousands of Iranians sent letters to government officials, often forwarding copies to the NCR's Washington Office. They declared their support for the Mojahedin and expressed concern at the Department's biased approach. Many wrote letters seeking appointments with Christopher Henzel, of the Department's Iran Desk, David Litt, Director, Office of Northern Gulf Affairs, and Robert Pelletreau, Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs. Their requests were either left unanswered

or refused.

A number subsequently complained to President Clinton and Congressional Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman, Rep. Lee Hamilton, and expressed concern about the political goals they suspected were being pursued by the Department. For his part, the Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman pointed out the necessity for a dialogue and expressed regret that such action might not have been taken.

Eventually, the House Foreign Affairs Committee intervened to arrange meetings for several sympathizers of the Iranian Resistance with Mr. Henzel in the last two weeks before the report's publication. These meetings were, of course, too late to be meaningful. According to participants, moreover, Mr. Henzel was not interested in a constructive discussion; rather, as became evident, the meetings were intended to stifle congressional protests, specifically from the Foreign Affairs Committee, and to portray the procedure as impartial. Participants subsequently told officials of the NCR's Washington Office that the report failed to mention any of the points they had emphasized in their meetings with Mr. Henzel, including even their responses to questions he had raised.

In the opinion of these Iranians, Mr. Henzel's knowledge of issues relating to Iran, especially the Mojahedin and Iranian Resistance, was severely limited. In many instances, he was uninformed of commonly known events in recent Iranian history, and repeatedly expressed an obverse view of them, especially regrettable because he is ostensibly responsible for compiling the report.⁵

We have no argument with the Department's contention that it consulted with a large cross-section of Iranians, if the reference is to contacts with those Iranians most of whom are supporters of the Tehran regime and former members of the SAVAK (the shah's notorious secret police), and whose views were subsequently reflected in the report. In that case, however, fairness dictates that the authors acknowledge that their report reflects the thinking of such individuals, not Mojahedin sympathizers.

5- Despite the claim that the Department reviewed Mojahedin publications from the 1960s through October 1994, the report does not contain even one reference to Mojahedin or NCR publications featuring replies to many of these accusations.⁶ For example, there is no mention of *Appeasing Tehran's Mullahs*,⁷ a book-length,

documented response, published by the NCR Foreign Affairs Committee. For impartiality's sake, the authors should have accurately cited at least one of the Mojahedin's replies to the numerous baseless accusations, even if only as a preface to their argument against it.

The State Department and Mr. Henzel received the book through various channels including the House Foreign Affairs Committee. The press had also reported on this book. Mr. Henzel had himself confirmed receiving the book in a meeting with one of the few Iranians he met.

Selective Sources

6- Despite the authors' claims of varied sources, the report draws largely from one book, *The Iranian Mojahedin*, by Ervand Abrahamian.⁸ There are 16 references to this work, and the report's main topics have been borrowed from it. Minus the end notes and annexes, the report is 23 pages. On the average, in 70% of the pages there has been at least one reference to Abrahamian's book. Besides the 16 references, in numerous instances the report borrows identically from the book, without attribution. Apparently embarrassed at the excessive resort to a single source, the authors opted instead for plagiarism. Their references to the book, moreover, have been selective; whatever not in line with their views was omitted. There are, of course, other books that present events in a different light, but the report's authors chose, likewise, to overlook them in favor of those in line with their slant.

7- Page ii of the report contains the following statement: "In 1981, the Mojahedin leadership fled to France and formed the National Council of Resistance (NCR) with other Iranian opposition movements." The statement, quoted without attribution, is one of numerous inaccuracies in Abrahamian's book.⁹ The National Council of Resistance was formed in Tehran, where Mr. Rajavi announced the development in a press release.

8- Elsewhere, the report claims that "within a few years the NCR became a mere shell,"¹⁰ another exact quotation from Abrahamian's book whose source was not cited.¹¹

9- One of the report's more contorted claims—that "the clerical regime in Tehran, aware of the Mojahedin's unpopularity, attempts to discredit many of its opponents by falsely linking them to the

[Mojahedin]"¹²—has also been borrowed from the author of *The Iranian Mojahedin*.¹³ Again, there is no mention of the source.

10- The principal sources of the report, namely the aforementioned book and others cited by the authors, besides their numerous inaccuracies, are generally outdated and do not correctly depict the present state of the Iranian Resistance. *The Iranian Mojahedin*, for example, was written from 1984 to 1986 and published in 1989. Another book, *The United States and Iran*, was published in 1982. Most of the newspaper articles to which the report refers also date back to the 1980s.

11- One source is *The Gulf War*, a book about the Iran-Iraq war whose author hardly qualifies as an Iran expert. Indeed, his knowledge of Iranian affairs is so limited that, for example, he identifies Nooreddin Kianouri, the Tudeh Party Secretary General, as the Mojahedin's deputy Secretary General.¹⁴ This error is analogous to mistaking a communist party leader for the leader of the Democratic Party or President Clinton.

12- Another source cited by the authors is Ehsan Naraqi, a high-ranking ex-official of the SAVAK. After the revolution Naraqi changed sides and lent his services to the Khomeini regime. According to his own written account, he was a close confidant of the shah's wife and met frequently with the shah and shahbanu throughout the final days of the Pahlavi rule, in December 1978 and January 1979. Despite his close ties with the former regime, the mullahs quickly freed him, after a short stint in prison, and he became a major theoretician of the regime's suppression. In his books, Naraqi blames the opposition and Mojahedin for most of the executions, torture and killings by the Khomeini regime. Iranian government newspapers are replete with his interviews, in which Naraqi has attacked the Mojahedin. His collaboration with the mullahs is so extreme that he endorsed Khomeini's death decree for Salman Rushdie in an article in the state-controlled weekly *Kayhan Havai*, stating: "I view Salman Rushdie's book as a sacrilege and an insult to Muslims. I always knew that Westerners were arrogant, intellectually arrogant. This surpasses imperialism..."¹⁵

13- The report's references to Mojahedin sources are distorted and occasionally false. For example, the statement that Voice of Mojahed radio reported Mojahedin attacks on the regime's representatives abroad¹⁶ is totally baseless. The radio never had such

a broadcast; a transcript of the relevant program is available for review. The Foreign Broadcast Information Service's (FBIS) translation of the broadcast was erroneous, as the Mojahedin informed the service in writing at the time.¹⁷

14- The report cites a *Wall Street Journal* article, published on October 4, 1994, for charges about the Mojahedin's internal affairs. The authors, however, again fail to cite the Mojahedin's response to that article, published by the *Journal* on October 19, 1994,¹⁸ and distributed by three U.S. Congressmen as a "Dear Colleague" letter.¹⁹ In general, it is evident that the State Department had little interest in the vast majority of the thousands of articles written in the past 12 years about the Mojahedin and Iranian Resistance in various countries; the authors instead sought rather stale, undistinguished material with which to attack the Mojahedin.

15- The report in several instances refers to dispatches by international news agencies in accusing the Mojahedin of bombings victimizing innocent bystanders.²⁰ A closer look reveals that all such news items were quotations from the Khomeini regime's news sources, and immediately denied by the Mojahedin. In most cases, the same news agencies carried the Mojahedin denials.²¹ The authors of the report saw no need to refer to these denials, however. This sort of yellow journalism is common to the report as a whole.

16- The report claims that on July 17, 1992, after a meeting with the Iraqi President, "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.'"²²

The report continues, "A day later, Voice of Mojahed reported the visit, noting that the meeting between Rajavi and Hussein has been widely reported by international news agencies."²³

For the uninformed reader, linking a statement supposedly issued by Mr. Rajavi to a Voice of Mojahed report the next day leaves no doubt about the veracity of the statement or the radio broadcast. But beyond the State Department ploy, the reality is that:

- Mr. Rajavi never issued any such statement nor made any such comments after his July 17 meeting with the Iraqi president.

- No such statement or comments were published in any Mojahedin publication or broadcast by Voice of Mojahed.
- As reported by Voice of Mojahed, *News Bulletin of Supporters of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran*, and the National Council of Resistance's monthly publication:

The President of the National Council of Resistance conferred with the Iraqi president on terrorist acts by the ruling mullahs in Iran and the bombing of a National Liberation Army base inside Iraqi territory. He described these acts as flagrant violations of the cease-fire and emphasized that terrorist, interventionist acts by the ruling regime in Iran had continued throughout the previous year and would continue...²⁴

On July 17, an AFP wire story reported that the meeting dealt with the April 1992 bombing of an NLA base and prior terrorist operations by the regime against the Mojahedin inside Iraqi territory. Remarks at a press conference by Mohammad Mohaddessin, then Director of International Relations for the Mojahedin, the following day in Paris, and covered extensively by Agence France Presse,²⁵ concur with the aforementioned account. Therefore, the State Department's reference to the meeting, directly or indirectly quoting local media, were disingenuously attributed to Mr. Rajavi. As this example illustrates, the Department's refusal to engage in a dialogue with the Mojahedin was intended to give the authors of the report a free hand in mis-representing the Mojahedin.

17- The authors also portray routine congratulatory telegrams from the NCR President on the anniversary of the Iraqi national day as damning. If so, how are we to interpret congratulatory telegrams from Presidents Reagan and Bush to President Saddam Hussein on the same occasion in previous years? The NCR President's congratulatory telegrams on the national days of France, the United States, Jordan, Turkey and many other countries are similarly routine. Perhaps the authors are implying the Iranian Resistance should follow their lead in such matters. After affirming, albeit sarcastically, that Rajavi was expelled from France and went to Iraq, it is inconsistent to fault him for engaging in customary courtesies with the president of the host country.

18- To discredit the Mojahedin as a credible source, the Department refers to the 1990 report by Mr. Reynaldo Galindo Pohl,

the Special Representative of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights on Iran. It says that following a trip to Iran, he "found some Mojahedin allegations inaccurate."²⁶ Special representatives of the United Nations Human Rights Commission have to date prepared some 21 reports about the violations of human rights in Iran. In all of these reports, including the 10 reports issued by Mr. Galindo Pohl after the one quoted by the State Department, he has consistently used the Mojahedin information due to its reliability and authenticity. But the authors have not mentioned any of them. The 1990 report was an exception to the rule. During Mr. Galindo Pohl's eight-day trip to Tehran, the Khomeini regime resorted to different schemes and provided erroneous information to prevent the formulation of a comprehensive report. Regrettably, it was partially successful. The Special Representative did indicate at the time that due to his short trip, he did not have sufficient time to offer a complete assessment of the situation and that most of his time was spent with government officials. The 1990 report was criticized for its deficiencies and inaccuracies by international human rights organizations and nearly 1,000 parliamentarians, including a large number of American congressmen and senators.²⁷

Discrepancies

19- According to the report's introduction, "responsibility for preparing the report was delegated to the Secretary of State by a presidential memorandum dated July 26, 1994."²⁸ In other words, the Department had no responsibility vis-a-vis the matter prior to this date. Actually, Congress had required the President to prepare the report, not the State Department. On July 26, however, Ms. Sherman wrote in response to a letter from Rep. Robert Torricelli: "We are presently consulting on the report with the N.S.C. and other agencies."²⁹ Furthermore, in her July 26 letter, Ms. Sherman has enumerated the very same findings she claimed, subsequent to the report's release, had been reached after much research, consultation with Iranians and experts, etc. Therefore, it is obvious that the findings of the report were predetermined, and that claims of "a comprehensive review" and consultations with a large cross-section, etc., are baseless.

Interestingly, following the publication of the 41-page report, the State Department has again sent an anti-Mojahedin letter to a

number of representatives, stating, "We believe that the report contains accurate and current information on the Mojahedin and their positions, drawing on information disseminated by the group itself. We also consulted with academic and governmental experts, many of whom are in contact with Mojahedin."³⁰ The rest of the three-page letter is exactly identical to the July 26 letter sent to Representative Torricelli.

20- The report purports the Mojahedin changed their tone in 1981 and began to speak more of democracy. "The first expression of Mojahedin ideology aimed at attracting Western support was published in 1981 when Bani-Sadr and Rajavi issued a 'Covenant' for the National Council of Resistance," the report relates.³¹ "Similar in many respects to the Minimum Expectations Program the Mojahedin had outlined in Iran in 1979, the Covenant promised simultaneously to establish a democracy and to declare Islam as the national religion. It further promised respect for civil liberties..."³² the passage continues. The authors' latter observation confirms, contrary to their claim a few lines earlier, that democracy had clearly been a pivotal point in the Mojahedin program since 1979, not 1981.

Anyone familiar in one way or another with the politics of the post-revolutionary Iran well remembers that the Mojahedin's main point of contention with the theocratic regime established by Khomeini was "democratic freedoms." It was on this basis that the Mojahedin boycotted the constitutional referendum to institutionalize the principle of *velayat-e faqih*, having rejected such a principle as in violation of the nation's free will.³³

21- On page 11, it is stated: "The Mojahedin claim they do not target civilians in Iran. We are unable to confirm or refute this assertion." In the Executive Summary, page iii, however, the authors declare: "The Mojahedin are responsible for violent attacks in Iran that victimize civilians."

22- The report claims that in 1988, the Mojahedin were wiped out.³⁴ Elsewhere, an Iraqi Kurdish leader, Jalal Talebani, is quoted as saying, "5,000 Iranian Mojahedin joined Saddam's forces in the battle for Kirkuk"³⁵ in 1991. It is not clear how the Mojahedin, wiped out in 1988, could muster a force of 5,000 for one battle alone, three years later. It is obvious, however, that once the authors had set out to indulge the mullahs in Tehran, they felt justified in any fabrication or discrepancy. Again, minimum norms of fairness dictate at least a

reference to the Mojahedin's denial, published by Reuters and the Associated Press at the time.³⁶ The Mojahedin categorically denied any involvement in Kirkuk or the "battle" for it, as alleged by Talebani, whose fabrication was meant to encourage the mullahs to keep up the flow of funds, fuel, flour, etc.

Distortions

23- One example of the sort of falsification and distortion of facts prevalent in the report is the claim that: "Analysts assume that Saddam permitted the NLA to cross into Iran [in March 1991] in order to signal that he would not tolerate Iranian support for a Shi'a uprising in southern Iraq."³⁷ *The New York Times* of June 5, 1991 and *The Times* of London of April 2, 1991 are cited as the sources of this claim. The NLA's forces never crossed into Iran in March 1991; the only source of claims to the contrary is the Khomeini regime. *The New York Times* article in question alleges no such crossing. On the contrary, the article quotes a Mojahedin official as saying that the regime's forces had entered Iraqi territory to attack the NLA. *Times* of London also pointed out that the Iranian regime had made such a claim. It reported the Mojahedin's statements as well. Neither did *Times* of London mention any comments by "analysts" on this matter. NLA forces captured several of Khomeini's troops. These POWs, later handed over to the International Red Cross, stressed that they belonged to a contingent of 20,000 Revolutionary Guards, crossing the border to attack the Iranian Resistance.³⁸

24- The report states that in 1993, Maryam Rajavi succeeded Massoud Rajavi as the "future President of Iran."³⁹ Mr. Rajavi never held this position. In August 1993, the National Council of Resistance elected Mrs. Rajavi as the future President of Iran for the transitional period.⁴⁰

25- The report states that Maryam Rajavi had previously held the position of "NCR secretary-general."⁴¹ This is also false. The NCR has never had such a post, nor has Mrs. Rajavi occupied any equivalent position in the NCR. Actually, before her election as future Iran President, Mrs. Rajavi had no official post in the Council.

26- The report states that Mr. Rajavi was arrested and imprisoned in 1972 and was kept in prison until 1979.⁴² Mr. Rajavi was arrested by the shah's SAVAK not in 1972 but on August 23, 1971. He was freed from prison on January 21, 1979 as a result of the popular

uprising against the shah's dictatorship.

27- The report states that the National Council of Resistance has set up eight committees.⁴³ This is also wrong. In August 1993, the NCR announced the formation of 18 committees and made the names of their chairpersons public.⁴⁴ The said statement was forwarded to the State Department at the time. *Appeasing Tehran's Mullahs*, published in September 1994 and sent to the Department, also reported the formation of 18 committees.

28- The report identifies Mohammad Hossein Naqdi, the NCR representative in Italy, assassinated in March 1993 in Rome by the mullahs' terrorists, as the head of the Mojahedin's Rome office.⁴⁵ Mr. Naqdi was a well-known secular member of the Council and never a member of the Mojahedin.

29- The report quotes Ehsan Naraqi, the operative both for the shah's SAVAK and the mullahs' regime, as saying, "The Mojahedin assisted in the identification, arrest, and execution of alleged supporters of the shah's regime. Thousands of these individuals, presumed to be opponents of the new Khomeini government, were sentenced to death by Ayatollah Khalkhali, the head of the Revolutionary Tribunal also known as the 'hanging judge'."⁴⁶

Blaming the atrocities of the hanging judge on the Mojahedin is the kind of lie that only the authors of the State Department could fabricate. Since the very beginning of the revolution, the Mojahedin called for the prosecution of the leaders of the shah's regime and the exposure of their crimes. They also stressed the need for public trials and the presence of the jury. A public trial, they felt, would not only reveal the atrocities by the shah's regime, but will also prevent the regime from perpetrating the same crimes. The alleged participation of the Mojahedin in the arrest and execution of "the supporters of the shah's regime" is absolutely false. Those sought after by the Pasdaran (The Guards Corps) from the beginning were the Mojahedin sympathizers. As he stated later on, Khalkhali had executed thousands of people according to Khomeini's hand-written decree. In addition to some of the officials of the shah's regime, the victims were by and large the Khomeini regime's opponents, including the Mojahedin and dissident Kurds.

30- The report contends that, "In 1986, for example, after he had relocated to Iraq, Rajavi unilaterally dissolved the PMOI's Central Committee and personally appointed a 500-person Central Council."⁴⁷

The statement is ample proof of the authors' total lack of knowledge of the Mojahedin's structure and *modus operandi*. Firstly, the 575-member Central Council took steps in 1984-85 to democratically adapt to the organization's growing ranks. In late 1985, the Central Council in Paris decided to dissolve the Political Bureau (then the Mojahedin's highest decision-making body, consisting of 20 members) and the Central Committee, and to replace them with an Executive Committee, encompassing a broader range of the membership, as the highest decision-making body in the organization. Mr. Rajavi, then Secretary General of the Mojahedin, announced the change on February 8, 1986, in a speech at Auvers-sur-Oise in France. The change, therefore, was decided upon and approved by the Central Council, not, as the report contends, unilaterally implemented by Mr. Rajavi. Furthermore, it occurred in Paris, not after the move to Iraq.

Secondly, the formation of the "500-person Central Council," to which the report alludes, had nothing to do with the dissolution of the Political Bureau or Central Committee. The names of the council's members, who included the individuals in the Political Bureau and Central Committee, as well as deputies to the Central Committee and the heads of various sections in the organization, were formally announced in spring 1985. Council members are nominated for the position by the organization's members at the various sections.⁴⁸ The same, democratic process is used today. In June 1994, the Mojahedin Central Council had 1,647 members.⁴⁹ The Mojahedin's publications at the time provided detailed reports on these changes.

31- The report has quoted remarks by "an Iranian jurist" identified as "Rajavi's former attorney"⁵⁰ from an article appearing in the *Christian Science Monitor* of June 10, 1986. The report neither mentions the jurist's name (Abdol Karim Lahiji) nor accurately identifies him. Mr. Lahiji was never Mr. Rajavi's attorney. He briefly represented a Mojahedin member in 1979. The authors' zeal to convict presumably precluded their checking for accuracy, and they repeated the journalist's error. Unless, of course, the State Department would not distinguish between the two, in which case one can ask whether the Department considers a lawyer for any member of the Democratic Party as representing the U.S. President. In this way, the report's authors have tried to produce a credible witness so that in the next step they could exploit his hostile remarks against the Iranian

Resistance. Lahiji is well known in the Iranian exile community for collaborating with the mullahs in gathering intelligence on the Mojahedin. *The Christian Science Monitor* quoted him in a different issue of the paper as saying, "I am not committed to the Islamic regime's downfall and I will return to my country as soon as possible."⁵¹ In that article, he said that the figures on execution victims and political prisoners cited by the Iranian Resistance are "exaggerated." Iranians opposed to the Khomeini regime view such statements as being tantamount to repentance for one's "past errors" vis-a-vis the ruling regime. If the authors seek to lend credibility to their report by referring to such individuals, they are only discrediting themselves.

32- Another example of factual distortion appears in the portrayal of non-violent acts of protest in different countries, including that against the regime's Foreign Minister when visiting Potsdam, Germany, as violent acts of terrorism.⁵² In Potsdam, Iranians protesting against the visit by a delegation from the regime, threw several eggs at Velayati's motorcade. Neither the German police nor government described the protest as a terrorist act.

In light of this concern that the security of the regime's Foreign Minister was jeopardized by legitimate protests, the absence of equivalent dismay at the regime's Scud-B missile attacks, air raids violating the no-fly zone and mortar attacks on the Mojahedin appears especially stark. There is also the matter of disinterest in the torture and assassination of Resistance activists. Over 100,000 people have been murdered by the Khomeini regime on political charges. A detailed list of over 20,000 names has been presented to the human rights bureau of the State Department in previous years. And there is the matter of the Department's nonchalance about the regime's violation of the no-fly zone, above the 36th parallel.

33- The report refers to the activities of the Mojahedin's office in Australia.⁵³ The Mojahedin have never had an office in Australia and, therefore, no reference to such an office has ever appeared in Mojahedin publications. This fact can easily be checked with the Australian authorities.

34- The report contends that the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDP) finally decided to leave the National Council of Resistance in 1986.⁵⁴ This, again, is erroneous. On April 9, 1985, the NCR voted unanimously to expel the KDP, due to its contacts with Khomeini's Revolutionary Guards Corps, in violation of the NCR's constitution.

The KDP's expulsion followed a six-month grace period, during which it was encouraged to sever links with the regime. At the time, the Mojahedin and NCR publications as well as other Iranian media formally announced the matter. The relevant NCR resolution states: "The Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran's divergence of opinion with other members of the National Council of Resistance, which has continued for several months, is over that party's political negotiations with the Khomeini regime," adding that if the KDP did not "openly prohibit and condemn any political negotiation with the Khomeini regime by signing the present document, like all other council members" then further cooperation between the NCR and the party would be "irrelevant."⁵⁵

After its expulsion from the National Council of Resistance, the KDP repeatedly sought to meet with the Mojahedin leadership. Contrary to the report's contention, the requests for meetings continued until 1987. One letter requesting to meet and negotiate with the Mojahedin leadership, signed by the former KDP Secretary General, Abdol-Rahman QassemLou, is dated March 13, 1987.⁵⁶ Bound by the April 1985 Council resolution, however, the Mojahedin refused the request until such time as the KDP had shunned relations and negotiations with the Khomeini regime.

35- The report further contends that Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr left the Council because of "Rajavi's unilateral decision to tie the Council to Iraq."⁵⁷ Again, this is untrue, as attested by documents published about Mr. Bani-Sadr's expulsion from the National Council of Resistance.

- The NCR has established no alliance with Iraq nor any other country.

- The decision for Mr. Rajavi to meet Mr. Tariq Aziz in Paris was approved by all Council members, including Mr. Bani-Sadr. Two days prior to Mr. Rajavi's public meeting with Mr. Aziz on January 9, 1983 in Paris, Mr. Bani-Sadr sought a secret meeting with Tariq Aziz at another location, which he canceled after being informed of Mr. Rajavi's meeting in his residence.⁵⁸ In his book, to which the report refers, Mr. Bani-Sadr confirms that he was informed of the meeting beforehand, and that he had agreed to it.⁵⁹

- The NCR's Peace Plan was ratified on March 13, 1983, by a unanimous vote, and signed by Mr. Bani-Sadr. In the introduction to the plan, the Council stresses,

The National Council of Resistance... after six months of comprehensive deliberations and consultations aimed at achieving a just peace, following the meeting between the Iraqi Vice-Premier, Mr. Tariq Aziz, and the President of the National Council of Resistance, Mr. Massoud Rajavi, and in view of the joint communiqué of January 9, 1983, which was issued at the end of the meeting, presents its peace plan.

- The peace plan, along with the aforementioned introduction, was published at the time in Mr. Bani-Sadr's newspaper.⁶⁰ A copy of the original document with Mr. Bani-Sadr's signature was also published.⁶¹ Therefore, the authors' contention that Mr. Bani-Sadr left the Council because of "Rajavi's unilateral decision to tie the Council to Iraq" is a sheer lie.

- Actually, Mr. Bani-Sadr's expulsion from the NCR, unanimously approved in March 1984,⁶² occurred a year after the approval and publication of the NCR Peace Plan. As explained by the NCR in April 1984,⁶³ Mr. Bani-Sadr was expelled for his political inclination to search for moderates within the regime and dreams of returning to his former patron, Khomeini, and moderating his regime. The substance of Mr. Bani-Sadr's secret correspondence of July 23, 1984, with Khomeini, discovered by Resistance activists in Iran, was subsequently unveiled, along with a copy of the hand-written letter bearing Mr. Bani-Sadr's signature. This letter confirms that the allegations made by the report's authors are invalid.⁶⁴

36- The report has mentioned the Union of Iranian Communists as an early member of the NCR.⁶⁵ This also is erroneous. This group, known as the *Sarbedaran* in Iran, was never a member of the NCR and is not a signatory to any of the Council's documents, declarations or plans. A statement by the Secretariat of the National Council of Resistance about the group, published on February 4, 1983, clarifies the following points:

- The Union of Iranian Communists issued a statement declaring its support of the NCR 10 days after the NCR's formation in Iran, on August 1, 1981.

- About a year later, a representative from the group traveled to Paris and submitted a written request for the group's membership in the Council. This request was reviewed and approved in the Council's August 20 meeting, and the decision published in the Council's bulletin. Inexplicably, however, a representative for the group was

not named and no one appeared in that capacity.

- During this period, the group was hit hard by the Khomeini regime, and essentially destroyed. They staged an uprising in the northern city of Amol on January 25, 1983, as a result of which 22 of their members were arrested and executed.

- No representative from the group ever participated in the Council. On March 23, 1984, the surviving members announced in a statement that because they had lost contact with many members after "the martyrdom of a great number of our leaders and members," and also due to differences of opinion about joining the Council, the Union of Iranian Communists never participated in the Council's meetings and "is not a member of the National Council of Resistance."⁶⁶

37- The report also mentions the *Hoviyat* group as an early NCR member,⁶⁷ while alleging that Mr. Bani-Sadr's and the KDP's departures "prompted a mass exodus and discouraged new membership." The Iranian People's Fedayeen Guerrillas - Followers of the *Hoviyat* Program actually sought membership in the NCR on September 6, 1984 - after Mr. Bani-Sadr's expulsion and in the heat of the discussions about the KDP's expulsion. In a subsequent session, the Council approved and announced its membership. It is thus clear that the authors have again sought to portray the NCR as undemocratic by distorting the facts.

As Mr. Rajavi, the Council's official spokesman, has declared frequently since the NCR's inception, democratic, independent and nationalist principles are of critical importance, as confirmed by the experience of the Shah's and Khomeini's dictatorships. Unlike Khomeini, "we will not seek unity at any price with various people in Paris, and then violently remove them after gaining power in Iran," he stressed. The NCR's insistence on these principles dictated the expulsion of Bani-Sadr and Qassemloo. It is both mendacious and unacceptable to portray differences over such questions as moderating the mullahs or maintaining relations with Khomeini's Revolutionary Guards, as a difference over a lack of democracy in the Council. It is because of these differences that these former members of the NCR have forfeited their credibility with the Iranian people and international circles. Today, Bani-Sadr is a non-entity. The KDP suffered a schism in March 1988; fifteen members of the party's politburo as well as members and deputies to its central committee

split to form a new party. The NCR, in contrast, has enjoyed greater stature and credibility as the only democratic alternative to the mullahs' religious, terrorist dictatorship. At the time of Bani-Sadr's expulsion, the NCR had only 15 members; today, it has 235 members, half of whom are women.

Murder of Americans

38-The report accuses the Mojahedin of assassinating six American citizens in the 1970s: Lt. Col. Hawkins, Col. Schaeffer, Lt. Col. Turner, and three Rockwell International employees. The report adds that "the attacks on the Rockwell employees occurred on the anniversary of the arrest of a Mojahedin member, Rahman Vahid Afrakhteh, for the murder of Colonels Schaeffer and Turner."⁶⁸ There are several errors, distortions and discrepancies in this section of the report which confirm the Mojahedin's account of the events.

There is no such person as Rahman Vahid Afrakhteh. This name mistakenly combines the names of two brothers, Rahman Afrakhteh, who was never seriously involved in any political activity, and Vahid Afrakhteh.

Vahid Afrakhteh is well known for his role in the *coup* against the Mojahedin in the mid-1970s. Associating him and attributing his subsequent actions to the Mojahedin is completely unjustified. In fact, he participated in the assassination of several Mojahedin members, including Majid Sharif-Vaqefi and Mohammad Yaqini in 1975. He was arrested by the shah's SAVAK in the spring of 1975 and executed in early 1976.

39- The report acknowledges that the assassination of the Rockwell employees occurred on the anniversary of Afrakhteh's arrest.⁶⁹ Therefore, the assassinations may be presumed to have been the work of his associates, not the Mojahedin, who were themselves victims of him and his gang. A document from 1976, containing findings by American officials on the Rockwell assassinations, attests that the assassins belonged to the "Iranian People's Strugglers (IPS)," a group identified as responsible for many past attacks on Americans.⁷⁰ The name "Mojahedin" was certainly well known to the shah's regime and American officials in 1976; the report itself states that the name "Mojahedin" first appeared in 1972. The report's authors, claiming to have consulted other government agencies in preparing the report, must have had access to this document.

40- Finally, the strongest evidence that the Muslim Mojahedin were not involved in the assassinations of the aforementioned Americans are the statements issued by their assassins. The first, dated May 22, 1975, regarding the assassinations of Col. Schaeffer and Lt. Col. Turner, bears the Mojahedin emblem, without, however, the traditional Quranic verse at the top, establishing that it is the work of the Marxist infiltrators. The tone used in the statement is also indicative of this fact.⁷¹

In a second statement, dated July 3, 1975, the emblem again lacks the Quranic verse, establishing that it belonged to the Marxists. The writers accept responsibility for "the unsuccessful attempt to assassinate an American diplomat."⁷² The tone and wording, again, indicate that it was unrelated to the Mojahedin.

A third statement, dated August 28, 1976, takes responsibility for the deaths of three Rockwell employees. The Mojahedin emblem is altogether absent.⁷³

It is, therefore, obvious that the assassinations have been erroneously attributed to the Mojahedin, who were not involved in them. As the Mojahedin have clarified, after the arrest of all their leaders and the majority of their members in 1971, a group took advantage of the situation and expropriated the Mojahedin name.

41- The report claims that in recent months, the Mojahedin and NCR have tried to associate themselves with Dr. Mohammad Mossadeq to enhance their credibility. This is another case of blatant fabrication. Since their foundation, the Mojahedin have emphasized their goal of fulfilling the objectives of the leader of Iran's nationalist movement. In his defense before the shah's military tribunal, 23 years ago in spring 1972, Massoud Rajavi stated before journalists present in court: "With the backing of the Iranian people, the late Dr. Mossadeq came to power to get the law passed to nationalize Iranian oil. It was for this reason that the people gave him the reins of power. His government was the only legal government in Iran. I do not need to elaborate on Mossadeq's government policies... My colleagues and I are the children of Dr. Mossadeq and have forsaken personal careers and wealth." Ten years later, on July 29, 1981, the anniversary of the nationwide uprising that restored Dr. Mossadeq in 1952, Mr. Rajavi announced the formation of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, the democratic alternative to the religious, terrorist dictatorship. The NCR and Mojahedin's publications and messages, as well as

statements by Rajavi and other officials of the Iranian Resistance frequently extol Dr. Mossadeq.

Obverse Logic

42- Feeling the pressure of Congress and the public, both of whom had expressed concern about the method in which the report was being prepared, and reacting to charges of appeasing the mullahs, Ms. Sherman was obliged to emphasize in her letter, accompanying the report, that the State Department's position on the Mojahedin did not imply "support for the behavior of the current regime in Iran."⁷⁴ She did not, however, mention the Department's long-standing position favoring dialogue with the terrorists ruling Iran. This penchant had been repeatedly enunciated by the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. Perhaps Ms. Sherman sought to save face, but the authors are well aware of the implications of so biased a report against a nationwide, just resistance movement. In the world of *Realpolitik*, this report is tantamount to appeasement of the ruling regime in Iran. The mullahs, consequently, were not offended by Ms. Sherman's apologetic comments, and welcomed the report. (See chapter IV) In contrast, Tehran's dictators lashed out at members of Congress for having urged that the Mojahedin be heard.

If Ms. Sherman and her Department are sincere in revoking their call for dialogue with the regime, the least that can be expected is that they state this position officially. We invite the State Department to announce that the United States will not engage in any dialogue with the ruling regime in Iran, on the grounds that it has executed tens of thousands of people for political reasons, assassinates its opponents abroad, lacks support among the Iranian people, has established a brutal dictatorship and therefore does not legitimately represent Iran's people.

II

Pressing for Dialogue

Section 523 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act of FY 1994–95 called on President Clinton for a comprehensive and objective report on the People’s Mojahedin Organization of Iran. In the proceedings that led to the amendment’s adoption, the conference committee urged those preparing the report “to consult and talk with the widest range of people possible when compiling the report,” and noted that “nothing in this section is intended to prejudge” the Mojahedin.¹

Dialogue

Despite the committee’s emphasis, the State Department did not comply with either requirement. The Department refused to meet with representatives of the Mojahedin or National Council of Resistance and adopted a biased approach in preparing the report. This was a cause of increasing concern to members of the House and Senate. Many wrote to the State Department, stressing that the Department should meet with the subject of the report.

Representative Lincoln Diaz-Balart wrote to the Secretary of State:

I am interested in as complete a report as possible, and request that in complying with the provisions of this legislation, every possible effort be made to meet and consult directly with representatives of the People’s Mojahedin of Iran. Undoubtedly, such a meeting would contribute to the completeness and impartiality of this report....

It would be helpful for the Department of State to designate a specific representative who would act as the liaison with this opposition group during the preparation of this report.²

In another letter to the Secretary of State, Congressman William L. Clay expressed the concerns of the Iranian-American community, writing:

Those with whom I met were particularly disturbed by the suggestion of one State Department official who indicated that the fundamentalist Iranian regime is a "permanent feature." To those who are sincerely dedicated to democracy and human rights such a concession to a brutal dictatorship is most discouraging.

Congress has requested that the Administration report on the People's Mujaheddin, which is the pivotal force of the National Council of Resistance (NCR). The NCR is recognized as the main Iranian opposition to the present Iranian regime and considers itself to be the force for creating a democratic government in Iran. For these reasons, many Iranian-Americans have expressed an interest in the Administration's report and have suggested that it would be most valuable if the Administration establishes a dialogue with the National Council of Resistance in connection with this report. As one who has always advocated communications as key to understanding and progress, I concur with this sentiment and believe that a dialogue with the NCR would be most beneficial for all parties.³

Calls for a new approach and expressions of hope that there would evolve an understanding towards establishing democracy in Iran were abundant. Senator John F. Kerry, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Narcotics and International Operations, had followed the issue closely. He wrote to an Iranian in Massachusetts:

I can assure you that this provision in no way calls for a reconciliation with the Rafsanjani regime. It is my hope that you and I are both in pursuit of the same objectives of achieving democratic government and political reform in Iran and that this evaluation will develop into a fruitful dialogue.⁴

Congressman Robert G. Torricelli, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs, wrote in a letter to Assistant Secretary of State Robert Pelletreau:

I am extremely concerned by information I have received from the Iran Desk at the State Department that there are currently no plans to consult with members of the People's Mujaheddin, or the National Council of Resistance, of which it is a member, in the course of developing this report. It was both stated and assumed during deliberations on this provision that an honest assessment could not occur without such consultation.⁵

Regrettably, the Department of State responded to such calls by

reiterating old accusations against the Mojahedin and refused to conduct a meaningful discussion, thereby revealing that those preparing the report were not interested in the comprehensive, objective report Congress had required. The Department's replies to members of Congress confirmed that despite the conference committee's emphasis on no prejudgments, the authors of the report had reached their conclusions before any serious review.

Joint Action

On September 21, 1994, Representatives Torricelli and Dan Burton announced in a press conference on Capitol Hill that a bipartisan coalition in Congress, consisting of 98 representatives, had called on Secretary of State Warren Christopher to ensure that a comprehensive and fair report on the Mojahedin is compiled, and that the organization is consulted directly by those preparing the report. In addition to Mr. Torricelli and Mr. Burton, the letter was sponsored by eight other members of Congress, among them Ronald Dellums, Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Ros-Lehtinen and Robert Borski, members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Philip Crane, and... The letter reads in part,

A thorough assessment of the situation in Iran and its major players will enable us to adopt a comprehensive and suitable policy toward Iran ... Our objective was for this report to be prepared in a fair manner with no prejudgments, as specified in the Conference Committee's report. We urge you, therefore, to ensure that representatives of the Mojahedin or National Council of Resistance are consulted directly by those who prepare the report... The report will be of little value without such consultation.⁶

In the press conference, Mr. Torricelli noted the Congress's desire for a new policy on the Iranian Resistance, and criticized the lack of dialogue with the representatives of the Mojahedin and the National Council of Resistance. He said:

It is difficult to conceive of how an objective study can be reached if there won't even be a conversation with a principal party ... In the interests of the United States Government, we want a fair review. But a fair review, by necessity, requires a free and a frank conversation ... Unless and until those conversations take place, the spirit of the law cannot be complied with, and whatever report is ultimately issued can be of no value ... Therefore, we urge the Department to immediately begin these conversations to allow

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compliance with the law . . .

It bears noting that if the Department cannot comply with the will of the Congress, having been asked, we do have the option in the future that it be compelled, and obviously we would hope that would not be necessary.⁷

Congressman Burton criticized the State Department's "one-sided view" of the issue, saying:

We all want freedom, democracy, and human rights in Iran, and the people who are working the hardest in that direction right now are the Mojahedin. For us not to talk to them, as a government, is a serious, serious mistake. And so, I would just say to the State Department, if they are watching now, or to the administration, if they are watching right now, let's get on with it. Let's get on with the will of Congress. Speak to the Mojahedin. They speak for a large segment of the people over there, which is growing every single day. The people over there want freedom, human rights and democracy. We should do everything we can to bring that about.⁸

Congressman Torricelli responded to reporters' questions about why the State Department refused to meet with members of the Resistance:

I think that there is a formal excuse, and there's a reason. The excuse is, of course, that they disagreed with the acts that have allegedly taken place in the past for which they claim the People's Mojahedin is responsible, but to speak with representatives and to learn about the organization and its purposes and, indeed, to inquire as to the veracity of those allegations, there is no reason not to have a conversation. Indeed, it may make the consultations all the more important for the veracity of the report.

However, I think the real reason is that, incredibly, despite the fact that there may be no government in the world that is more in contradiction with the objectives of the United States Government and our purpose in the world, than the government in Tehran, I believe that there is a continuing intention not to offend or contradict some in the Iranian government. Most Americans would find that shocking.⁹

Congressman Burton added:

In 1987, we did, as a government, have a dialogue with the Mojahedin. Now I can't understand why we would do that in 1987, and not do it today, especially in view of the fact that their support has grown in Iran, not decreased.¹⁰

Another senior member of the Foreign Affairs Committee,

Congressman Gary Ackerman (D-NY), joined Representatives Torricelli and Burton at the conference and released a statement to the press. In his bulletin, Congressman Ackerman stressed the necessity of establishing a dialogue with the Mojahedin:

The language in this legislation was intended to achieve an unbiased assessment of the resistance, with no prejudgments. Such a report cannot be accomplished without a direct dialogue. If we do not establish a liaison with the Iranian resistance now, we may well forgo the opportunity to pursue a reasonable and reasoned foreign policy toward Iran when the status quo in that beleaguered nation changes.¹¹

On the same day, Senator Dave Durenberger (R-MN) issued a press release announcing:

Senator Durenberger is one of 12 senators who have called for meetings between the State Department and the pro-democrat People's Mojahedin (part of the Iranian National Council of Resistance) and is one of 100 members of Congress who support a balanced Presidential report.¹²

The press release revealed that the Senator had written to the Secretary of State: "It is the clear intent that this report be prepared in an unbiased manner and that it not be based on any prejudgments."

The office of Congressman Ed Towns (D-NY) also issued a news release, stating:

Congressman Ed Towns stressed that the United States must side with the people of Iran, not with the despots ruling over them. He also urged the administration to establish dialogue with the National Council of Resistance of Iran, in order to cultivate the seeds of friendship and cooperation with the people of Iran.¹³

A number of other representatives also wrote letters to the Secretary of State to express concern about the way in which the report was being prepared and to encourage the Department to prepare an objective report. In a Congressional hearing, Rep. Ackerman questioned Robert Pelletreau, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, on the matter and called on him to establish dialogue with the Mojahedin. While insisting that the report on the Mojahedin would be comprehensive, Mr. Pelletreau repeated old accusations from the Irangate affair to defend the Department's unjustifiable policy against Iran's democratic opposition.¹⁴

The Media

The call for an objective approach and dialogue with the representatives of the Iranian Resistance went beyond Capitol Hill. In an editorial, *The New York Times* presented a candid appeal: "Listen to All Iranian Voices." The editorial read in part:

In dealing with a dictatorship, it is simple prudence to listen to its critics. This has not been U.S. policy in dealing with Iran's clerical tyranny. The State Department has shunned all contact with a key opposition group, the People's Mujaheddin, which also happens to be the group most loudly denounced by Iran.¹⁵

In criticizing the State Department, the *New York Times* endorsed the congressional will. The paper also stressed: "It is especially distasteful that this boycott is treated as a victory by Iranian mullahs."

The media covered the congressional initiative widely. *The Washington Times* wrote:

The resistance is gaining broad support in Congress, which has called on the Clinton administration to produce a fresh review of the Iranian opposition... Last week, New Jersey Democrat Robert Torricelli and Indiana Republican Dan Burton, both members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, held a news conference on the Capitol grounds to endorse the resistance. Mr. Torricelli called it "the most effective opposition to the Tehran government."¹⁶

U.S. policy on Iran and its bearing on the State Department's approach to the Iranian democratic opposition were also scrutinized. Arnold Beichman, a well-known research fellow at the Hoover Institute, described the State Department's no-contact attitude vis-a-vis the Iranian Resistance as a mistake. He wrote: "The State Department is on a collision course with members of Congress who think the time has come to support the Iranian opposition, both inside and outside the country." Mr. Beichman added: "Confronting the State Department's refusal to deal with the People's Mujaheddin are scores of members of both houses of Congress pressing for support of Iran opposition groups..."¹⁷

Peter Rodman, a respected Middle East expert, said the following:

The State Department, moreover, is inclined to view Iran's revolutionary regime as "deeply rooted" in the society and therefore a "permanent feature"

of the region. The department is opposed to any contacts with a prominent exile group, the People's Mujaheddin, on the grounds of its Iraqi connections and past leftism and anti-Americanism. An unusually broad bipartisan coalition of 98 House members and 12 Senators wrote to Christopher on September 9 to urge that the department consult with the Mujaheddin in the process of preparing a congressionally mandated report on the group and its activities. Given the strategic menace represented by the Iranian regime, it may be self-defeating to continue to shun an apparently vigorous resistance group that is turning to us for help, whatever its provenance. It can't be worse than the incumbents. Antigovernment riots in early August in the northwestern city of Qazvin suggest the regime might not be a "permanent feature" after all. In any case, it is difficult to see why the United States should do it the favor of treating it as such.¹⁸

The Boston Globe ran an editorial criticizing the contradictions between the administration's words and deeds. The editorial also referred to the anti-Mojahedin campaign by Tehran's lobby in Washington, recalling: "The Iranian clerics demanded similar U.S. condemnations of the Mujahedeen - the opposition group they find most threatening - during their missiles-for-hostages deals with Reagan."¹⁹

The Indianapolis Star's editorial stressed the need to support the National Council of Resistance in countering terrorism:

Closer relations between the United States and Iranian resistance might help dislodge the present Tehran regime and strangle its support of international terrorism aimed at wrecking the Arab-Israeli peace process and keeping the Middle East in turmoil. Rajavi promises to form an elective, representative republic that will end terrorism and oppression, respect human rights and strive for peace with its neighbors.²⁰

In an analytical review in the *Houston Post*, Stephen Green wrote:

Although the Iranian government repeatedly has demonstrated that it has no intention of behaving as a civilized state, American diplomats keep trying to find ways to normalize U.S.-Tehran relations. Such efforts are a waste of time.

In recognizing that the policy of refusing to do business with the Mojahedin is flawed, Congress has ordered the administration to make an "objective" report on the Iranian resistance ... The law specifically requires administration officials to consult directly with the Mojahedin in preparing the report ... As Rep. Gary Ackerman, D-NY, a senior member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, has noted, the "language in the legislation was intended to achieve an unbiased assessment of the resistance with no

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prejudgments. Such a report cannot be accomplished without a direct dialogue."²¹

Middle East experts also cited the congressional criticisms of U.S. policy on Iran. An Army War College fellow, Colonel Harry Summers, rejected the State Department's policy on the clerical dictatorship in Iran as a "cowardly appeasement policy," adding:

In words that Great Britain's Neville Chamberlain, who attempted to curry favor with Adolph Hitler on the eve of World War II, would have found familiar, the State Department is once again toadying up to dictators, this time the radical mullahs that rule Iran. "The United States is not really trying to overthrow the Iranian regime," said Robert H. Pelletreau, the assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern Affairs during his testimony before Congress last March. "We believe the Iranian regime is a permanent feature."²²

John Hughes, a former State Department official, remarked: "If the U.S. can talk with the Irish Republican Army and the North Koreans and the former military junta of Lt. Gen. Raoul Cedras in Haiti, it is difficult to see why it cannot explore face to face with the Iranian Mojahedin the accusations against them."²³

The *Albuquerque Journal* published an article called, "Friend or Foe? Congress Pushes For Assessment," in which Rep. Steven Schiff is quoted:

Although he missed the deadline for signing the letter, Rep. Steve Schiff, R-NM, said in a recent telephone interview he supports its intent. "The letter does not demand that the State Department make these people our allies," Schiff said. "If it turns out these people go beyond our framework, then we should back off. But we should always be looking to see what opposition groups we can work with ... Just be open-minded, objective, that's all we asked for."

In response to the accusations made against the Mojahedin, Rep. Schiff added:

"Even if some of the allegations turn out to be true, the State Department should take an objective, unbiased look at the group. In that arena there aren't too many boy scouts," he said. "We need to remember that Iran is the principal destabilizer in the Middle East."²⁴

The article also refers to a statement by Rep. Joe Skeen's

spokeswoman, who told a delegation of Iranian-Americans, "We are asking the State Department to recognize this organization and the seriousness of human rights abuses occurring in Iran."²⁵

In an article entitled "Who's The Real Terrorist?" the *National Journal* wrote:

The Mujahedin's agents in Washington are distributing a 161-page book, hot off the presses of a Paris publisher, that disputes State's assertions that the group supports terrorism, is non-democratic and lacks significant backing in Iran. The book, *Appeasing Tehran's Mullahs*, accuses the State Department of making concessions to Iran.²⁶

The *Miami Herald* reviewed the contradictions in U.S. policy on Iran in its opinion column:

Clinton has called Iran "the world's leading sponsor of state-sponsored terrorism" and urged allied nations to "recognize the true nature of Iranian intentions." Yet, from another side of the policy mouth, the assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs, Robert Pelletreau, told Congress in March that the Iranian regime should be treated as a "permanent feature" of the region... And why is it that the Department of State has shunned all contacts with the Iranian opposition coalition - the People's Mujahedeen or the National Council of Resistance (NCR) - the group most vociferously denounced by Iran's fundamentalist regime? In dealing with a dictatorship, after all, isn't it simple prudence to engage the critics? Iranian mullahs, on the other hand, view American policy toward the NCR as a clear victory. Senior Iranian officials allegedly suggested to U.S. counterparts that American doors slammed in the face of Iranian opposition groups would open doors in Tehran. Angered by the administration's boycott of the NCR, over 100 members of Congress recently wrote to Secretary of State Warren Christopher urging such a dialogue. Their missive has fallen on deaf ears. Could the White House be protecting the Iranian regime from its internal foes...?²⁷

National Public Radio devoted one of its most popular programs to the issue, noting:

The Clinton administration has called the government of Iran, an international outlaw and the most dangerous state-sponsor of terrorism. Despite this dim view of the Iranian leadership, the State Department refuses to meet with an Iranian resistance group that's determined to overthrow the current regime in Tehran. The People's Mojahedin, as the group is popularly known, believes the State Department is trying to quietly appease the regime in Tehran by refusing to meet with the opposition.²⁸

In a lengthy article entitled "Clinton, Christopher and Rafsanjani: Irangate Déjà Vu?," *The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* reviewed the history of relations between the State Department and the Mojahedin, as well as the policy of appeasing Iran, writing in part:

A very strange thing happened nine years ago at a House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing. At the end of his prepared testimony on July 24, 1985, then Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Richard Murphy read into the record an unrelated statement about the Mojahedin Khalq - the People's Mojahedin. The unsolicited statement strongly criticized the most prominent group in opposition to the Islamic revolutionary government of the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini as "militantly Islamic, anti-democratic, anti-American" and supportive of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and of the use of "terrorism and violence as standard instruments of their policies."

It was jarring both because it had no relationship to information normally sought by members of the congressional committee and because, with the possible exception of the reference to Afghanistan, it could more accurately have been applied to the Iranian government than to its Mojahedin opponents ... It was not until the Irangate scandal hit the headlines, and nationally televised congressional hearings began to unravel the tangled skein of the Reagan administration's controversial overture to Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's "moderates" within the Khomeini government, that the truth emerged about the Murphy statement, and subsequent attempts to discredit the members of Congress who had endorsed the Mojahedin.

The statement, according to the Tower Commission Report, was part of the price demanded by Iranian mullahs for participation in what quickly degenerated into Israeli-brokered arms-for-hostages transactions. Murphy, according to Irangate independent counsel Lawrence Walsh's 1993 report, was one of the nine U.S. government players in the Irangate scandal. In fact, when it seemed to have served its purpose, Murphy briefly backed down from his earlier statement. He told a House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on April 21, 1987, "I will very freely admit that there were gaps in our knowledge about the organization ... We meet, have met with the Mojahedin Organization here in Washington. They are a player in Iran ... We are not boycotting them."

However, in that same month, Rafsanjani, then the speaker of the Majlis, Iran's parliament, said in a statement reported by United Press that if the U.S. government were to restrain the activities of the anti-Khomeini People's Mojahedin, the Iranian government would end its support of terrorist groups in Lebanon. Whether by coincidence or not, very soon thereafter, the State Department informed the Mojahedin that it was no longer welcome to meet and talk with Department of State officials. The *de facto* State Department boycott in contacts with the Mojahedin has been in effect ever since.

On Sept. 8, suspicion that the Clinton administration was about to

take its own first step down the Irangate path led 12 senators and 98 House members to write Secretary of State Warren Christopher recommending that, since Congress desires "an accurate picture of the People's Mojahedin," he "ensure that representatives of the Mojahedin or National Council of Resistance are consulted directly by those who prepare the report."

When the 110 members of Congress called upon the State Department Sept. 9 for a "thorough assessment of the situation in Iran and its major players," they said they did so to "enable us to adopt a comprehensive and suitable policy toward Iran." It seems obvious that the best way to comply is to listen carefully to what is being said by Iranians - all Iranians. Those who claim otherwise open themselves to the suspicion that they have a hidden agenda, just as did the participants in Irangate, the worst foreign policy scandal in American history, only nine years ago." ²⁹

Scores of other articles appeared in the press criticizing the State Department's obstinate policy on the Iranian Resistance and questioned the credibility of a report prepared without direct dialogue with representatives of the Mojahedin and National Council of Resistance. The headlines read: "U.S. Can't Isolate Iran and Let Oil Companies Do Business There,"³⁰ "U.S. Should Work For A New Iran,"³¹ "U.S. Should Support Democracy in Iran."³²

Some of the articles described the State Department's stony-faced boycott of the Resistance as part and parcel of its policy of appeasing Iran's mullahs. Martin Schram described the congressional call and the support expressed by *The New York Times* as "major triumphs." In his article in *The Washington Times*, Mr. Schram wrote:

Once again, a U.S. administration has conned itself into chasing an evanescent wisp of moderates believed to be floating among Tehran's rulers. To reach these moderates, the Clinton administration is tight-roping a diplomatic prayer of a line - it stretches between talking tough for Western consumption and not offending Tehran's terrorist-sponsoring regime by meeting with the Mujahideen.

It's enough to make one wonder if, when the Department finishes its report on Iran's Mujahideen, it will be gift-wrapped and hand-delivered to Tehran, along with an autographed Bible and a cake in the shape of a key.³³

A number of experts in regional affairs concurred. In one political briefing, a Middle East expert from the Center for Strategic and International Studies and a former White House consultant, Joyce Starr, waved aside the excuses put forward for not engaging in dialogue with the Iranian Resistance, saying: "None of us believe it."

Dr. Starr examined U.S. policy on Iran, pointing to the contradiction:

If we are afraid to hear from, just to talk to, to discuss with a group of people whose worst crime is to fight against the current Iranian regime - what does this say about the continuity of our policy?... The question for me as an American, the question for me as a journalist and a writer is, what is happening behind closed doors in the State Department and the White House. And don't think that if the State Department takes a particular position, that it's taking it out there, without the consultation of the White House. Our President, Mr. Clinton, has stated before B'nai B'rith just about a month ago, called the Iranian regime "the world's leading sponsor of state-sponsored terrorism." That's interesting. Is it possible that our leadership is making public claims that are completely belied and undercut by what they are doing behind closed doors and in terms of the implementation of their policy? That's the way it looks to me. So I don't think you... will find your answer here today. I think the answer is in the corridors of power. What's in it for them to block these people? If you can answer that, then I think you will help widen this debate, rather than stand here and defend and defend and defend a record... We can always find another aspect of the record to condemn - of anybody's record.³⁴

Dr. Starr expressed her dismay at the State Department's disregard for the congressional view in this way:

As an American citizen, I am extremely ashamed. I am ashamed that a hundred members of Congress would have to literally beg the Department of State, which works for us and not for some people in another country, to talk to a group who is sitting here in the United States. We're not talking about, not one is asking our government for money. Nobody's asking our government for arms... When a hundred members of Congress have to write a letter begging the State Department to do that and they're not answered, they're not given an answer, that means that the system of democracy is not working in this country.³⁵

In the briefing, another Iran expert, Dr. Khalid Duran, analyzed the regime's terrorism and pointed to Tehran's threat to regional stability, also stressing the necessity of establishing dialogue with the NCR.³⁶

Europeans Weigh In

Many European politicians and parliamentarians joined the U.S. Congress in criticizing the State Department's position. They described the Department's policy on the Mojahedin as favoring the

regime in Tehran, and questioned American appeals to Europe to take a stronger stance against Tehran and tighten restrictions on trade with the mullahs. They also expressed doubts over the real intent and direction of American policy on Iran. The European dignitaries all concurred on the necessity of a dialogue with the Mojahedin, as a prerequisite to objectivity and fairness in preparing the report.

In Britain, a bipartisan coalition of 63 MPs sent a letter to President Clinton to express their concern about U.S. policy on the Tehran regime and the Iranian Resistance. The British parliamentarians wrote,

The refusal of the United States' Department of State to talk with the opposition in the past several months is sending out misleading signals. The Iranian regime, which your government previously described as "an international outlaw," is already using the State Department's positions for public relations advantage against its main opposition. We believe that this regime deserves to be met with decisiveness and the most unequivocal approach... We, like our colleagues in the U.S. House and Senate, believe any practical and effective measure should be accompanied by an exchange of views with the Iranian Resistance and its representatives. It is our own experience that meeting with them has always been a constructive move.³⁷

Lord Avebury, Chairman of the British Parliamentary Human Rights Group, wrote to President Clinton to convey his findings on the regime's terrorism and other acts that Tehran falsely attributes to the Mojahedin. Lord Avebury stated in his letter that the Parliamentary Group which he heads had investigated recent murders in Iran which "we believe were committed by agents of the mullahs' regime." He added, "There are some people in the State Department who are not impartial in this matter, because they are the same officials who agreed to brand the Mojahedin as terrorists in 1986" during the Irangate scandal.³⁸

Lord Ennals, a former Foreign Office minister also wrote to President Clinton. Citing the "increasingly crude breaches of human rights by the Iranian government" he said, "I find it difficult to understand how your government failed to discuss these issues with the Iranian Mojahedin and the National Council of Resistance before reaching conclusions."³⁹

Lennart Friden, a conservative Swedish member of parliament

also wrote to President Clinton and expressed amazement that the report was being prepared without contacts with the Resistance's representatives, saying:

The good old Roman legal principle "Audiator et altera pars" is always recommendable to follow in political work. As the Mojahedin movement is an organization with a major role in the Iranian question, it is even more important to meet with them. That should also be profitable for the relations with the U.S. in a future Iranian government.⁴⁰

Pax Christi, an international Catholic peace movement, expressed concern at the consequences of the State Department's report. The organization wrote to the U.S. ambassador in Germany:

In a letter from U.S. congressmen to Warren Christopher on September 9, 1994, regarding a report that is to be prepared on the People's Mojahedin it is requested that a direct dialogue be established with the National Council of Resistance. We have enough reason to be concerned that your administration, like our federal government and other democratic governments are leaning toward accepting the fundamentalist regime in Tehran for economic and strategic reasons and ignoring the Mojahedin and the National Council of Resistance. We are a Catholic church organization that has been watching and supporting the activities of the Iranian Resistance to end the suppression of the Iranian people. In contrast to other national resistance movements, the Mojahedin have engaged in totally legitimate political activities here in Germany to disseminate news. The information published by the Mojahedin and the National Council of Resistance is according to the estimate of many human rights organizations such as Amnesty International authoritative. We have not seen until now any violent act on the part of this organization. In truth, the facts are contrary to this.⁴¹

Iranians React

The Iranian-American community also criticized the State Department's behavior and its refusal to meet with representatives of the Iranian Resistance. The Washington Office of the National Council of Resistance received copies of several thousand letters by Iranians to the President, Secretary of State and members of Congress. Many had written to the Department to request meetings, but their requests were refused or left unanswered. Several Iranians subsequently wrote to the Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee to express dismay at the biased behavior of officials at

the State Department.

Regrettably, only in the final days, when the report had actually been completed, did the State Department agree to meet with a few of the hundreds of Iranians who had requested meetings. Reportedly, in one such meeting, the head of the Department's Iran Desk shrugged off his and the Department's responsibility in the affair, stating that they were only implementing presidential policy.⁴²

The San Diego chapter of the Society of Iranian Scholars and Professionals criticized the State Department position in an article in the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, writing:

The regime in Tehran faces an organized, nationwide resistance called the National Council of Resistance, which strives for democracy, human rights and a pluralistic rule . . . Politically, Congress has set the stage for a new approach by asking the President to prepare a report by October on the Iranian Resistance. Dialogue between the resistance and the Clinton administration is part and parcel of an impartial and exhaustive report.⁴³

Many other Iranian organizations and associations in the U.S. published statements, held meetings and expressed their opinion in other ways as well, calling for a dialogue with the Mojahedin and the National Council of Resistance. The Association of Iranian Scholars and Professionals in the United States published a report called "A Question of Fairness." The report enumerates the concerns of Iranians residing in the U.S.:

We are concerned that the mullahs' regime be given no opportunity to further suppress Iran's democratic opposition movement. We are concerned about better future relations between the United States and Iran, and we do not want a misrepresentation of Iran's democratic opposition to jeopardize that future. If the report on the Mojahedin is to be helpful, it must be fair, devoid of pre-judgments, and include consultation with their representatives.

The text offers five reasons to support the initiatives by the House and Senate:

- An accurate representation of the facts is possible only by means of a fair, comprehensive study of the issues.
- Anything less than fairness violates democratic principles.
- Prejudgments or reluctance to meet with "the widest range of people possible" (which obviously includes the subjects of the report) violates the congressional guidelines to the Bill.

- Anything less than a fair treatment of the report's primary subject seriously jeopardizes the report's credibility.
- Anything less than a fair and comprehensive report will be misused by Iran's terrorist rulers to justify their suppression of the opposition.⁴⁴

Representative offices of the National Council of Resistance in Britain, Germany, France and other European countries also received copies of several thousand letters written by Iranians to the U.S. President and U.S. embassies, expressing their dissatisfaction at the State Department's biased position and declaring their support for the Mojahedin.

III

Congressional Outrage

The State Department continued to violate the elementary principle of objectivity throughout the preparation of the report, discrediting the paper even before publication. When the findings were eventually released, the congressional reaction was harsh.¹ Several points left no doubt about the report's bias, establishing it as a one-sided recounting of old accusations. First, by not engaging in a dialogue with the representatives of the Mojahedin and National Council of Resistance, the State Department had violated the spirit of the congressional request.² Second, by repeatedly rejecting calls by members of Congress for such dialogue, the Department aggravated concerns about a hidden agenda on Iran. Third, by remaining oblivious to widespread criticism in the media and Iranian-American community, both of whom called for no prejudgments and direct discussions with the subjects of the report, the authors made it clear that they were not interested in a fair report.

Prior to publication, Wendy Sherman replied to all inquiries by members of Congress by repeating the same points that was later rehashed at greater length in the report on October 28.³ Again, in November, Ms. Sherman sent letters essentially identical to the one she had written in July, to different groups of congressional members.

Rep. Robert Torricelli issued a news release in which he called the report "biased," adding:

"A thorough and timely assessment of the situation in Iran and its major players would have enabled the United States to adopt a comprehensive and suitable policy toward Iran. By not consulting with the Mojahedin or the National Council of Resistance (NCR), the State Department's report is noncompliant with the desire of Congress to obtain an accurate and balanced

picture of the resistance group." Torricelli called "for a new study that includes direct discussions with representatives of the Mojahedin or the NCR."⁴

Another influential member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Rep. Dan Burton, said:

I am disappointed that the State Department has, once again, issued an incomplete report on the People's Mojahedin of Iran. The State Department continues to thwart the will of the U.S. Congress, which has made clear its preference that, in the context of the preparation of the report, there be discussions with the Mojahedin. Without such discussions, a truly objective report is impossible.⁵

Rep. Gary Ackerman, Chairman of the Asia Subcommittee, described the report as "noncompliant with the spirit of the law," and said: "The language in this legislation was intended to achieve an unbiased assessment of the resistance with no prejudgments. Such a report could only be achieved with direct dialogue. It is for this reason that I am extremely disappointed in this report."⁶

Another House member, Rep. Edolphus Towns, described the report as "not acceptable," adding: "This whitewash report is a gift to the Iranian regime. This contradicts the mandate given by the Congress." The Congressman called for a new independent study prepared through dialogue with the Mojahedin.⁷

Senator Dave Durenberger criticized the report and its authors in a harshly-worded statement:

"I regret that the State Department has issued a report on the People's Mojahedin of Iran that appears to mirror the same bias against this group that has been evident for some time... It is apparent that the State Department never planned to issue a fair report and ignored our request to interview the people who were the focus of the report." The Senator joined the call by other members of Congress, saying: "I would recommend that an independent study be conducted that permits all interests the right to provide input."⁸

The Press

The New York Times reported on congressional criticisms of the report, writing: "The State Department upset many members of Congress today by issuing a scathing report about a prominent Iranian opposition group without meeting with officials from the

group, as more than 100 lawmakers had asked it to do."⁹ It added: "Many members of Congress support contact, arguing that they can speed the demise of Iran's religious government and can be a moderating influence on the Mojahedin, which maintains military bases in Iraq, near the Iranian border."¹⁰ The paper cited the Department's allegations against the Mojahedin and the views of several legislators, quoting Paul Marcone, chief of staff for Rep. James A. Traficant, Jr., as saying that, "Mr. Traficant supports meeting with the Mojahedin because he thinks they are probably the best hope for democracy in Iran in the short term and we should at least try to help them."¹¹

In an article entitled "State Dept. Report Denouncing Iranian Rebel Group Is Criticized," *the Washington Post*, wrote:

None of the report's scathing assessments of the Mujaheddin came as a surprise. Mujaheddin representatives here surmised weeks ago what the State Department would say, and they published a detailed response in advance... To some extent they succeeded in preemptively raising questions about the report's value by complaining publicly that the State Department refused to talk to them as part of its research... Reps. Gary L. Ackerman (D-NY), Robert G. Torricelli (D-NJ) and Dan Burton (R-IN), all senior members of the House Foreign Affairs committee, issued statements yesterday criticizing the State Department and the report.¹²

Following the clerical regime's November 6 Scud missile attack on a Resistance base, a report by Reuters questioned the State Department's claim that the Iranian Resistance lacks a popular base and is not a political alternative to the regime:

The United States says the Mujahideen Khalq are not an important Iranian opposition group, but this week's flare-up in the struggle between them and Iran's rulers suggests Tehran does not share that view... The latest violence came just days after the U.S. State Department, in a long-awaited report, concluded that the Mujahideen "are not a viable alternative to the current government of Iran."¹³

Other media featured stories also highly critical of the State Department report. An editorial appearing in *the Indianapolis Star* said:

Congressional anger at the State Department is warranted. It is justified not only because State officials ignored the congressional mandate to consult

with the Mujahedeen but because the present regime in Iran is a principal source of funding for terrorists involved in hostage-taking, assassinations and bombings around the world and numerous Americans have been among their victims. Helping the Mujahedeen would help counter the threat of the radical regime now in control of Iran.¹⁴

In Washington, a spokesman for the Mojahedin described the report as "a bunch of bold-faced lies."¹⁵

What Did the Experts Say?

Professor Marvin Zonis, a prominent Iran expert, whose name was mentioned in the report's list of experts, commented on the Department's report in an interview with the Chicago Public Radio. "There were a number of different groups in Iran, some were totally Marxist-communist, and some totally Islamic, and others were fairly democratic, which merged together and broke up and merged together and broke up and finally emerged as the present organization," Zonis said of the Mojahedin's history.¹⁶

In a review of the post-revolutionary period, when the regime tried to eliminate all opposition, especially the Mojahedin, Zonis noted the Mojahedin's reluctance to enter into an armed confrontation. He added:

Eventually there was a very, very messy confrontation between the Mojahedin and the regime in June of 1981, which was just more than two years after the shah's overthrow. The clerics really decided to stamp out the Mojahedin. The leader of the Mojahedin, Mr. Rajavi, and then president of Iran, who was not a Mojahedin member, Bani-Sadr, both fled Iran together into exile in Paris. The regime then began a campaign of mass slaughter of Mojahedin members, and most of the brutality of the regime has been directed against them.

Q: What happened to the exiles? What became of what we know today of as the Mojahedin-Khalq?

Zonis: Well, Massoud Rajavi set up shop in Paris and lots of other Mojahedin fled Iran, because it was clear at that time that it was either death or exile. Lots of people fled and lots of sympathizers set up chapters all over the world, collecting money, printing publications supporting Rajavi in Paris.

The French government, not unusual for France, I am sorry to say, eventually buckled under pressure from Iran and decided they would rather have good relations with the clerics than provide haven for Rajavi, even though I remind you they provided haven for Khomeini against the shah. They threw Rajavi out of the country and that is how he ended up where he

is today, in Baghdad, because that was the only country in the world at the time which did not care about good relations with Iran. So Iraq now has a relationship with the Mojahedin-Khalq, and they have bases there. Other groups, I guess, Kurdish groups who also oppose Iran, they also have bases in Iraq close to Iran. Amazingly enough, the Mojahedin decided the political movement alone was insufficient and they needed to build an army which would be able to go into Iran militarily and rouse the population so that the regime could be overthrown...

Q: Let's go on our policy with the Mojahedin-Khalq. They have got an office in Washington, D.C. They are lobbying somebody there and here we see the State Department has come out last week and said that they are fundamentally undemocratic... and they are no alternative to the regime that is currently there now in Iran, although they do not support the regime there in Iran but these people are not an alternative. Why did the State Department say this about the Mojahedin-Khalq?

Zonis: I think there are two issues that are operating in the minds of the State Department people who wrote that report. One, the Mojahedin are associated with the murder of several American armed forces personnel, whom I can remember were assassinated on the streets of Tehran as a way to overthrow the shah. The United States believes that the Mojahedin-Khalq were responsible for those assassinations. The Mojahedin line is that they did not do it... I have no way to judge that.

The second thing in the mind of the State Department, I believe, is the view that Rajavi, the leader of the Mojahedin, is essentially non-democratic and, worse, would impose another kind of socialist Islamic dictatorship on Iran. And that is essentially how they come to the conclusion that it is not a progressive step.

My own view is that, of course, it is a terribly mistaken view. While the Mojahedin are not my favorite group and are not particularly democratic, they certainly would never create an Iran which was an enemy to the rest of the world and which supported terrorism all over the world.

Q: So what kind of government do you think they would have if they would come to power?

Zonis: Well they would certainly have a republican form of government. Actually Mr. Rajavi, I think as a way to move the political process faster, designated his wife as the President of Iran. So believe it or not, Iran would have a female president. It would be a republic and she would run it. And it will be along Islamic lines, with a high degree of internal discipline. It reminds me of some of these third world socialist movements of the 60s even. But the key is that they have no interest in terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism, broadcasting the Iranian revolution. What they want is to build the Iranian economy.

Q: Who in the United States supports them? I saw that Robert Torricelli called the State Department report incomplete and biased.

Zonis: That is right. You mentioned that the Mojahedin had an office in Washington, which is correct. They also have offices in other cities, but the

Washington office is especially important because the Mojahedin spend a great deal of energy lobbying with the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States. In fact the reason the State Department did this report on the Mojahedin was because a very large number of congressmen were induced by the Mojahedin to demand an investigation of U.S. policy and why the U.S. had not dealt with the Mojahedin. So there were more than, I cannot remember the number, but I think it was almost 200 congressmen who urged the United States to do business with the Mojahedin. I think there were even some senators. So they have a lot of support in Washington...¹⁷

Green Light

The firing of three Scud-B missiles at an Iranian Resistance base on November 6 caused further concern about the implications of the biased report. Had it encouraged Tehran to commit more crimes? Many U.S. congressmen endorsed this view in statements issued after the attack. Rep. Ed Towns said: "I had said that this report is a gift to the Iranian regime and the missile attack proved that. This is a shame that the State Department's report is being used as a green light to stage one of the most blatant crimes by using weapons of mass destruction."¹⁸

Rep. Torricelli pointed out the discrepancies in U.S. policy on Iran in his statement of condemnation, writing:

Regrettably, a recent State Department report about the Mujahedin is being interpreted as a "green light" for Iran to conduct terrorism, even though Iran is considered officially by the United States as an international outlaw. The United States should not cross signals when it comes to terrorism.¹⁹

Another congressman, Rep. James Traficant, wrote to President Clinton:

...The request for an objective report is indicative of Congress's intent to fully assess the political influence on Iran and its key players in order to develop a comprehensive and unbiased policy toward Iran. In defining the parameters of this extensive report, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act called for a direct dialogue between the State Department and the NCR. The October 28, 1994 report was incomplete in this respect and, therefore, not without potential bias.²⁰

The Houston Post published a very critical article entitled "U.S. should back mujahideen fight," in which it reviewed the connection between the State Department report and the Iranian regime's missile

attack only days after its publication. The article stated:

It is possible that a State Department action had the effect of precipitating the Nov. 6 attack. Five days earlier, the State Department had issued a report scathingly denouncing the mujahideen as a terrorist organization with little support inside Iran. The official Iranian press hailed the State Department report as vindication of Tehran's battle against the resistance.²¹

The article criticized the policy of appeasing the regime in Tehran: "For the United States to decide that the Tehran regime is too strong to be overthrown is tantamount to surrender to terrorism. Iran is a growing menace to the world."²²

The *Orlando Sentinel* also criticized U.S. policy on Iran. Basing its argument on the facts, the paper refuted the claim that the Mojahedin are not an important force in Iran. Pointing to the contradictions in U.S. policy, the article continued:

Alliances depend on a common enemy, not on shared values. This also speaks to another of the State Department's specious criticisms of the Mujahideen, that they were anti-American in the 1970s. Yep, they sure were. They were trying to overthrow the shah, whom the United States had forced on the Iranian people in a CIA-engineered coup and whose dictatorship the U.S. government was supporting. It was impossible at that time to be anti-shah and pro-American. But that was then and this is now. Who are our strongest allies today? Our worst enemies 50 years ago, Japan and Germany.²³

Iranians Voice Outrage

The biased report sparked resentment and anger in the Iranian community abroad. Iranian-American groups and societies issued statements, condemning it as a gift to the mullahs in Iran. At the grassroots level, individuals wrote to local newspapers and their representatives to declare their support of the National Council of Resistance as the alternative to the regime in Iran. An Iranian-American in San Antonio described the report as "the worst thing for the Iranian people and the best thing for Khomeini's heirs," adding,

It is time for President Clinton and the State Department to wake up to the realities of Iran and recognize the Iranian people's rights and democratic aspirations. Do not cater to the despots who rule Iran. The State Department should establish dialogue with the resistance and send a clear message to the mullahs, as was called for by more than 100 congressmen and 12 senators in a bipartisan initiative.²⁴

Democracy Betrayed

The anger climaxed when the regime attacked a resistance base. Thousands of Iranians demonstrated in 15 cities throughout the world.²⁵ They condemned the regime and described the State Department's report as a green light for murder. Over 1,000 people gathered in front of the White House in Washington, D.C., to express their concern over the implications that the report had emboldened the regime to commit more crimes. The demonstration's resolution read in part:

Doubtless, the biased report by the State Department abounding in lies and distortions against the Mojahedin and the Iranian Resistance, encouraged the Khomeini regime to launch the missile attack on Ashraf camp. While condemning this report, whose writers and fomulators pursued no goal other than appeasing the criminal mullahs, we declare that this report is a reminder of America's unconditional support for the shah's treacherous dictatorship.²⁶

IV

Mullahs & the Report

The religious, terrorist dictatorship in Iran was the only party to welcome the State Department report on the Mojahedin. The mullahs expressed their gratitude to the Department, and vociferously attacked Congress and the American public's call for an objective report as a "Zionist conspiracy."¹

For years, one of the mullahs' main foreign policy objectives has been to restrict the activities of the Iranian opposition. The clerics have approached this goal by various means, sometimes promising favored trading status and sometimes using terrorism to intimidate democratic countries. For obvious reasons, Tehran has been obsessed with countering the NCR and the Mojahedin, which it sees as its main threat.

In 1985, Khomeini demanded that the U.S. condemn the Mojahedin in return for the release of Americans held hostage in Lebanon.² During the same period, his first and foremost demand from France was restrictions on the activities of Massoud Rajavi, in return for the freedom of French hostages and better economic ties with Paris. In any case, appeasing Khomeini did not lessen his bent for terrorism. On the contrary, buckling under only propelled his regime down a more violent path. The American shipment of TOW anti-tank missiles and unwarranted statement on the Mojahedin in 1985 did not bring about the freedom of American hostages; the regime simply raised the stakes. Nor did the U.S.'s miscalculated policy bolster any "moderates," simply because they do not exist, then or now. After Massoud Rajavi's departure from France in 1986, Khomeini's regime sought greater concessions, and pressed its demands with a wave of bombings in Paris that led to the deaths of more than a dozen French citizens.³

Fundamental Demands

In the past year, the regime's deteriorating state has compelled it to lay increasing emphasis on this fundamental demand in dealings with foreign countries. In a rare and diplomatically unusual move, the regime's Foreign Minister summoned all ambassadors in Tehran to the Ministry twice in July to tell them in effect that their governments had to choose between his government and the Mojahedin.⁴ The tactic was apparently unsuccessful, so the regime began to fabricate statements against the Mojahedin, supposedly made by officials of other countries. In early summer, *Ressalat* newspaper reported a remark purported to have been made by the British chargé d'affaires to Sa'id Raja'i-Khorassani, a parliamentary deputy: "The English Government condemns the atrocious terrorist acts of the *Monafegin* (Mojahedin) in Mashad and stresses that this group's terrorist record is clear to the English authorities..." Lord Henley, spokesman for the British Government, told the House of Lords: "The newspaper did not accurately report the chargé d'affaires' meeting with Dr. Khorassani."⁵ Douglas Hogg, the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, informed Lord Avebury in a letter that *Ressalat* had "blatantly misrepresented Mr. James's comments on the Mashad bomb."⁶

The incident is typical of Tehran's desperate efforts to compel officials of other countries to condemn the democratic opposition. Such statements serve to justify its brutal internal suppression of dissent and so-called "war on terrorism." They also justify the regime's international terrorism against opponents outside Iran, which has risen to over 100 terrorist operations.⁷

This explains why in January 1994, the clerics welcomed the proposal of the McCain amendment,⁸ replete with baseless charges against the Mojahedin. Referring to earlier Senate condemnations of human rights abuses in Iran, *Jomhuri Islami* newspaper wrote: "It is said that there is a new tone to the new American foreign policy bill taken up by the Senate. The legislation stresses that the People's Mojahedin Organization has been involved in terrorist activities since its inception in 1963."⁹

In an article on the McCain amendment, *U.S.-Iran Review* - published by FAIR, the regime's lobby in Washington - wrote:

Should McCain's amendment be retained and become law, its significance

will go far beyond simply requiring yet another State Department report. As McCain points out, such a report would allow Congress... and the media... to "consider the source." The Mojahedin has been the source of much misinformation and exaggeration about Iran, understandingly enough, since its aim is to overthrow the current regime. Many articles and columnists in the popular media use the Mojahedin as if it were a credible source. Congress would be well served to be made aware of the background of the PMOI and thus be cautious in assessing information received from them.

But perhaps more significant would be the balance brought to the State Department terrorism report by the McCain requirement. The State Department's accusation that Iran is "the most dangerous state sponsor of terrorism in 1992" is based on charges that Iran has assassinated political opponents. Note that it is difficult to comment authoritatively on exactly who is behind the various killings, since hard evidence is not available or is currently being investigated in courts in Europe.

What is often disregarded in articles about Iran's alleged state-sponsored murders is the fact that most of these killings (with a few inexplicable exceptions), as inexcusable as they are, appear to be part of a broad cycle of violence. Iran's political opponents, including the Mojahedin and Kurdish separatists, are violently attacking Iran, often killing civilians in cross-border raids and terrorist-type attacks.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the McCain amendment would likely be received in Tehran as one bit of concrete evidence that the United States is not seeking to overthrow the Islamic Republic. Statements by several U.S. officials, including the recent ones by Martin Indyk and Anthony Lake, have said that the United States is not trying to overthrow the regime. However, Iran likely suspects that the United States' greatest wish is to topple the Islamic regime, and the access to Congress and the media by the Mojahedin only contribute to that impression. Iran also suspects that the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency is funding and supporting the Mojahedin, along with Iran's other arch enemy, Iraq. Simply reporting on the Mojahedin's terrorist activity would do much to alter that view.¹⁰

The commentaries are clear about what it is the mullahs want. Significantly, State Department officials began their calls for a dialogue with Tehran at about the same time the McCain amendment first appeared.¹¹ The regime reacted by reporting the development widely in its press, as a sign of American weakness. *Jomhuri Islami* wrote:

Political analysts view these comments as an admission to the failure of all of the U.S.'s hostile efforts against Iran in the past years... The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State is expressing his willingness to have a dialogue with Iran as the European countries continue to pressure the U.S. to resolve its difficulties with the Islamic Republic.¹²

Eventually, the paper published Khamenei's answer:

His Reverence, Ayatollah Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, revealed the U.S.'s motives for a dialogue with Iran in his November 4 address last year on the occasion of the seizure of the U.S. nest of spies. He stressed that the nation of Iran does not need dialogue and contact with an arrogant enemy such as the United States.¹³

As could be expected, the conciliatory messages by officials of the State Department had only raised the stakes. *Kayhan International* daily suggested that the United States accept several preconditions to facilitate negotiations to resolve differences between the two countries.¹⁴

Just days before the State Department released its report, *Kayhan Havai*, a state-run weekly published for Iranians abroad, wrote:

While little time remains before the State Department submits its report on the terrorist nature of Rajavi's grouplet to that country's Congress, Zionist circles in the media and Congress of the United States have begun a tremendous campaign to divert the course and conclusions of this investigative report. The U.S. State Department has called Rajavi's grouplet a terrorist organization and this country's Congress has mandated the State Department to report on the group's nature and actions.¹⁵

Obviously, the regime had prior knowledge of the report's pronouncements, or it would not have spoken of congressional efforts to "divert the course and conclusions." It is also clear that contrary to the principle of objectivity stressed by Congress, the State Department had reached its conclusions long before any investigation and had, as the state-run Iranian paper said, branded the Mojahedin as a "terrorist organization."

The *Kayhan Havai* article attested that calling the Mojahedin "terrorists" was a two-sided coin, the other side of which was rapprochement with the regime. It wrote:

Several months before, Robert Pelletreau had stated in a report to the U.S. Congress on Iran and future bilateral relations that the U.S. does not really seek to overthrow the government of Iran and that it considered the Tehran government as a permanent feature.¹⁶

Salam, another state-controlled Tehran daily, commented:

Insecurity in Iraq and a European cold shoulder, have made the [Mojahedin] turn as never before to the U.S. They have tried to use the influence of the Zionists to find a haven for themselves in the States. The Zionist influence in the U.S.'s decision-making bodies has prevented Washington from legally ending the terrorist group's activities in the U.S., despite the State Department's position that they are terrorists.¹⁷

Report Cheered

Immediately after the report's publication, IRNA reported:

The U.S. State Department in an official statement had admitted that the MKO was a terrorist group. The U.S. took such an open stance despite attempts by the Zionists to receive approval of the Americans for the MKO. As a result, the terrorist group which had pinned hope on the U.S. support was all at once entrapped in a political impasse.¹⁸

When you consider the regime's wish list, as laid out in the FAIR article, it is clear that the State Department report was more than generous. The Tehran regime had long awaited just such a move to justify its bloody record of suppression. A *Tehran Times* editorial referred to the report as "indicative of a rude awakening in the West, an awakening to the fact that they should not take claims by dubious freedom fighters at face value, that whatever the Islamic Republic was saying all along against the unprincipled, murderous MKO was all true."¹⁹ In a report on this article, IRNA added:

Turning to the anger of Western officials at the terrorist MKO for leading them to believe that they were the voice of reason and restraint and for hiding their true nature as mercenaries for Saddam, the paper termed their anger as natural saying no victim was ever free from anger against the victimizer.²⁰

Another daily, *Jomhuri Islami*, expressed satisfaction at the report as well, saying:

The U.S. State Department has declared that the Monafeqin are terrorists tied to Saddam Hussein, and the U.S. would never count on them in a future Iran because they have no support among the Iranian people.²¹

In a fabricated account of an attack by the Mojahedin on a diplomatic automobile belonging to the regime in Denmark, IRNA reported: "Political observers believe that the attack on the Iranian diplomats took place in a bid to bring the organization out of the

present deadlock and at the same time encourage its agents in Baghdad." As usual, Tehran complained of the State Department's delay in taking such a stance:

If Western governments which would term the MKO as a terrorist organization in their private talks and unpublished statements, had openly announced their point of view towards the grouplet, no doubt the terrorists would not have been emboldened as such to attack the diplomats.²²

The state-controlled daily, *Abrar*, wrote that the U.S. State Department report "points to the group's inability to take power in Iran and describes the group as a puppet and undemocratic tool of the Iraqi government."²³ An Arabic language paper reported:

An Iranian Foreign Ministry source welcomed the report and said, on condition of anonymity, "This report strengthens the hand of those Iranian factions that are still trying to conduct a constructive dialogue with Washington."²⁴

In another article, *Jomhuri Islami* wrote,

Despite tremendous Zionist pressures in Congress, the U.S. State Department was forced to admit to the [Mojahedin's] terrorist nature... The report said that the group had a 29-year-record of undemocratic behavior, including a series of assassinations, kidnappings, intimidation, armed insurrection and suppression of dissent... Some of the documents referred to in the report are letters sent by Iraqis to the U.S. State Department, testifying that their relatives in the 1991 insurrection of the Iraqi people against the Baathist rule were killed by joint execution squads of Baathists and [Mojahedin]... The [Mojahedin's] denials of responsibility for terrorist acts have not been accepted. Likewise, their claims about pursuing a free-minded democracy have not been accepted...²⁵

Based on reports from Iran, the mullahs are making the most of the report to bring pressure to bear on political prisoners. It is represented as vindication of Khomeini's *fatwa* declaring: "The Mojahedin, their members and supporters alike, are all condemned to death and there is no need for a trial."²⁶

The Consequences

A Scud missile attack on a base of the National Liberation Army of Iran only a week after the report's publication was viewed by a

journal on Middle Eastern affairs as the result of a green light to Tehran from Washington:

Iran appears to have considered carefully the possible diplomatic effects of its decision to launch the cross-border attacks and decided that the initiative was worth the risk... What appeared to convince the Iranians, correctly it seems, that they had effectively been given the green light from the West was the fact that the U.S. State Department had in October denounced the MKO for being profoundly undemocratic and unrepresentative of the Iranian people.²⁷

Salam tried to gloss over the facts in response to a reader's question: "I wanted to know the connection between the U.S. State Department's report in favor of Iran and against the [Mojahedin], and Iran's missile attack on their base in Iraq." The reply: "Although the timing of the attack and the statement that describes the [Mojahedin] as terrorist may lead one to make such a conclusion" that is not the case.²⁸

Mahmoud Mohammadi, the regime's Foreign Ministry spokesman, defended the attack with arguments about the regime being "the greatest victim of a wave of terrorism." He referred to the State Department report that described the [Mojahedin] as terrorist and said: "It is indicative of the rightfulness of our position. For years we have said, and provided numerous documents attesting that they are terrorists, and now the Islamic Republic has been vindicated as never before."²⁹

After having accused the democratic opposition in Iran of being "violent", "terrorist", "tied to Iraq," having "no popular base," etc., Washington could hardly condemn Tehran's efforts to destroy so "undesirable" a movement, even though in doing so the regime had broken international laws. Furthermore, the Department is evidently well aware that any position critical of the regime on an issue that concerns the Mojahedin and NCR, is detrimental to its hopes of a dialogue with this "international outlaw." Two days after the missile attack, Tehran felt secure enough from an international protest to try bombing an NLA base. The attacking jet fighters were driven off by anti-aircraft fire, but managed to strike at Kurdish bases in the no-fly zone in northern Iraq, completely controlled by American warplanes.³⁰ Again, there was no reaction from the U.S. State Department.

These events demonstrate that as long as such biased views prevail about the Iranian Resistance, tough talk by U.S. officials about the regime's outlaw behavior will have no effect. These events confirm that the *de facto* U.S. policy is nothing other than appeasing the mullahs at the expense of the Iranian people's Resistance movement. It is a policy that will only encourage more crimes. In the course of the Bakhtiar murder trial in Paris, in which two of the regime's agents were sentenced to life and ten-years, Khomeini's heirs did their utmost to use the State Department report to influence the verdict. In a letter to the court accompanied by the report, the regime's ambassador lashed out at the Mojahedin, saying that the best response is the State Department's. He tried to portray the regime as a victim of the Mojahedin's terrorism.³¹

Doing Their Best

While the report was being prepared, the regime tried through different channels to ensure that it would denounce the Mojahedin and reflect the mullahs' viewpoints. To this end, Rafsanjani's office and the regime's Foreign Ministry jointly prepared a plan, to be implemented under the supervision of Kamal Kharrazi, the regime's ambassador to the U.N. in New York. When Congress eventually stressed that it wanted a fair report, the clerics assailed the legislators and increased their efforts to provide the Department with bogus information against the Mojahedin.

In September, Tehran sent an unofficial emissary to the U.S. Ibrahim Yazdi, Iran's Foreign Minister in the period after the shah's overthrow, was well suited for the job. His son-in-law, Mehdi Noorbaksh who lives in the States, had been contacted by the State Department about the Mojahedin. Moreover, since Yazdi did not hold an official position in the regime, he had a free hand. Tehran had intended to keep his whereabouts unknown, at least until after the report's publication, but the Mojahedin learned through their sources in Iran of Mr. Yazdi's mission, and issued two statements on his visit.³² After his presence had been exposed, there was an attempt at damage control. An Iranian radio station arranged an interview with him, pretending that it had taken place in Iran. After the report was ultimately released, however, Yazdi gave a series of speeches in Washington. An Iranian journalist present in one of these meetings said: "In one of the seminars, participants realized that Yazdi had

come to the U.S. on a mission from the Islamic Republic."³³

According to an internal report by Mr. Rafsanjani's office, Kamal Kharrazi established contacts, through Ibrahim Yazdi, Bijan Sepasy and Houshang Amir Ahmadi, with a number of former U.S. officials and experts who advocated a policy of appeasement toward the regime. They hoped to prepare a statement against the Mojahedin, signed by these officials and experts, for submission to the State Department. The draft contained such allegations as "employing violence and terrorism," "lack of inter-organizational democracy and popular base," "threatening Iranians abroad," etc. In a confidential report to Tehran, Mr. Kharrazi expressed hope that individuals such as Richard Cottam, Gary Sick, Ervand Abrahamian, Ruhollah Ramazani, Nasta Ramazani, Bahman Bakhtiari, Mohammad Ja'far Mahallati and others would endorse the statement.³⁴ He added that these individuals had been in independent contact with the State Department.

Simultaneously, FAIR, the regime's lobby in Washington, launched its own campaign against the Mojahedin and the National Council of Resistance. FAIR was formed in summer 1992, following the House majority statement expressing support for the NCR. FAIR registered as the regime's agent with the Department of Justice, whose documents indicate a monthly stipend of \$20,000 from the regime's permanent mission at the United Nations. In addition, FAIR's president, Bijan Sepasy, received a monthly salary of \$10,000. Other expenses were paid for separately.³⁵

FAIR's activities included half-page ads in the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*, stating the State Department's position against the Mojahedin and attempting to portray the regime as a "victim of the Mojahedin's terrorism."³⁶ FAIR also sent letters to congressmen and other officials, which avoided identifying it as a registered lobby of the Iranian regime.³⁷ In a letter to Iranian-Americans, FAIR urged them to contact their elected representatives in Congress and discourage their support for the National Council of Resistance of Iran.³⁸ The letter, signed by Sepasy, describes the increasing support for the NCR in the U.S. Congress as an "emergency." Referring to the State Department position against the Mojahedin, he writes: "There are members of Congress—possibly yours—who mistakenly believe the Mujahedin-e-Khalq to be a legitimate voice of opposition to the present government in Iran. Why? Because the Mujahedin-e-Khalq

has been engaged in *intense lobbying*, backed by Iraqi money. Don't let this voice be the only one *your* member of Congress hears. Your help is urgently needed."³⁹ Previous reports by the State Department were included, along with the recommendation that in contacting their congressmen, Iranians should stress that the State Department is opposed to the Mojahedin. Thousands of Iranians who had received this letter sent copies to the NCR office in Washington, expressing their disdain at FAIR. When the campaign failed, the regime sent fraudulent letters to congressmen and government officials.

At the same time, the regime tried to feed the State Department erroneous information on the Mojahedin. For example, through an Iranian middleman, Nasser Khajenouri,⁴⁰ Tehran provided a list of 114 names of "former Mojahedin members." A number of these individuals are living in Iran, some are prison guards and torturers and others are well-known members of other groups, including several Marxist factions.⁴¹ The list was one of several propaganda gimmicks about "suppression of dissidents inside the Mojahedin organization," a threadbare allegation the regime brings out of mothballs every so often.

Towards the end of September, the Mojahedin received reliable reports from inside sources that officials in the regime expected an article against the organization to be published in the *Wall Street Journal* in early October. In a strange coincidence, in September the State Department also began referring the many requests it received for information on the Mojahedin to the *Wall Street Journal* reporter. The Mojahedin's Washington press office informed the editors of the *Wall Street Journal* of the matter.⁴²

Over the summer of 1994, the regime launched a sustained campaign of frenzied attacks on the Mojahedin by the state-controlled media. First appeared hysteric accusations about the Mojahedin being responsible for the tragic bombing of the holy shrine of *Imam Reza* (the eighth Shi'ite Imam). Next, they were blamed for the cowardly murders of three Christian clerics. The onslaught was so glaring it appeared odd, even to foreign observers and analysts. An informed journalist said at the time that apparently until the day the report comes out, the regime will be doing something every day to give the State Department the ammunition it needs.

Policy Options

There are two schools of thought concerning Iran among U.S. governmental and non-governmental policy planners, experts and specialists on Middle East and Iranian affairs. Some argue that the only effective approach is a show of decisiveness by the international community. Basing their argument on the experience of the past 16 years, they refute the notion of moderates or pragmatists within the regime, and stress the mullahs' active involvement in international terrorism, export of fundamentalism and chaos to regional countries, and staunch opposition to the peace process. They also say the regime is vigorously seeking to obtain nuclear technology and has an ambitious program to stockpile advanced weaponry. They point to efforts to attain long range missiles, and to Tehran's demonstrated readiness to use them. These experts raise the issue of flagrant human rights violations as well, viewing it as indicative of the regime's lack of popular support. They conclude that the U.S.'s interests are best served by a firm policy vis-a-vis the regime. Instead of investing in bogus "moderation," the U.S. should look to change by the Iranian people. This approach is endorsed by a significant block in Congress. In recent years, representatives and senators have singly and jointly issued statements calling for decisiveness, condemning the regime and supporting the NCR.

The opposing view is that, in due course, the current Iran regime will tone down and lose the fervor of extremism. Thus, the correct policy is to encourage the "moderate or pragmatist" faction. The proponents of this approach argue that any firmness toward the Tehran regime will only strengthen the "radicals" and delay the process of transmutation. Consequently, while these experts cannot deny the regime's extremist behavior and involvement in terrorism, they portray them as insignificant or the work of "rogue" factions within the regime. Sometimes they are depicted as largely Mojahedin propaganda.

James Bill explains the views of those courting the mullahs as follows: "This position also holds that Iran's connections with violence were fashioned through the enormous pressures, both internal and external, that were applied to Iran."⁴³ Referring to Iran's strategic location, they argue that the United States cannot remain indifferent toward Iran. To support their analysis, advocates inevitably reject

any opposition to the regime, portraying it instead as a permanent feature with which the U.S. must ultimately come to terms. Thus, their proposed course of action is to exercise "patience" vis-a-vis the regime until such time as the U.S. can arrive at an understanding with it. Though they seldom refer to it publicly, these "experts" also believe that the U.S. must make some concessions to entice the regime to engage in a dialogue.

Thermidore-type Policy

Over the years, the advocates of this line have done their best to justify the regime's policies in their analyses, interviews and writings. Depending on the circumstances, they have also advocated compromise with the clerics as a fact of life. Thus, many in the U.S. describe them as "apologists."

In the mid-1980s, the pro-compromise faction felt that Iran was on the verge of victory in the Iran-Iraq War. Therefore, they said, the U.S. must accept the reality of the Khomeini regime. The message is appeasement. In a 1986 article, "How Iran is becoming the Gulf Superpower," Gary Sick, a well-known proponent of this line, referred to the regime's advances in the war and the possibility of victory and establishment of an Islamic government in Iraq:

This scenario seems farfetched only because it has not happened-yet. But this script is a description of the basic elements of a plan that Iran's revolutionary leaders have been pursuing with conscious determination and considerable success-over the past year. If we are surprised again by Iran, as we have been in the past, we have only ourselves to blame.

Iran's recent successes were the result of conscious decisions taken to reverse policies that had brought it to a costly dead-end in its war with Iraq. The brilliant feat of arms, which bore comparison with Anwar Sadat's surprise attack across the Suez Canal, was no fluke. It demonstrated convincingly that the Iranian leadership was no longer motivated solely by religious fervor...

On the basis of the recent performance, one can only conclude that Iran's military will be a force to be dealt with in the region for some time to come. The same conclusion applies to the political leadership. Iran's theocratic political structure is unique, even bizarre by Western standards. Still, it has shown a remarkable ability to manage chaos and to protect its interests effectively when its survival is at stake.⁴⁴

The apologists have lost no opportunity to identify signals for positive change in the regime's policies. In a 1987 article in *Foreign*

Affairs, Gary Sick wrote:

Initially, Iran proclaimed its foreign policy in absolute, exclusionary terms in which Iran's role was to serve as the exemplar and catalyst to bring "Islam to the entire world." The Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the foreign service were purged repeatedly, and representatives abroad were exhorted to abjure traditional diplomacy in favor of revolutionary and doctrinal purity. Implicit in this approach was the assumption that the world was corrupt and, in the end, the world needed Iran more than Iran needed the world. After four years of war, that assumption was wearing thin. In October 1984, Khomeini summoned Iran's diplomatic representatives from abroad and instructed them to take a new approach. "We should act as it was done in early Islam when the Prophet... send ambassadors to all parts of the world to establish proper relations. We cannot sit idly by saying we have nothing to do with the governments. This is contrary to intellect and religious law. We should have relations with all governments with the exception of a few with which we have no relations at present... We will not establish relations with America unless America behaves properly."

These pronouncements marked a fundamental shift, not in Tehran's foreign policy goals but in its strategy for pursuing those goals. Khomeini and his lieutenants had discovered that a policy of unrelenting hostility and pressure was getting nowhere, and, more important, hampering Iran's ability to sustain itself at home, while fighting a total war...

These announcements in late 1984, were followed by a series of missions by key Iranian political figures to dozens of countries throughout the world. The message of these emissaries in each case was that Iran posed no military or subversive threat to its neighbors, that the war with Iraq was imposed on Iran by Saddam Hussein's aggression, that Iran had no territorial designs on Iraq or any other nation in the Persian Gulf region, and that Iran desires normal political and trade relations with all countries of the world...

By mid-1986, Khomeini was able to assert: "There was a time when the situation was chaotic and everything was in ruins, but—thank God—everything is now proper and right... domestic and international affairs are put right..."

Iran has proved adept in the practice of "thump and talk" diplomacy, lashing out with what appears to be utter fearlessness and abandon at enemies of all sizes while simultaneously discussing agreements and concessions. Its reputation as a "crazy state" is deserved but it is often not as crazy as it seems...

It is apparent that Iran has modified, at least for the time being, its millenarian goal of bringing "Islam to the entire world" in favor of a policy that might be described as "clericalism in one country..."

Perhaps because of the high price it paid for the original hostage crisis, Iran now attempts to avoid direct association with terrorism. Its deputy prime minister has declared (with a straight face) that it is "against hostage taking which is also rejected by Islam" and that it will "take any measures in its powers wherever in the world" to oppose the taking of hostages.⁴⁵

Mr. Sick's commentary was published while a score of American and British nationals were being held by the regime's agents in South Lebanon. At the same time, he described the regime as a victim of the Mojahedin's terrorism.

In 1988, Sick likened the Iranian situation to what was transpiring in the Soviet Union.⁴⁶ Advocating a policy of courting the mullahs more openly, he stressed that the United States must rid itself of the specter of the Iran-Contra affair that had cast a shadow over U.S. policy in the region.⁴⁷ Some time later, in a CNN interview, he lauded the U.S. government for holding secret talks with the regime's representatives.⁴⁸ In a subsequent interview with NBC television, he again expressed support for secret talks with the mullahs, saying that the Iranians really wanted to change their image.⁴⁹

Shortly after the State Department report came out, Mr. Sick wrote, "Iran is ripe for a peaceful overture,"⁵⁰ reasoning: "Isolation of potential offenders, even when combined with a strict international ban on the sale of nuclear technology is not sufficient to solve the ultimate problem."⁵¹ Rejecting the policy of containment, he added that the Clinton Administration should name a senior representative to start talking, without preconditions, with Iran. Mr. Sick's candidate for the job was Assistant Secretary of State Robert Pelletreau, whose department prepared the report on the Mojahedin. Sick concluded that appointing a senior representative "would add a new seriousness of purpose to U.S. expressions of willingness to talk to Iran. Iran complains that its security concerns go unheeded by the West."⁵² In other words, the appointed contact to establish dialogue with the mullahs' would address Tehran's "security concerns." The mullahs have repeatedly and explicitly identified their primary concern, through diplomatic channels on the one hand and by torturing and executing even marginal supporters of the Resistance, assassinating Resistance's activists abroad, and bombing its bases. Officials in the U.S. and other countries are fully aware of this reality. Clearly, therefore, Mr. Sick's call for a dialogue with Tehran to address its security concerns can mean only one thing: That the U.S. attack the Mojahedin and National Council of Resistance, a primary "security concern" of the Iranian regime.

To promulgate such views, their authors must portray the regime as popular and conceal its atrocities. In 1988, Khomeini ordered an

extensive wave of political executions largely of Mojahedin members and sympathizers, described as unprecedented by international human rights organizations. His designated successor, Hossein Ali Montazeri, protested that the executions would not eliminate the Mojahedin, but only add to their popularity. Here is what James Bill had to say about the mass executions after a visit to Iran in early 1989. Asserting that the "great majority of the Iranian people support" the regime, he added:

When the most recent cycle mercifully stops spinning, the period of revolutionary extreme terror should be complete. With the war apparently over and the overwhelming majority of the Iranian people seeking peace and normalcy, there is hope that the 10th anniversary of the revolution will usher in a new era when the revolutionary pragmatists will take over the political controls of the state and when the builders, reconstructers, developers, and healers can move to the fore to ply their trades.⁵³

Six years later, Mr. Bill's visions of moderation and reconstruction in Iran are nowhere in sight. On the contrary, the mullahs have intensified the crackdown on internal dissent and stepped up international terrorism and export of fundamentalism, emerging as the main threat to peace and stability in the region. Yet, Mr. Bill insists on his views. In a piece for *Middle East Policy* in 1993, he offers a discourse on the regime's state and U.S. policy. In justifying the mullahs' atrocities, he portrays the Iranian regime's human rights violations, terrorism, weapons purchases and efforts to acquire nuclear technology as "myths," and therefore negligible. Like other supporters of compromise, he believes that the U.S. must take further steps in rapprochement with the Iranian regime, and questions even the nominal denunciations by the President and the Secretary of State. He writes:

The current U.S. policy of pressuring and publicly condemning Iran is based upon a series of predominant myths and misunderstandings... American policy makers are pursuing a counterproductive strategy. Internationally, Iran will respond in kind to U.S. pressure; within the Islamic Republic of Iran itself, this pressure will only strengthen the most extreme groups who continue to feed off the emotions and suffering that have followed in the path of the revolution and the long, devastating war with Iraq.

If U.S. policy and pressure are able to do serious economic and political harms to Iran, the result could be disastrous for the stability in the Persian Gulf... (A) prudent policy would first be based on a recognition of what is

myth and what is reality concerning Iran. Such policy would then involve toning down the rhetoric while practicing the patience befitting a great power. The United States should consider implementing a low-key dialogue while initiating a series of confidence building measures that would be apportioned to the Iranian response.⁵⁴

Another person introduced as an Iran expert at the end of the State Department report is Mehdi Noorbaksh, Ibrahim Yazdi's son-in-law. Mr. Noorbaksh has very close ties with the regime's ambassador to the United Nations, Kamal Kharrazi, who has given large sums of money to the Institute for Research in Islamic Studies (IRIS), which Noorbaksh heads. He criticizes U.S. policy for inattention to the "reformist" factions, which, he explains, is why the present regime has radicalized. He even blames this policy for the hostage crisis, arguing that even Khomeini was initially opposed to the U.S. Embassy takeover. Noorbaksh formulates his version of the proper U.S. policy on Iran in this way:

It has to be recognized that the process of transformation has not yet been completed. The revolution is not yet over. Iranian society is still in a post-revolutionary phase in which many questions must be answered and many problems resolved. Conflict aids only radicalism inside and postpones constructive debates on domestic and foreign policy.⁵⁵

Speaking of other, diverse factions in Iran, he concludes:

Awareness of this diversity helps the U.S. to overcome misunderstanding about Islam and the Muslim world and encourages positive engagement with Muslims and Iranians who within and outside the government are pushing for moderation.⁵⁶

The discredited saga of "moderates" is the crux of Mr. Noorbaksh's analysis. The ploy has been successfully used for years by the mullahs, with a little help from their friends, to forestall a firm policy. In their "impartial" assessments, however, Messrs. Noorbaksh and Bill overlook 15 years of U.S. efforts to lure the mullahs and realize the dream of "moderates." That policy was a dismal failure, only encouraging the mullahs to persist in their policies. Interestingly, both writers offer similar reasoning. More importantly, both express opposition to the Mojahedin.

Ervand Abrahamian, whose writings form the basis for the State Department report, explains this group's perspective in his most

recent book, *Khomeinism*. He writes that the word "fundamentalist" does not properly define Khomeini. The correct term is "populist": "If Khomeinism is a form of populism, it contains the potential for change and acceptance of modernity—even eventually of political pluralism, gender equality, individual rights and social democracy."⁵⁷ He adds: "My argument is that Khomeinism should be seen as a flexible political movement expressing social economic grievances, not simply as a religious crusade obsessed with scriptural texts, spiritual purity and theological dogma."⁵⁸ In the last chapter of his book, Mr. Abrahamian concludes: "As the radicals have been marginalized, Rafsanjani and Khamenei have implemented a full range of Thermidore-type policies; in the economy, in social matters, in judiciary, and in foreign affairs."⁵⁹ Several years after the book's publication, however, the consequences of these "Thermidore-type policies" have been but deteriorating economic conditions, escalating political and social suppression, growing public discontent at home and increasing involvement in terrorism abroad.

Eric Hooglund is another source of report. Lavish in his support for the mullahs of Iran, he has frequently traveled to that country in recent years, and is one of the most notorious proponents of an appeasement policy. He recently became Editor in Chief of *U.S.-Iran Review*, published in Washington by the mullahs' U.S. lobby, FAIR.

Dangerous Moderates

Patrick Clawson, an expert on Iranian affairs, rejects closer ties with the regime, noting: "'The moderates' may pose a greater threat than the 'radicals' to stability in the Gulf..."⁶⁰ In his book, *Iran's Challenge to the West: How, When and Why?* he writes: "Many arguments have been made against cultivating relations with Iranian moderates." Dismissing the policy of "bringing Iran to the family of nations," he states:

This policy of accommodation is based on the hypothesis that economic moderation—free-market policies, extensive trade and investment—will lead to foreign policy moderation. So far, there is little evidence to support this assumption. Indeed, it could be argued that additional resources have permitted Iran to accelerate its rearmament, to step up its pressure on Gulf states, and to meddle more in Middle Eastern policies from Lebanon to Algeria and Sudan—

the exact opposite of what Europe and Japan had hoped to accomplish through their policy of accommodation.⁶¹

Referring to congressional opposition and articles in the press highlighting "the risks of greater trade with Iran," he brands the policy as ineffective.

Citing the existing experiences, including the Iran-Contra affair, Mr. Clawson describes the policy of "carrot-and-stick" as unrealistic:

A carrot-and-stick policy contains dangers that need to be carefully considered. It is likely to turn out to be less effective than hoped, and, in any case, it might not be acceptable to the American people... There may well be no basis for a constructive relationship between the Islamic Republic and the U.S.... In this case, the best U.S. policy may be containment... Economic weaknesses and the growing disillusionment of the Iranian people with rampant corruption and continuing poverty increases the chance that a policy of containment would succeed... The reservoir of support for the clerics, once fed by the waters of hatred for the shah, has run dry.⁶²

Joshua Muravchik, a specialist in democracy, human rights and American foreign policy, sees the policy choice of "regime versus Mojahedin" in a larger context, in which the Mojahedin's inclination toward democracy is the key factor. Democracy, Muravchik believes,

may offer an answer to a terrible problem, the rise of Islamic "fundamentalism," that is fanatical, politicized and violent... It is also of special concern from the point of view of those who delight in the recent progress of democracy around the globe. With the collapse of the last of the great and terrible 20th century totalitarian ideological alternatives to democracy, the one remaining fierce opponent of democracy in the world is the force of Islamic fanaticism.⁶³

Reflecting on his discussions about democracy with the Mojahedin, Mr. Muravchik states:

The idea that it might be possible to stimulate the development of a democratic movement in Iran to challenge fanaticism right at its center intrigued me. For today, Tehran is to Islamic fanaticism what Moscow was to world communism.⁶⁴

After reviewing the State Department's allegations and offering possible explanations, he reasons:

If they [the Mojahedin] are not the good guys that they say, and I hope they are, we still have a hard-headed strategic reason to support them. The government of Iran is a very special threat and an enemy whose potential for damage spreads very far and wide...

There is also a less hard-headed reason for taking an interest in what the Mojahedin say. Let's suppose that the fears of their critics are well-founded, and they do not mean what they say about democracy. The fact that they are talking about democracy and not sloganeering, is still very important. They are talking about the values of religious tolerance and contested elections. They are talking about the values of tolerance as opposed to cruelty, which seems to be the fundamental issue. They are spreading this message among the Iranian people and in their part of the world. This is a very valuable message to have spread, whether the people who are spreading it are sincere or not. We have often seen that people start spreading a message and eventually they convince themselves. From this perspective, even the objection that they are insincere is not a decisive objection, because the Mojahedin say the right things about democracy, and I am eager to see people in this part of the world talking about democracy.⁶⁵

Fox's Tail

In its search for a way to package the baseless allegations against the Mojahedin, the State Department has referred to the views of a number of appeasement policy advocates. As the Persian saying goes: "They asked the fox, Who is your witness? He said, My tail."

In his book, *Khomeinism*, Ervand Abrahamian explains that during the Mossadeq era, the shah's regime tried, with the direct assistance of governments supporting it, to rewrite history:

Some Western academics did their best to expurgate from their publications any mention of the CIA and MI6 in the 1953 coup. In fact, recent autobiographies reveal that the shah often subsidized British and American academics whose publications tended to reinforce the court view of modern Iranian history, especially of the 1953 events.⁶⁶

The mullahs' regime has pursued the same *modus operandi*, promoting its views through third parties and spending millions of dollars on lobby groups, such as FAIR. There is a significant difference, however: In light of the irremediable crises plaguing them, before seeking to distort history, the mullahs must first try to cover up the present: Their atrocities at home and their international isolation abroad.

V

A Decade of Appeasement

On July 24, 1985, Richard Murphy, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs in the Reagan administration, appeared before a hearing of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee of Europe and the Middle East. At the session's close, he proceeded to read unsolicited remarks about the People's Mojahedin of Iran into the record. Ambassador Murphy's statement read in part: "They are militantly Islamic, anti-democratic, anti-American, and continue to employ terrorism and violence as standard instruments of their policies."¹ This rather abrupt burst of accusations startled the committee members and reporters present. It was without precedent for a superpower to so attack a resistance movement to a religious, terrorist regime.

If, at the time, it was unclear why the United States would so strongly lash out at a movement which had already seen nearly 40,000 of its members and sympathizers executed by the ruling regime, the later release of the *Tower Commission Report* clarified the motives. In a letter to his contact, Manouchehr Ghorbanifar (an Iranian middleman) noted that the State Department had met one of the mullahs' nine demands for the release of the Americans taken hostage by pro-regime terrorists: "[Issuance] of an official announcement terming the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization terrorist and Marxist..."²

A review of events preceding Richard Murphy's remarks sheds light on the subject. In 1984, senators Gary Hart, Edward Kennedy, and a number of representatives had written to Massoud Rajavi, to declare their support for the Iranian people's just Resistance. The regime's internal situation at the time was critical. These statements

of support, accompanied by thousands more from other countries, alarmed the mullahs, who subsequently made any normalization of relations with Western countries, including the United States, contingent upon curbing the activities of the Mojahedin and National Council of Resistance. Hence, missiles were not the only issue being negotiated by Oliver North and the mullahs; the Mojahedin's presence in the United States and congressional support were also on the agenda. As in other instances, those involved in the Irangate affair misinformed Congress about the Mojahedin, distorting facts to undermine their support.

In December 1984, the State Department had written to Rep. Lee Hamilton, then Chairman of the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, to clarify its official views on the Mojahedin: "The Iranian Mujahedin remains a highly nationalistic, Islamic, left-wing and anti-western organization. . ."³ The letter was followed by a more detailed, 11-page report. Even though it had been prepared in line with the overall Irangate policy - and therefore distorted the facts and raised false allegations against the Mojahedin - the report is in some respects enlightening, since it appeared in the early stages of Irangate, before the mullahs had formulated all of their demands, and contains several points later denied or questioned by the State Department.

In reference to the Mojahedin's extensive social base, for example, the report notes:

- An estimated 100,000 well-organized sympathizers marched through Tehran. The demonstration had been organized without access to any of the major media outlets and announced only in Mujahedin publications and by word of mouth. Simultaneous Mujahedin demonstrations took place throughout Iran.
- The Mujahedin unsuccessfully sought a freely elected constituent assembly to draft a constitution.
- [Masud] Rajavi was forced to withdraw when Ayatollah Khomeini ruled that only candidates who had supported the constitution in the December referendum- which the Mujahedin had boycotted - were eligible.
- Rajavi's withdrawal statement emphasized the group's efforts to conform to election regulations and reiterated the Mujahedin's intention to advance its political aims within the new legal system.
- The Mujahedin was the only leftist group with enough first-

round votes [in the parliamentary elections] to qualify candidates for the run-off. Rajavi and Khiabani seemed assured of winning... The group's allegation that vote tallies had been altered to deny Rajavi and Khiabani's victories, were ignored.

- On June 25 [1980], Khomeini responded by a major statement against the Mujahedin, claiming their activities would derail the revolution and bring back "U.S. dominance."

- [In mid-1971,] all the founding Mujahedin leaders were either imprisoned or executed.

- In 1973, a dedicated Marxist faction... murdered several Mujahedin leaders who preferred the Islamic content, as opposed to the Marxist orientation.

- [Masud] Rajavi—then imprisoned for anti-shah activities—was accepted as the Mujahedin's leader and chief ideologue.

- Several thousands of [the Mojahedin's] followers or alleged followers probably have been executed.⁴

Khomeini Sets the Terms

Apparently, the mullahs did not like this version. Six months later, on June 14, 1985, the State Department issued another statement against the Mojahedin which contrasted sharply with the facts contained in its previous report. In this statement, the "highly nationalistic, Islamic" Mojahedin, became "a militantly Islamic, anti-democratic, anti-American, anti-Western collectivist organization." The Mojahedin who, according to the December 1984 report, had "sought a freely elected constituent assembly to draft a constitution," and maintained specific political demarcations with the mullahs, now "served as initial security forces for the new regime."

In June 1985, tens of thousands of Iranians, including 2,500 in Washington, D.C., declared their support for the Iranian Resistance in worldwide demonstrations.⁵ A significant number of U.S. congressmen sent messages of support or addressed the gathering. Shortly thereafter, on July 24, 1985, the Department issued its unsolicited statement during the congressional hearing. The Secretariat of the National Council of Resistance of Iran prepared a detailed response to the allegations, which it submitted to pertinent officials, to clarify the facts. Irangate masterminds and their operatives in the State Department, however, had bought the tailor-made scheme by Iranian "moderates" wholesale.

The U.S. media found "the duping of U.S. congressmen" by an "anti-American terrorist group" interesting news. Offered reasonable replies by the Resistance's representatives, however, they could not come to grips with the Department's contradictory positions. A correspondent for a major television network told Dr. Ali Safavi, then U.S. press spokesman for the Mojahedin in Washington, that he was dumbfounded by the State Department's ready willingness to provide "documents" on the Mojahedin's "terrorism," coupled with foot-dragging about documents pertaining to the mullahs' terrorist activities. Little did he or anyone else know that the masterminds of Irangate had made a deal with criminals who had executed Iranians *en masse*, including pregnant women, raped young girl supporters of the Mojahedin before executing them, gouged out the eyes of Mojahedin prisoners, and poured acid down their victims' throats. Meanwhile, the mullahs had also murdered 241 American marines in a single explosion in Beirut.⁶ Judge Lawrence Walsh, Irangate's independent counsel, published a report in 1993, singling out Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy as one of the State Department's nine players in the Irangate scandal.⁷

Irangate Aftermath

Following the exposure of Irangate, the State Department contacted the Mojahedin's Washington office in November 1986, to formally request a dialogue. In several meetings between one State Department official and Mojahedin representatives in Washington, the official described the Department's previous position as "stupid and unrealistic." He reiterated that American policy-makers viewed the Mojahedin as the "only serious and sincere force with a decisive role in the future developments in Iran." (Minutes to these meetings are available.) He stressed that the June 14, 1985, statement by the Department had been discarded and a new one was being prepared. The press also criticized the appeasement policy and consequent position on the Resistance.⁸

In spring 1987, Representative Mervyn M. Dymally, referring to the Tower Commission report, questioned Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy about the Department's efforts to discredit those House members who had endorsed the Mojahedin.⁹ In a subsequent "Dear Colleague" letter, Mr. Dymally explained how the Iranian Resistance had been victimized by the Irangate deals.¹⁰

Mr. Murphy was again questioned about the Irangate scandal at a hearing on April 21, 1987, by the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East. In line with the change in policy, Mr. Murphy did an about-face when asked about the Department's anti-Mojahedin statements. He said: "I will very freely admit that there were gaps in our knowledge about the organization," adding, "We meet, have met with the Mojahedin Organization here in Washington. They are a player in Iran...We are not boycotting them."¹¹ *The Washington Post* carried his remarks the next day.¹² The same month, the Khomeini regime, concerned about a policy change in favor of the Mojahedin, once again reacted, this time publicly. United Press International quoted Hashemi-Rafsanjani, then *Majlis* speaker, as saying that if the U.S. government were to curtail the activities of the anti-Khomeini Mojahedin Khalq opposition movement, the Iranian government would end its support of terrorist groups in Lebanon.¹³

Washington apparently swallowed the bait. Soon thereafter, the Department official informed the Mojahedin's representatives that the Department's policy had changed and that he was no longer permitted to meet and talk with the organization. It became clear that the catastrophic failure of the Irangate policy had only temporarily forced the proponents of appeasement into retreat. A year later, they were back, making another attempt to negotiate a compromise with the mullahs.

The appeasement policy continued to hold sway during the administration of George Bush, who addressed a message to Tehran's rulers in his inauguration speech: "Goodwill begets goodwill." The goal, according to U.S. government officials, was constructive engagement of Iran, to which end, apparently, the State Department persisted in the absurd allegations lingering from the Irangate era. The American people's elected representatives in Congress, however, knew better. Members of Congress from both parties, affronted by the regime's terrorist, medieval nature, increasingly supported the Iranian Resistance and condemned the Khomeini regime, ignoring the Department's allegations against the Resistance.

Here We Go Again

In September 1989, the State Department replied to a letter to Secretary of State James Baker from Congressman Mervyn Dymally.¹⁴ Repeating the Irangate allegations, the Department rejected Mr.

Dymally's request to resume dialogue with the Mojahedin. In conclusion, the letter enunciated the real reason for the hostile attitude towards the Iranian Resistance: "We believe a more normal relationship between Iran and the United States is desirable."¹⁵

Four days later, John Kelly, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs addressed a House subcommittee hearing. Responding to a question from Chairman Hamilton about a letter from 186 members of Congress urging Secretary Baker to support the Iranian Resistance, Kelly repeated the same old accusations against the Mojahedin.¹⁶

Two weeks later, Representative Dymally submitted another letter to Secretary Baker. After first clarifying the facts concerning the allegations in the State Department's September 15 letter, Mr. Dymally proposed an explanatory briefing between the Department and the Mojahedin's representatives.¹⁷ On October 6, the State Department sent Mr. Dymally a note. Without referring to his reply, the Department again cited the Mojahedin's plan for "the violent overthrow of the Government of Iran" as the reason for its refusal to engage in a dialogue.¹⁸

The policy's pursuit also led to the arrest, on bogus charges, of Dr. Aladdin Touran, then representative of the National Council of Resistance in Washington, as he entered the United States in August 1989. As later proved in court, Dr. Touran had committed no offense. To inform the regime of the gesture, American sources leaked word of the arrest to media sources in the Persian Gulf states. Khomeini's death in June and Rafsanjani's presidency had again tempted Western countries, including some special interest groups in the United States, to take another stab at the "moderates" in Iran.

The Bush administration's policy on Iran, the Mojahedin and the Khomeini regime remained more or less unchanged. The gradual surfacing of Rafsanjani's domestic failures, the insistence on export of terrorism, and the bid to take advantage of the Persian Gulf War to establish an "Islamic Government" in Iraq (for which reason President Bush halted the war), however, left little room for further deals or compromises with Tehran.

One of the State Department's last pronouncements was issued when a House majority of 219 members of Congress signed a statement in support of the National Council of Resistance. The statement, made public on July 8, 1992, said in part:

...The time has come for the free world to form a common front against fundamentalism with those fighting for peace and democracy against the Iranian regime. In announcing a specific program and determining responsible policies vis-a-vis recent international developments, the National Council of Resistance, led by Mr. Massoud Rajavi, has demonstrated that it is determined and able to contribute to peace and stability in this sensitive region...

Experience has shown that this resistance's profound popular and religious roots within Iran's people are the best impediment to the Iranian regime's abuse of popular religious sentiments. Hence this resistance is the solution to the phenomenon of fanatic fundamentalism.

We are convinced that support for the National Council of Resistance will contribute to the achievement of peace and stability for all the countries of the region.¹⁹

In response to a request from a correspondent of the Khomeini regime's news agency, IRNA, State Department spokesman Joseph Snyder gathered a group of reporters at the Department, where he repeated the same old allegations against the People's Mojahedin.²⁰ The message was clear: Although a majority in the House of Representatives endorsed the Iranian Resistance, you can count on us.

The New Administration

Initially, it appeared that a policy debate was being conducted in the new administration. Such a debate probably continues, to some extent. While the President and Secretary of State concurred that Tehran was the worst supporter of terrorism, described the regime as an "international outlaw," and spoke of a containment policy, the officials at State did not budge. The same people who had formulated the policy of appeasement continued to insist on their line. They never referred to the containment policy in any official statement. Pushed for a straight answer by a House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing, the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs did his best to avoid the term "containment," never once stating that it was official U.S. policy on Iran.²¹ Hence, the new administration's policy has, for all practical purposes, been a continuation of the past policy.

Geoffrey Kemp, an expert on Middle East affairs at the Carnegie Endowment, writes,

At first glance the Clinton administration seems clearly to support the former

view [that the Iranian regime is the most serious threat to U.S. and Western interests in the Middle East.] Secretary of State Warren Christopher has asserted that the Clinton team has a "stronger policy of isolating Iran than the prior administration did. We think Iran is an international outlaw... and we're trying to persuade the other nations of the world to feel as we do, to treat Iran as an outlaw." In reality, however, there is less to this new American toughness than meets the eye. The administration has openly called for a dialogue with the Teheran regime and (though scarcely mentioned by administration officials) U.S. exports to Iran have increased dramatically over the past two years and include major sales of oil drilling and engineering equipment. Exports may reach \$1 billion in 1993 compared to \$747 million in 1992, \$527 million in 1991 and \$161 million in 1990. Iran is also selling huge amounts of oil to U.S. oil companies - between \$3.5 billion and \$4 billion a year - who sell it on the world market. For this privilege the oil companies pay Iran in hard currency, which not only helps Iran's struggling economy but its rearmament program as well.²²

In its last days, the previous administration gave more leeway to American companies to buy Iranian oil. The amount of trade between the U.S. and Iran continued to mount in 1994. Presently they lead all the other oil companies.²³ The United States is reportedly Iran's third largest trading partner, after Germany and Japan.²⁴ In a critical commentary, "Double standard in dealing with Iran?" *The Washington Times* wrote:

In 1994, American oil companies were Iran's biggest customers, purchasing about \$4 billion worth during the year. The sales marked an astonishing 19.5 percent increase over the previous 12 months. Lamentably, American dollars are helping to finance the very same Iranian activities the administration has deplored.

American oil companies are providing Iran with more than enough money to fund its purchases of arms and military technology. The oil deals also have assisted Iran in paying for terrorism and other international mischief-making.

The companies involved are Exxon, Bay Oil, Coastal, Texaco, Mobil and Caltex, the latter a joint venture of Texaco and Chevron. But they are not the only American firms contributing to the Iranian economy.

Some U.S. corporations have obtained lucrative contracts to sell high technology and other products to Iran. The firms include Apple Computers, Motorola U.D.F. and ATT Global Information.

Rockwell international sold helicopter gear and electronics, Bell Helicopter supplied five helicopters, Hewlett Packard sells advanced computers and Chrysler plans a jointly operated Jeep assembly plant. Furthermore, a Reston, Va., firm, known as Octagon, has signed a contract

to sell portable satellite telephones for use by the Iranian military.

The administration is correct in trying to isolate Iran. Tehran's pursuit of nuclear weapons, its support for terrorism and Islamic extremism as well as its efforts to undermine the Middle East peace process must be stopped. But, in view of the web of commercial activity that increasingly binds the United States and Tehran, the administration's efforts to stop other countries from trading seem hypocritical.

Under American pressure, Japan has delayed a \$450 million loan package to Tehran. But the administration can't credibly ask that the loan be canceled as long as American companies profit from trading with Iran. For the same reason, the administration's protests against Russia selling nuclear reactors to Iran sound hollow.²⁵

A Policy Misguided

In response to repeated calls by members of Congress for dialogue with the Iranian Resistance, officials at State have more or less stuck to the 1985 trashing of the Mojahedin. In a show of how inconsistent a policy can be, in the period provided by Congress for a comprehensive and objective report on the Mojahedin, these same officials spared no opportunity to display their animosity toward the Iranian Resistance, while continually pleading with Tehran for a dialogue, describing the Khomeini regime as a "permanent feature."

Without doubt, the primary victims of the policy of appeasement have been and remain the Iranian people and Resistance. The people and government of the United States, however, are running a close second as big losers in this disgraceful deal. The regime's two fundamental demands from the U.S. government are to loosen restrictions on sales of oil, technology and other goods—currently underway—and to maintain a hostile attitude toward the Iranian Resistance.

Clearly, the mullahs have never sought diplomatic relations or public, face-to-face talks with American officials, because normalizing international relations runs contrary to the medieval nature of the velayat-e faqih. The regime needs to tout America as its enemy. Ironically, it is always the United States which is appealing to the regime for diplomatic relations and open, direct talks. One U.S. official or another sporadically, and unilaterally, issues an invitation to negotiate with this "international outlaw." Khamenei and Rafsanjani routinely reject these proposals. In other words, purely from the standpoint of the political and diplomatic balance of power, the policy

espoused for so many years by the State Department is unprofessional, encouraging the mullahs' terrorism and rogue conduct.

A policy so far off the mark obviously stems from what is essentially a misperception of the Khomeini regime, as well as from a lack of sufficient information about Iran's internal situation. The latter is nothing new, and has been behind American policy blunders in Iran at different junctures, particularly during the 1979 revolution, when the U.S. relied on the information provided by SAVAK for its analysis of the Iranian situation.

During Khomeini's era, the State Department's assessments reflected a worse deficiency of information than during the shah's time. The diplomatic, military and economic ties, and elaborate embassies of the shah's era no longer existed. After the State Department had characterized the Iranian people and their Resistance as "violent terrorists, without any popular backing," and "not worth listening to," what remained but the regime, its lobby and its operatives in and out of the U.S.?

Western foreign policy in general, and that of the U.S. in particular, however, suffers from a more basic problem: Non-comprehension of the religious dictatorship and the velayat-e faqih system. Drawing parallels between this regime and 20th century dictatorships, such as the shah's or those of various Latin American countries, gives the false impression that the mullahs are inclined to appeasement and change. Sixteen years of experience, however, has shown that policies seeking to placate and appease the mullahs have only one message, weakness, which emboldens the regime to export more terrorism and fundamentalism, i.e., Khomeinism. The only effective policy with Tehran is firmness.

VI

History

The nineteenth century, coinciding with the rule of the Qajar dynasty in Iran, is remembered by most Iranians as an era of national subjugation by foreign powers, particularly Imperial Russia and Great Britain, both of which frequently infringed on Iranian national sovereignty. Control over Iranian oil fields made Britain the major power in Iran until the end of World War II. After the fall of Reza Shah's dictatorship in 1941, popular movements began to voice the Iranian resentment of British colonialism and the puppet regimes. In the late 1940s, Dr. Mohammad Mossadeq led the movement to nationalize Iran's oil industry. His movement had widespread support among the Iranian people, and the shah was forced in 1951 to appoint him as prime minister after parliament ratified the oil nationalization bill. Dr. Mossadeq's 27-month-term was devoted on the one hand to implementing the new law, and on the other to confronting the joint conspiracies of the court, reactionary clergy, and pro-Soviet communist Tudeh Party. The British essentially coordinated these conspiracies. Despite the ruling in Iran's favor on the oil issue by the International Court of Justice at the Hague and the U.N. General Assembly, British hostility towards Mossadeq's government persisted. In 1952, the United States allied itself with the British in this policy.

Unfortunately, Mossadeq's overthrow in a U.S.-engineered *coup d'état* convinced Iranians that the United States had replaced Britain in defending the shah and depriving Iranians of democracy and their national interests. The brutal suppression of student protests and the killing of three student leaders only four months after the *coup*, on the eve of Vice President Richard Nixon's trip to Iran in December 1953,¹ only served to confirm this view.

Democracy Betrayed

In a report submitted to President Eisenhower's National Security Council in 1953, U.S. policymakers explained their support for the shah:

Over the long run, the most effective instrument for maintaining Iran's orientation towards the West is the monarchy, which in turn has the army as its only real source of power. U.S. military aid serves to improve army morale, cement army loyalty to the shah, and thus consolidate the present regime and provide some assurance that Iran's current orientation towards the West will be perpetual.²

Mohsen Milani, author of *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution*, writes:

The coup had drastic consequences. First, because it was generally believed that the United States had saved his throne, the shah lost his legitimacy. From then on, he was tainted as an American puppet... and most important, the foreign-orchestrated coup seemed to have touched the very sensitive pride-nerve of some middle class Iranians who perceived the monarch as America's shah.³

John F. Kennedy's election to the Presidency in 1960 raised hopes that the new administration would make the defense of human rights and democracy a foreign policy goal, and therefore dissuade the shah from his repressive ways and limit his dictatorship. The shah's extended trip to the U.S. in late 1962, however, was followed by a widespread crackdown on popular protests by SAVAK and the army in the first half of 1963, dashing all such hopes. As Iran expert Shaul Bakhash puts it:

One result of these developments was to push elements of the opposition toward an increasingly radical position. The suppression of the 1963 protest movement persuaded young men of the National Front that constitutional methods of opposition against the shah were ineffective.⁴

Milani agrees that the historical consequences were profound:

The June uprising had a profound impact both on Iranian politics in general and on the ulama community in particular. In the literature of most opposition groups to the shah, the June uprising symbolized the end of peaceful coexistence with the shah and justified the start of the armed struggle against his regime.⁵

In subsequent years, the shah increasingly strengthened the secret police, SAVAK, which had been formed in 1957 with American support. Notorious for its use of torture, SAVAK grew to symbolize the shah's rule from 1963-79, a period also characterized by corruption in the royal family, one-party rule, the torture and execution of thousands of political prisoners, sweeping clampdown, suppression of dissent, and alienation of the religious masses, whose historic symbols were openly scorned. Throughout those years, the United States reinforced its image as the shah's protector and staunch supporter, sowing the seeds of the anti-Americanism that later manifested itself in the revolution against the monarchy. In this historical context, the forces that would build Iran's future - the younger generation - began to search for a solution to the country's problems.

The 1960s also saw a rise in resistance movements throughout the third world, most heavily influenced by Marxism. This applied to some extent to European societies as well, where dissident movements also began to emerge. Major student movements were formed in France and Germany. In Iran, frustration with the failures of the traditional secular opposition propelled the intelligentsia towards Marxism as a possible solution. They saw no hope in the Islam espoused by traditional religious leaders, such as Khomeini. Meanwhile, with every step, the shah heightened the repression, only increasing the potential for social revolution.

The Founding

The *Sazeman-e Mojahedin-e Khalq-e Iran*, or People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran, was founded in 1965 by Mohammad Hanifnejad and two other young intellectuals, Sa'id Mohsen and Ali-Asghar Badi'zadegan. The three wanted to establish a Muslim, revolutionary, nationalist and democratic organization. All university graduates, they had been politically active in the nationalist movement for democracy since the Mossadeq era and later became members of Mehdi Bazargan's Freedom Movement. Both Hanifnejad and Mohsen had been temporarily detained by the shah's secret police for their political activities.

The founders' ultimate goal was to pave the way for a democratic government to replace the shah's regime. In contrast to most of their contemporaries, they believed that a new, democratically inclined

interpretation of Islam was the means to this end. They set about establishing a political organization that could survive the shah's repression and respond to the needs of ordinary citizens. This was no easy task.

They began by refuting the reactionary interpretation of Islam, marking the Mojahedin's first confrontation with the traditional clergy, who considered themselves the sole guardians of the faith. They and the organization's new members painstakingly studied the various schools of thought, as well as Iranian history and those of other countries, enabling them to analyze other philosophies and theories with considerable knowledge and to present their own ideology, based on Islam, as the answer to Iran's problems.⁷

The Mojahedin's early activities were of necessity kept secret, and no one knew of the organization's existence. In years to come, however, the Mojahedin's message found its place among Muslim and revolutionary intellectuals and the religious sector. More importantly, because of their propinquity to Iranian society and culture, the Mojahedin attracted vast support among the people.

After reviewing the overall situation in Iran, the organization concluded that in light of the shah's iron-fisted rule and suppression of all opposition, the only viable route to democratic rule was the ouster of his regime. Given the shah's police-state, attaining this objective through a non-violent political campaign was, by definition, impossible.⁸ Consequently, the Mojahedin began to prepare for armed resistance. They were also critical of U.S. policy on Iran, and called for an end to the United States' unflinching support for the shah.

In 1971, before the Mojahedin undertook any military action, SAVAK arrested and imprisoned all of their leaders and many of their members. In May 1972, on the eve of the visit to Iran by then U.S. President, Richard Nixon, the three Mojahedin founders and two Central Committee members were executed.

The events of 1971 had dire consequences. In the aftermath of the arrests, the organization was shattered when several individuals took advantage of the ensuing vacuum to infiltrate the organization and carry out a bloody coup from within. To consolidate their control of the organizational apparatus, they planned and carried out the murders of several of the remaining leading members.⁹ They also removed the traditional Quranic verse from the Mojahedin emblem, declaring that there had been an ideological "advance" to Marxism.

They continued, however, to misappropriate the Mojahedin name and reputation.¹⁰

These actions had far-reaching repercussions, going beyond the shattering of the Mojahedin. Until then, the Mojahedin, espousing a democratic interpretation of Islam, had assumed the leadership of the anti-shah movement, pushing the backward mullahs to the fringes. Many of the present regime's leaders, including Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Khamenei, claimed to be Mojahedin supporters to bolster their public images. Although opposed to the young Mojahedin, even Khomeini could not publicly take a stand against them. Under public pressure to express support, which he never did, Khomeini succumbed to the point of issuing a fatwa that one-third of the religious tithe be given to the "young Muslims and strugglers," an obvious reference to the Mojahedin at the time. The temporary dissolution of the Mojahedin's organization allowed Khomeini to exploit the vacuum of leadership in the 1979 uprising and popular disillusionment from the internal *coup* to usurp the helm and turn a popular revolution, yearning for freedom and independence, into a tragic episode of genocide in Iranian history. The internal *coup* hence became a decisive factor in the advance of fundamentalist interpretations of Islam.¹¹

The Mojahedin, meanwhile, came under attack from three sides: Using the *coup* to divide and weaken the ranks of the opposition, the shah's regime labeled them Islamic-Marxists and began a concerted campaign to wipe out the true Mojahedin. From another angle, the reactionary mullahs, previously held at bay by the Mojahedin's popularity and social roots, sprang to the attack, preaching that their Islam was the only Islam. Several imprisoned clerics decreed the Muslim Mojahedin to be non-Muslim after 1975. On the third front were opportunist Marxists, who exploited the setbacks suffered by the Mojahedin to portray them as proponents of a petite-bourgeoisie ideology whose time had passed.

From 1975 to 1979, while incarcerated in different prisons, Massoud Rajavi led the Mojahedin's resistance against all three fronts, for which reason he was taken to the Tehran Komiteh's torture center and tortured to the brink of death.¹² He stressed the need to continue the struggle against the shah's dictatorship. At the same time, he characterized religious fanaticism as the primary internal threat to the popular opposition, and warned against the emergence

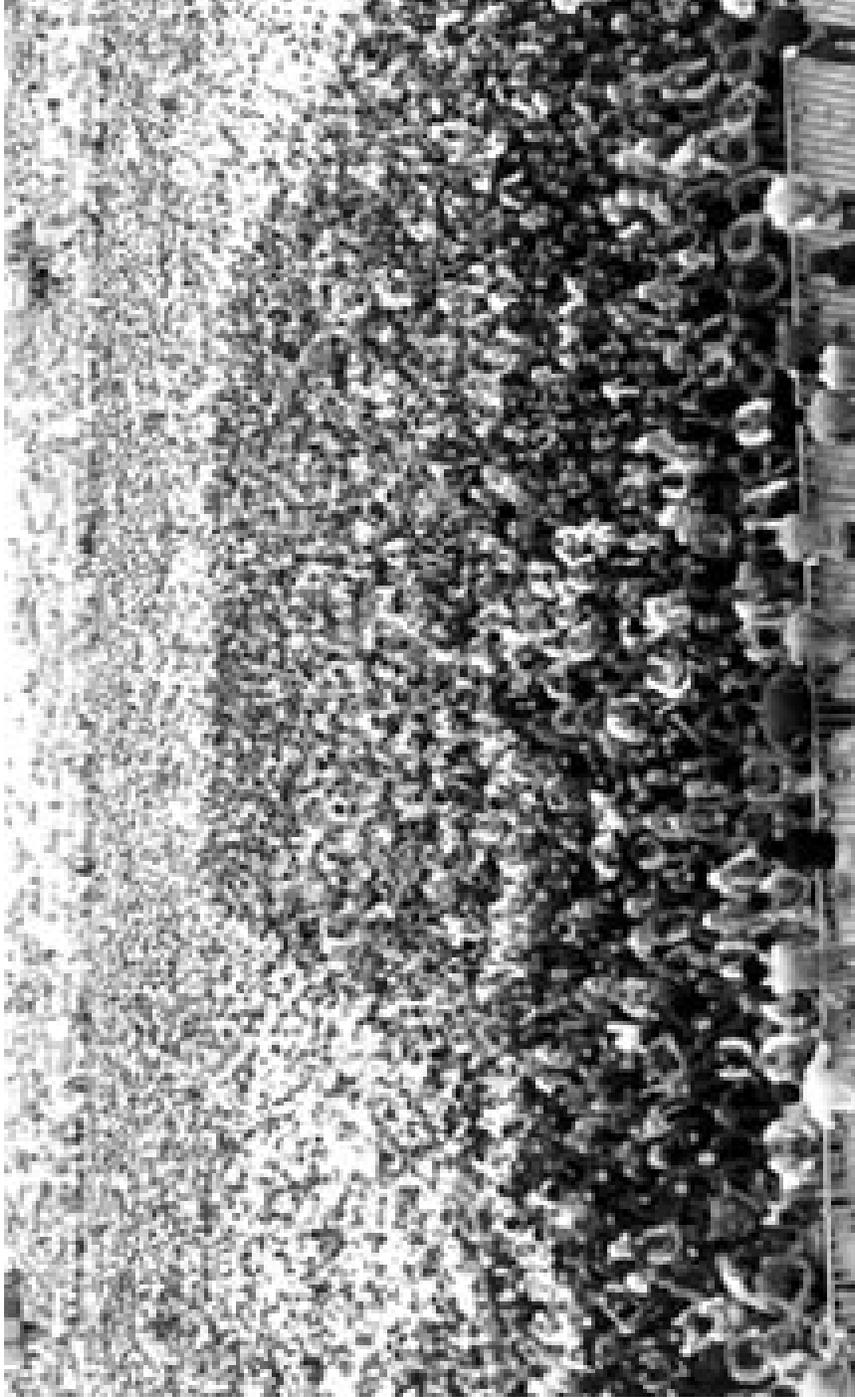
and growth of religious backwardness and despotism symbolized by Khomeini.¹³ These positions remained the Mojahedin's manifesto until the overthrow of the shah's regime. In internal discourses, Rajavi argued that Khomeini represented the reactionary sector of society and preached religious fascism. Later, in the early days after the 1979 revolution, the mullahs, specifically Rafsanjani, pointed to these statements in inciting the *hezbollahi* club-wielders to attack the Mojahedin.

New Challenge

In the late 1970s, the shah, under international pressure, began to free some of the political prisoners. Among the last were the Mojahedin leaders, set free thanks to the public uprising.¹⁴ Their release, one week after the shah fled and 12 days before Khomeini returned to Iran on January 21, 1979, coincided with a new phase in the Iranian revolution, when crowds filled the streets shouting anti-shah and anti-American slogans.

Despite the destruction of their organizational apparatus as the result of the *coup*, the Mojahedin still wielded significant weight and popular support. They soon reorganized their membership and waded into the fray.¹⁵ Massoud Rajavi's first public speech, on January 24, 1979, inspired little support for the Mojahedin in the political climate of the time. Instead of unconditionally endorsing Khomeini, *comme il faut*, Rajavi insisted on safeguards for democratic freedoms, as the most important achievement of the revolution.¹⁶ He refused to call the anti-monarchic revolution an "Islamic revolution" and called for a democratic revolution.

The Mojahedin also called for public participation in the establishment of a nationalist, democratic government. This demand formed the basis of their political strategy and was reiterated in their "Minimum Expectations" program in early 1979,¹⁷ and later in Mr. Rajavi's platform during the presidential elections. The Mojahedin slate of candidates for the first Assembly of Experts (which Khomeini had substituted for the Constituent Assembly) and then for the parliamentary elections was a coalition slate of all democratic forces.¹⁸ Well aware of the reactionary nature of the regime to come, the Mojahedin strategy emphasized a political campaign that increasingly highlighted the need for democratic freedoms and exposed the turbaned rulers. Although they had refused from the outset to



150,000 turn out at Tehran's Amjadieh stadium on June 12, 1980 listening to Massoud Rajavi stressing upon the need to safeguard freedoms.

Democracy Betrayed



500,000 Mojahedin sympathizers demonstrate on June 20, 1981 in Tehran to protest the emerging dictatorship.

collaborate with the mullahs, the Mojahedin wanted to avoid any sort of confrontation. Shortly after the new government took power, however, they again came under attack. Their offices, meetings and supporters were assaulted by the *hezbollah*.¹⁹ But, the hostility only served to bolster their popularity. They had become known for standing firm against religious fanaticism and the mullahs' bid at monopolizing the religion.²⁰ In a short period, the movement became Iran's largest organized political force. The circulation of *Mojahed* newspaper reached 500,000, surpassing those of official newspapers.

The Mojahedin grew in popularity and political strength, despite the many restrictions imposed on their activities by the new regime, and continuing arrests of and attacks on their supporters and members.²¹ In 1980, they nominated Massoud Rajavi for President of the republic. Less than a year after the shah's fall, all opposition political groups supported Rajavi's candidacy. In his book, *The Iranian Mojahedin*, Ervand Abrahamian writes:

Rajavi's candidacy was not only endorsed by the Mojahedin-affiliated organizations... ; but also by an impressive array of independent organizations including the Feda'iyan, the National Democratic Front, the Kurdish Democratic Party, the Kurdish Toilers Revolutionary Party (Komula), the Society of Iranian Socialists, the Society for the Cultural and Political Rights of the Turkomans, the Society of Young Assyrians, and the Joint Group of Armenian, Zoroastrian and Jewish Minorities. Rajavi also received the support of a large number of prominent figures: Taleqani's widow; Shaykh Ezeddin Hosayni, the spiritual leader of the Sunni Kurds in Mahabad; Hojjat al-Islam Jalal Ganjehi... ; fifty well-known members of the Iranian Writers' Association, including the economist Naser Pakdaman, the essayist Manuchehr Hezarkhani and the secular historians Feraydun Adamiyyat and Homa Nateq; and, of course, many of the families of the early Mojahedin martyrs, notably the Hanif-nezhads, Rezais, Mohsens, Badizadegans, Asgarizadehs, Sadeqs, Meshkinfams, and Mihandusts. The Mojahedin had become the vanguards of the secular opposition to the Islamic Republic.²²

Khomeini took the threat seriously, issuing a fatwa declaring Rajavi ineligible as a candidate because he had not voted for the velayat-e faqih and the constitution based on it. A few months later, similar decrees and electoral fraud prevented even one Mojahedin member from being elected to parliament. Mr. Rajavi, a parliamentary candidate from Tehran, received over 530,000 votes (25 percent of the total cast)²³. Despite widespread rigging, the Mojahedin

candidates came in second in every case.

Turning Point

Finally, in June 1981, Khomeini decided that the only solution to curb the Mojahedin's rising popularity was their total suppression. On the afternoon of June 20, 1981, some 500,000 demonstrators turned out in Tehran in support of the Mojahedin, who had only hours to organize the protest via their own network of supporters, and marched toward the parliament. Khomeini's Revolutionary Guards opened fire on the peaceful demonstration, killing or wounding hundreds.²⁴ Thousands of demonstrators were arrested and hundreds summarily executed that same night.²⁵ (For a detailed review of the political struggle between the Mojahedin and the regime, see chapter VII.)

This event marked the beginning of an era of widespread suppression, arrests, torture, and mass executions. It also marked the beginning of the Iranian people's nationwide resistance movement. To unite all opposition political forces against the Khomeini regime, the Mojahedin proposed that a coalition be formed. In July 1981, Massoud Rajavi officially announced in Tehran the formation of the National Council of Resistance, and invited all democratic forces opposed to religious despotism to join.²⁶

At the time, Khomeini had deposed Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr as the president. Hunted by the government, Bani-Sadr sought refuge with the Mojahedin, who gave him haven in Rajavi's residence. The two agreed on a covenant, which they published, whereby Bani-Sadr recognized Rajavi as prime minister, responsible for forming the National Council of Resistance.²⁷ From then on, the Mojahedin's strategy was two-pronged: nationwide resistance and all-out confrontation against the regime's suppression in Iran, and formation of a democratic alternative to the Khomeini regime.

Rajavi, accompanied by Bani-Sadr, left Tehran for Paris at the end of July 1981 from Tehran's 1st fighter base, aboard an Iranian Air Force jet piloted by Colonel Behzad Mo'ezzi (the shah's former pilot), who had joined the Mojahedin after the anti-monarchic revolution. In Paris, the National Council of Resistance announced its program and more independent political parties and dignitaries joined its ranks.²⁸ The Council soon emerged as the only viable alternative to Khomeini's fundamentalist regime. As resistance inside

Iran continued, the Council and the Mojahedin established offices in Europe and North America and began a worldwide campaign to expose the clerics' atrocities and introduce the NCR as the democratic alternative. Many parliamentarians the world over declared their support.

Simultaneously, the Council launched a campaign to end the Iran-Iraq war. The NCR's feasible plan for peace was widely welcomed in Iran and endorsed by 5,000 parliamentarians and political dignitaries throughout the world.²⁹ In 1986, after the French struck a deal with Tehran, Mr. Rajavi left Paris and went to the Iran-Iraq frontier, where he formed the National Liberation Army of Iran in 1987.³⁰ In a series of military operations, the NLA struck hard at Khomeini's forces, becoming a major threat to the mullahs' regime.³¹ The all-volunteer NLA's fighters are of diverse political and religious preferences, and include members of the Mojahedin.

The Iranian Resistance has, in recent years, organized anti-government protests and demonstrations through its internal network of resistance activists.³² It has also waged an extensive publicity campaign to prepare the ground for the regime's overthrow and a change for democracy in Iran.³³ The NCR has expanded over the years, to represent a wider range of the Iranian people.³⁴

The State Department report distorts the Mojahedin's history. The Mojahedin's ideology is described as "eclectic" and based on "Shi'a Islamic theology and Marxist tenets."³⁵ They are accused of having: "assassinated at least six American citizens" in the 1970s; "collaborated with Ayatollah Khomeini;" "supported the takeover of the U.S. Embassy;" engaged in violence and terrorism in resisting the Khomeini regime; and being dependent on Iraq.³⁶ Regrettably, the authors of the report followed political guidelines that precluded an impartial study in favor of an account that distorts the simplest facts. (We will consider the subject of relations with Iraq and terrorism in detail in chapters VII and VIII. The issue of the Mojahedin's popular base is discussed in chapter XI.)

Collaborating with Khomeini?

The charge of collaborating with Khomeini is a classic example of the authors' rather shallow understanding of events in Iran. Khomeini took power with the backing of the majority of the Iranian people. He continued to enjoy vast popular support during the early

post-revolutionary era. In accordance with democratic principles and norms, the Mojahedin recognized the regime's initial political legitimacy in deference to the popular will, despite their opposition to many of the policies of the new rulers. The organization continued to recognize the regime as legitimate as long as the people continued to support it, and as long as it allowed peaceful dissent. The Mojahedin, however, were almost immediately recognized as the regime's opposition, because they refused to collaborate with Khomeini. In a dramatic expression of dissent, they boycotted the new regime's constitutional referendum in late 1979.

Abrahamian's *Iranian Mojahedin*, upon which the report draws so heavily, is quite definitive about the Mojahedin's opposition to the Khomeini regime:

By late 1980, the Mojahedin was brazenly accusing Khomeini's entourage, especially the IRP, of "monopolizing power", "hijacking" the revolution, trampling over "democratic rights", and plotting to set up a "fascistic" one-party dictatorship. By early 1981, the authorities had closed down Mojahedin offices, outlawed their newspapers, banned their demonstrations, and issued arrest warrants for some of their leaders; in short they had forced the organization underground...

In the economic sphere, they denounced the regime for having failed not only to raise the standard of living, but also to tackle the unemployment problem; to control the spiraling inflation, especially in rents and food prices; to diminish the dependence on the West, particularly in the vital arena of agriculture imports; to diversify the exports and lessen the reliance on the oil industry; to distribute land to the landless; to build homes for the homeless; to deal with the ever-increasing growth of urban slums; and, even more sensitive, to stamp out corruption in high places. These complaints read much like those previously leveled at the Pahlavi state. In raising the question of corruption, the Mojahedin published internal documents from the Mostazafin Foundation showing that it was subsidizing clerical newspapers, providing jobs for amiable functionaries, and at ridiculously low prices quietly selling off expropriated royalist properties to IRP friends in the bazaar. The Mostazafin Foundation, they charged, was as corrupt as its predecessor - the Pahlavi Foundation.

In the social sphere, the Mojahedin argued that the regime had failed to solve any of the country's major problems: illiteracy, ill health, malnutrition, prostitution, gambling, drug addiction and, of course, inadequate educational facilities. Moreover, they argued that the "medieval-minded" regime had resorted to primitive remedies to deal with the problem of urban crime. The macabre Law of Retribution, they stressed, violated human rights, insulted true Islam, ignored the social causes of crime,

unthinkingly revived the tribal customs of seventh-century Arabia and, being based on "feudal principles", institutionalized inequality - especially between rich and poor, between believers and non believers, and between men and women. Furthermore, they argued that the regime, being wedded to the traditional notion that the two sexes should have separate spheres, had drastically worsened the general condition of women. It had purged women from many professions, lowered the marriage age, closed down coeducational schools, eliminated safeguards against willful divorce and polygamy and, most detrimental of all, perpetuated the "medieval" myth that women were empty vessels created by God to bear children, obey their husbands, and carry out household chores. True Islam, the Mojahedin argued, viewed men and women as social, political and intellectual equals, and thus advocated absolute equality in all spheres of life: in the workplace, at home, and before the law... The concept of sexual equality, which had been implicit in their earlier works, was now explicit.

In the political sphere, the Mojahedin attacked the regime for disrupting rallies and meetings; banning newspapers and burning down bookstores; rigging elections and closing down universities; kidnapping, imprisoning, and torturing political activists; favoring clerics who had collaborated with the previous regime, even those who had participated in Mosaddeq's overthrow; venerating the arch-reactionary Shaykh Fazlollah Nuri who had fought against the 1905-9 constitutional revolution; grossly distorting Shariati's teachings; covering up the fact that courtiers had helped Beheshti gain control of the mosque in Hamburg; making a mockery of the promise to create grass-root councils; violating the rights of the national minorities, especially the Kurds; reviving SAVAK and using the tribunals to terrorize their opponents.³⁷

Hence, the charge of "collaboration with Khomeini" is outlandish, only revealing the extent to which the Department's report has distorted the historical record.

Islamic-Marxists

The label "Islamic-Marxist" has been borrowed from the shah's SAVAK and later Khomeini's regime, both of which used it in a futile attempt to undermine the Mojahedin's social base. On many occasions, the Department has described the Mojahedin ideology as a blend of Marxism, Leninism, and Shi'ism. Obviously, Islam and Marxism are philosophically, politically, and economically disparate and cannot in any sense be mixed. In the years prior to the revolution, when most of the Mojahedin were imprisoned by the SAVAK, they were much admired by the people precisely for their Islamic beliefs, despite having suffered a major organizational setback. Faced with the same

problem, the Khomeini regime coined the term *Monafeq*, meaning "hypocrite" in Arabic, to imply that the Mojahedin falsely claimed to be Muslim. The report also contains this allegation.

The truth is that every ideology ultimately manifests itself in the practices and policies of its followers. We suggest an objective, as opposed to distorted and self-serving, review of the Mojahedin's activities and positions, coupled with a close look at the alignment of political forces in Iran during the last 15 years, as the best criteria for judgment. Remember that Khomeini was able to eliminate every other opponent from the political arena under the banner of Islam. Only the Mojahedin and their current allies in the National Council of Resistance survived, despite the brutal repression, because of their well known beliefs or respect for Islam, the religion of most Iranians.

In his book *The Center of the Universe, The Geopolitics of Iran*, Graham E. Fuller notes that the Mojahedin's Islamic orientation was a major impediment to the Soviets' effort to influence them:

The Soviets in the past have also been interested in other leftist movements such as the Mojahedin Khalq ("The People's Holy Warriors") but had almost no success in establishing any influence over it because of that group's own suspicions of Moscow and its nominal commitment to Islam.

Death of Americans

In referring to the assassinations of American citizens in Iran, the State Department has again distorted the historical record to serve its end. These charges have been dealt with in detail in chapter I. As previously stated in *Appeasing Tehran's Mullahs*, the Mojahedin are not responsible for actions undertaken by others in their name. We refer to specific individuals who eliminated the Quranic verse from the Mojahedin's emblem and murdered Mojahedin officials who had not been arrested (including Majid Sharif Vaghefi and Mohammad Yaqini). It is common knowledge that from the outset, Mr. Rajavi, still in prison, condemned this Marxist group's use of the name "Mojahedin." Emphasizing the Islamic ideology, he clearly demarcated the differences between the Mojahedin and this group, which in 1977 finally changed its name to *Peykar* (Organization of Struggle in the Path of Emancipation of the Working Class).³⁸

The Embassy Takeover

One of the most controversial events of the reign of the mullahs was the U.S. embassy takeover and the holding of American citizens as hostages. In its report, and on previous occasions, the State Department has accused the Mojahedin of supporting the hostage-taking in 1979-81. Interestingly, although the Mojahedin are at worst accused of "supporting" the hostage-taking, the State Department apparently has no qualms about inviting the former hostage-takers themselves, now "diplomats" of the regime's foreign ministry, to engage in dialogue and negotiations with the United States. These same hostage-takers later masterminded, encouraged and supported the murder of hundreds of American and French nationals in successive bombings in Lebanon, and the kidnapping of scores of foreign nationals.³⁹ This extraordinarily unbalanced attitude only makes sense as part of a policy of courting the mullahs.

The Mojahedin have always maintained that the hostage crisis was the single best pretext under which the Khomeini regime could isolate Iran's democratic forces and drive them from the political arena. Hence, they were victims, and probably a primary target, of the hostage-taking. As *Mojahed* newspaper wrote at the time:

For the ruling monopolists, the hostages were nothing but a pretext, to be used in the power struggle to consolidate all key government positions. This is why this faction's slogans about the hostages were always fervid, never calling for anything less than their trial and even execution. The hostage issue had become a tool in the hands of the ruling reactionary faction to outmaneuver and push aside all political rivals and forces... It was only for internal consumption, because it could not have any significant effect or positive impact outside Iran or on foreign policy. The affair was prolonged for internal consumption, namely the power-hungry profiteering of the monopolists.⁴⁰

Six years later, on the takeover's anniversary, Abdol Karim Moussavi-Ardebili, then the regime's Chief Justice, elaborated on the mullahs' motives: "[The embassy takeover] brought about the fall of the Provisional Government, the isolation of the liberals and the confusion of left-wing groups and the Monafeqin and exposed their real faces. As Imam Khomeini said, this revolutionary move was greater than the first revolution."⁴¹ Abbas Soroush, the Director General for Political Affairs in the regime's Foreign Ministry, was

one of the leaders of the "Student Followers of the Imam's Line" and a hostage-taker. He acknowledges that "political groups, especially the Mojahedin, played no role whatsoever in the occupation of the embassy. But once they realized that they had fallen behind us in the political struggle, they brought their people in front of the embassy." Mullah Mohammad Moussavi-Khoiniha, the mastermind of the hostage-taking and Khomeini's personal representative in the affair, has stressed that in their first statement, the Mojahedin described the occupation of the embassy as reactionary and unpopular, but displayed superficial tolerance so that the titanic waves would not sweep them aside.

Immediately after it was occupied, the U.S. embassy in Tehran became a staging ground for attacks on the Mojahedin. Everyday, after the public prayer, the regime's hooligans paraded in front of the embassy, where they were exhorted by officials to prepare for attacks on the "second nest of spies" (a reference to the Mojahedin's offices. The mullahs called the American embassy the first "nest of spies.")

Unfortunately, longtime U.S. support for the shah had sown the seeds of anti-Americanism among the public, which Khomeini used to his advantage. Under the circumstances, any public opposition to the hostage-taking by the Mojahedin would have given Khomeini a *carte blanche* to suppress them as "U.S. lackeys." They had to walk a political tightrope. While exposing Khomeini's real motives, the Mojahedin had to deny the mullahs the chance to exploit the public sentiment against the democratic opposition.⁴² The spirit of all Mojahedin positions and publications in this period was to unveil Khomeini's political deceit and intrigue. If given half a chance, Khomeini would have eliminated the Mojahedin, as he did others.⁴³

Abrahamian says the Mojahedin's criticisms included:

Engineering the American hostage crisis to impose on the nation the "medieval" concept of the *velayat-e faqih*. To support the last accusation they published articles revealing how the student hostage-takers were linked to the IRP; how the *pasdars* had facilitated the break-in; how those who had refused to toe the IRP line had been forced out of the compound; how Ayatollah Beheshti had used the whole incident to sweep aside the Bazargan government; and how Hojjat al-Islam Khoiniha, the man appointed by Khomeini to advise the students, had carefully removed from the embassy all documents with references to U.S. officials meeting clerical leaders during the 1979 revolution...⁴⁴

Abrahamian adds, "Meanwhile, the Muslim Student Followers of the Imam's Line, the occupiers of the U.S. embassy, denounced the Mojahedin as secret Marxists in cahoots with the "pro-American liberals."⁴⁵

From day one of Khomeini's rule, the Mojahedin had tried to prevent the mullahs from manipulating the people's anti-American sentiments to suppress dissent. History records that Khomeini was notorious for using anti-imperialist slogans to justify the internal repression and export of terrorism and instability to countries of the region. The alignment of forces in Iran in 1979 attested to this reality. Two political fronts, with opposing programs, were arrayed face to face. On one front were Khomeini and his allies, including the pro-Moscow Tudeh Party and the Fedayeen (a pro-Moscow Marxist organization), who contended that the primary issue for Iran was the struggle against the United States and that the main internal threat was "liberalism." On the opposing front were the Mojahedin, Ayatollah Taleqani,⁴⁶ and their current allies in the NCR, who dissented from the mainstream politics of post-revolutionary Iran by insisting that the vital issue was political freedoms inside Iran. The Mojahedin and their allies continuously warned that the foreboding shadow of religious dictatorship was the primary threat.⁴⁷

This alignment had taken shape in the early months of Khomeini's reign. In August 1979, three months prior to the embassy takeover, the Revolutionary Guards formally occupied the Mojahedin's central offices in Mossadeq Avenue in Tehran.⁴⁸ From that point on the organization became a semi-clandestine movement, and Massoud Rajavi warned of the return of dictatorship under the cloak of religion.⁴⁹ In March 1979, less than three weeks after the mullahs seized power, Mojahedin offices in Kashan, Yazd, and Torbat Heydarieh were ransacked and taken over, and many members - men and women - were beaten and detained.⁵⁰ In April 1979, and only two months after the shah's fall, Ayatollah Taleqani closed all his offices and left Tehran in protest to the new despotism.⁵¹ The Mojahedin supported Taleqani's move, announcing that they had put all their forces and facilities at his disposal to confront religious dictatorship.⁵² In July 1979, two Mojahedin supporters in Fars Province, the Asgari brothers, were arrested and executed on orders of the religious judge (also Khomeini's representative) on charges of conducting "pro-

imperialist" activities.

Precisely because of this emphasis on political freedoms, the Tudeh leaders described the Mojahedin as "a bastion of liberalism and imperialism." The communist party paper wrote:

Mr. Rajavi please consider this: Even movements and individuals who have monarchist views and are not democratic, but are struggling in practical terms against imperialism, are revolutionary. Clear enough? Firstly, can democracy, so loved and esteemed by you, exist without independence and struggle against imperialism? Secondly, due to your emphasis on democracy, the struggle against imperialism, today our number one priority, may lose its standing even as a secondary goal.⁵³

In a 1981 commentary in his newspaper, Nooreddin Kianouri, the Secretary General of the Tudeh, posed several politically loaded questions to Massoud Rajavi, among them: "What have you done that unveiled women from uptown, the bourgeoisie and liberals are applauding you?" The Tudeh Party's "plot-meter" described the Mojahedin actions during those years as American conspiracies, and many Mojahedin later executed on Khomeini's orders were wrapped in American flags before burial.

In later years, the religious tyranny, which the Tudeh had helped bolster, unleashed an onslaught against the Mojahedin and executed thousands of their supporters. In the meantime, the pro-Moscow communists carried on their activities and distributed their publications freely and openly. Of course, the price of their freedom was collaboration with the regime in the suppression, arrest, and torture of the Mojahedin and other opposition groups.

If the authors of the State Department report had objectively reviewed their sources and refrained from selective use of them, they would have necessarily concluded that democracy was the major issue for the Mojahedin in post-revolutionary Iran. Abrahamian writes:

In criticizing the regime's political record, the Mojahedin moved the issue of democracy to center stage. They argued that the regime had broken all the democratic promises made during the revolution; that an attack on any group was an attack on all groups; that the issue of democracy was of "fundamental importance;"...⁵⁴

Abrahamian says that in the same years, the communist Tudeh and Majority faction of the Fedayeen "pleaded with the Mojahedin to

join their Anti-Imperialist Democratic Front; to remember that the United States was still Iran's main enemy; to avoid allying with pro-Western liberals," adding that the Minority faction of the Fedayeen (still opposed to the regime) accused the Mojahedin of "flirting with pro-American liberals such as Bazargan." The author admits that "the Mojahedin rebuffed the pleas and criticism."⁵⁵

A Final Say

The State Department's Near East Bureau, seemingly oblivious to the repercussions of 25 years of unconditional U.S. support for the shah's dictatorship, bickers with the Mojahedin about why they did not speak of the United States in friendlier terms in the post-revolutionary era. This is either an excuse for a policy of appeasement, or an indication of the bureau's naiveté regarding post-revolutionary circumstances. The point here is not to defend every single position, word or tactic of the Mojahedin or their affiliated publications in the past. We see no need, in principle, to answer to any authority but to the people of Iran. The Mojahedin take pride in their three decades of unwavering struggle for freedom, independence, and national, popular sovereignty. Neither the Mojahedin nor their allies in the National Council of Resistance will ever deviate from these sacred ideals. Thus, our aim is only to explain a policy which stressed political freedoms, while denying the mullahs the opportunity to use "anti-imperialist" theatrics and schemes to suppress Iran's democratic forces.

At the same time, it is worth pointing out that the State Department which has so meticulously reviewed and criticized Mojahedin deeds and words of 15 years ago, has not been at all conscientious about reviewing its own past policy on Iran. Regrettably, there has been no equivalent effort to examine the negative implications of that policy either, especially because since 1984, the U.S. has again severed all ties with the Iranian people and their resistance in favor of deals with one of the most sinister regimes in the world today. Unfortunately, the minimum demand in any deal with the mullahs has been, is and will remain labeling the Iranian Resistance "terrorist." Even more perplexing is the insistence on pursuing such a policy today, when Khomeini's regime is more unpopular than the shah's ever was, and when dictatorships are giving way to new democracies in the wake of Soviet disintegration.

Democracy Betrayed

It bears reiterating that the Iranian people and Resistance are determined to end religious dictatorship in Iran and bring democracy to their country. This Resistance movement extends its hand in peace, friendship and cooperation to all who respect Iran's freedom, independence and territorial integrity, today and in tomorrow's democratic Iran. It is up to the United States to demonstrate its desire for a policy that deals justly with the Iranian people. Meanwhile, the fact remains that the mullahs are on their last legs, and the State Department's hysteric animosity toward the Mojahedin is reminiscent of U.S. policy under the shah.

VII

Freedom Fighters or Terrorists?

The State Department charges the Mojahedin with using violence and terrorism in their drive to overthrow the regime in Iran. The crux of the dispute, however, is not about how to overthrow the regime, but whether the mullahs should be overthrown in the first place. Department officials have reiterated that they do not seek to overthrow the Iranian regime. Obviously, no one expects the U.S., or for that matter any other government, to seek or implement the ouster of the mullahs. It is the responsibility of the Iranian people to end the reign of dictatorship in their homeland. The argument, therefore, is about recognition of the Iranian people's right to resist dictatorship and establish democracy. Support for the current regime is unthinkable. There cannot, therefore, be more than two sides to this debate: On one side are the Iranian people, who seek liberation from religious tyranny; on the other are the holdouts from the Irangate era, who view the regime as a "permanent feature"¹ and consider dissent as violence and terrorism.

The authors have gone a step further, describing mass executions and extensive suppression as the regime's reply to the Mojahedin's terrorism.² This rationale allows the mullahs to justify their atrocities on the pretext of combating terrorism. The next step is to demand, as the regime's ambassador did at a U. N. Human Rights Commission session, that the regime be lauded for its war on terrorism, instead of censured for human rights abuses.³ This is disgraceful.

Non-violent Dissent

Immediately after Khomeini seized power, a fundamental dispute surfaced between the Mojahedin and the clerical regime. Massoud

Rajavi publicly named freedom as the Iranian people's principal demand in the revolution which had toppled the shah. His remarks launched a nationwide campaign by the Mojahedin to defend democracy. From the outset, the regime organized hoodlums - the forerunners of the *hezbollah* - to heckle and harass Mojahedin supporters, and disrupt peaceful political activities.⁴ Not a day went by without attacks somewhere in the country on their gatherings and those of other current Council members, such as the National Democratic Front.

In January 1980, Khomeini issued a fatwa, vetoing Massoud Rajavi's candidacy for the presidency.⁵ The French daily, *Le Monde*, wrote:

... According to diverse estimates, had Imam Khomeini not vetoed his candidacy in the presidential election last January, Mr. Rajavi, would have gotten several million votes. He was, moreover, assured of the support of the religious and ethnic minorities - whose rights to equality and autonomy he defended - and a good part of the female vote, who seek emancipation, and the young, who totally reject the "reactionary clergy"...

The Mojahedin have not ceased denouncing, documenting and issuing calls about "the irregularities, pressures, fraud and violence" surrounding the first round of elections. 2,500 of their supporters were wounded, 50 of them gravely, by armed bands of "Hezbollah" in the course of the election campaign... Observers appointed by the Mojahedin who protested the election fraud were expelled from the premises, beaten, and sometimes arrested...⁶

Another round of attacks on Mojahedin offices and gatherings followed, in which many of their supporters were killed or injured. In June 1980, *Le Monde* wrote:

... The objective of the popular gathering on Thursday afternoon, called by the People's Mojahedin, was to protest against attacks on their supporters and activists in the past few days...

Tens of thousands of the party's sympathizers had lined up at the entrance gates an hour before the gathering [at Amjadieh Stadium] when groups of Hezbollah began loudly protesting against the Mojahedin... chanting, "There is only one party, the Party of God, and only one Leader, Imam Khomeini."

The Hezbollah claims no precise political organization. They are notorious among the public as the shock troops... and serve as the tool of the extreme right faction of the Islamic Republic Party, directed by Beheshti... The Hezbollah tried to prevent the gathering from taking place... They attacked the entrances to the stadium... The police and Revolutionary Guards

for once observed strict neutrality. They did not turn their forces on the attackers, but they did protect them from the Mojahedin, 10 to 20 times more numerous...

Things as they stand, the choice, according to observers, is between conciliation and civil war.⁷

Lines Are Drawn

Our enemy is neither in the United States, nor the Soviet Union, nor Kurdistan, but right here, right under our nose, in Tehran.⁸

With these words, in late June 1980 Khomeini drew the lines. "Death to the Mojahedin" became the regime's motto and *Hezbollah* stepped up its attacks on the organization's centers, all legal. Two weeks prior, on June 12, 1980, in the famous speech, "What's to be done?" at Tehran's Amjadieh stadium, Massoud Rajavi had exhorted the crowd of 200,000 gathered in and out of the stadium, to "defend freedoms... freedom of speech, associations and gatherings."⁹ The non-violent resistance of thousands of Mojahedin supporters effectively frustrated the *Pasdaran* effort to disrupt the meeting with tear gas and live ammunition. Their assault left one dead, hundreds wounded and thousands beaten up, arousing the public's sympathy for the Mojahedin and disdain for the regime's crime. Even Khomeini's son, Ahmad, condemned the Revolutionary Guards' action as "treachery to Islam." The Police Chief, Deputy Interior Minister and a number of *Majlis* deputies condemned the attack. A flood of letters and telegrams of condemnation from different political organizations, various sectors of society, and members of the business community were reprinted in the media, greatly alarming Khomeini. He had to make a choice: Either back down, or step up the political onslaught on the Mojahedin. A week later, the Mojahedin revealed a tape-recording of a speech by Hassan Ayat, one of the leaders of the ruling party, in which he revealed the details of the plots. Khomeini hedged no longer, and on June 25, 1980, pointed his finger at enemy number one. The Mojahedin, he said, "are worse than infidels."

Even the organization's health clinics soon came under attack. There were more deaths and injuries, and thousands of arrests.¹⁰ Responding to a letter of complaint by Mojahedin supporters in August 1980, when the organization still engaged in public activities, Mullah Allameh, head of the revolutionary court of Bam, in southern Iran, wrote: "According to the decree of Imam Khomeini, the Mojahedin of

Iran are infidels and worse than blasphemers... They have no right to life."¹¹

Mohammad Yazdi, head of the regime's Judiciary, referred to Khomeini's order to massacre the Mojahedin and their supporters, issued months before it became public, as follows:

The Imam's hand-written judicial order condemned the [Mojahedin] - the totality of the organization and its infrastructure, and not individuals - so that there would be no hesitation in terming the activities by these individuals as waging war on God and corruption on Earth [and carrying out their execution orders].¹²

Shaul Bakhash writes about the events of that era in his book, *The Reign of the Ayatollahs*:

In February 1980, 60,000 copies of *Mojahed* were seized and burned. In Mashad, Shiraz, Qa'emshahr, Sari, and dozens of small towns, club wielders attacked and looted Mojahedin headquarters, student societies, and meetings. Since the Mojahedin meetings were often large, these attacks turned into huge melees. Some 700 were injured in the attack on the Mojahedin headquarters at Qa'emshahr in April, 400 in Mashad. Ten members of the organization lost their lives in clashes between February and June 1980.

Preachers were often the instigators of these attacks. In Qom, anti-Mojahedin marches took place after sermons by Mohammad Taqi Falsafi and Mohammad-Javad Bahonar. In Behshahr, the Mojahedin were attacked after a sermon by Fakhr ad-Din Hejazi. Hojjat ol-Eslam Khaz'ali moved from town to town to preach against the Mojahedin. "If they do not repent," he told a crowd in Shahrud, "take them and throw them in the Caspian Sea." He accused the Mojahedin of being communists, taking part in the Kurdish uprising, killing Revolutionary Guardsmen, and misleading young girls. "Even if they hide in a mouse hole," he told a Mashad congregation, "we will drag them out and kill them... We are thirsty for their blood. We must close off their jugular."...

[Khomeini] was suspicious of the Mojahedin's growing strength and disapproved of their attempts, as laymen, to appropriate to themselves the authority to interpret Islamic doctrine. In June 1980, Khomeini publicly denounced the Mojahedin as polytheists and hypocrites and contemptuously referred to Rajavi as "this lad who calls himself the leader." The Mojahedin responded by quietly closing all their branch offices and retreating further underground.¹³

Ervand Abrahamian describes the Mojahedin's political behavior as "non-confrontationalist,"¹⁴ despite the numerous attacks carried

out against them with Khomeini's blessing. He also refers to the occupation of Mojahedin offices in Ahwaz, Bushehr, Abadan, and Isfahan in the first year of Khomeini's rule, noting that the *Hezbollahis* attempted to take over the Mojahedin headquarters in Tehran, but failed due to popular support for the movement.¹⁵ Referring to Khomeini's speech in March 1980, the author writes,

The hezbollahis, no doubt prompted by the IRP, waged war on the Mojahedin. They assaulted Mojahedin offices, printing presses, and election rallies in Tehran, Rasht, Gorgan, Hamadan, Mianeh, Mashhad, Shiraz, Isfahan, Kermanshah, Khomein, Malayer, and Qiyamshahr (Shahi). These attacks caused three deaths and over 1000 casualties. The attack on the Tehran rally, which drew 200,000 participants, left twenty-three Mojahedin sympathizers seriously injured.¹⁶

The Mojahedin, however, refrained from any confrontation and "participated eagerly in the parliamentary elections."¹⁷ In mentioning the mullahs' propaganda campaign against the Mojahedin, Abrahamian adds,

The regime used more than propaganda. The Chief Prosecutor on 2 November 1980 banned *Mojahed* for spreading slanderous lies; the paper did not appear regularly until early December when the organization established a clandestine printing press. The local komitehs tried to arrest Mojahedin leaders; most had already gone underground, but many prominent sympathizers and the middle-level organizers were detained and executed after June 1981. The pasdars closed down Mojahedin offices and disrupted their rallies by shooting into crowds and making mass arrests. By early June 1981, the prisons - especially in Tehran, the central cities, and the Caspian towns - contained more than 1,180 Mojaheds...

Furthermore, the hezbollahis, most probably under IRP instructions, began a reign of terror. They shot news stand owners selling Mojahedin publications; beat up suspected sympathizers; bombed homes (including that of the Rezai family); broke into the offices of the Muslim Student Association; disrupted conferences, especially the Congress of Trade Unions; and physically attacked meetings, shouting "Hypocrites are more dangerous than infidels." By 20 June 1981 these hezbollahi attacks, together with the pasdar shootings, had left seventy-one mojaheds dead...

On 27 April, the Mojahedin organized a mass march in central Tehran to protest both the closing down of Bani-Sadr's newspaper and the killing of four demonstrators in Qiyamshahr (Shahi). The march, which attracted over 150,000... waved banners declaring, "Justice for the Qiyamshahr victims"... Clearly, the regime was losing control on the streets. The following day, the Chief Prosecutor banned all future Mojahedin demonstrations...

Democracy Betrayed

In an open letter to Ayatollah Khomeini the Mojahedin reiterated their past complaints; listed those killed by the hezbollahis; pointed out that not a single one of the killers had been brought to justice; and, protesting the ban on street demonstrations, warned that if all peaceful avenues were closed off they would have no choice but to return to "armed struggle." In a letter to the president the Mojahedin exhorted Bani-Sadr, as the "highest state authority", to protect the rights of citizens, especially their right to demonstrate peacefully.¹⁸

Referring to the events of 1979-81, the State Department acknowledges these facts in its December 1984 report:

The Mujahedin have never accepted the Khomeini regime as an adequate Islamic government. When Khomeini took power, the Mujahedin called for continued revolution, but said they would work for change within the legal framework of the new regime. The Mujahedin publications emphasized their unique role as an urban guerrilla force that promised to enter candidates for the highest offices under the new political system. The Mojahedin also entered avidly into the national debate on the structure of the new Islamic regime. The Mujahedin unsuccessfully sought a freely elected constituent assembly to draft a constitution.

The Mujahedin similarly made an attempt at political participation when Mujahedin leader Masud Rajavi ran for the presidency in January 1980. Rajavi was forced to withdraw when Ayatollah Khomeini ruled that only candidates who had supported the constitution in the December referendum - which the Mojahedin had boycotted- were eligible. Rajavi's withdrawal statement emphasized the group's efforts to conform to election regulations and reiterated the Mojahedin's intention to advance its political aims within the new legal system.

In March and May 1980, Rajavi and several other Mujahedin ran in Tehran for the Islamic Assembly (*Majlis*). Moussa Khiabani, Rajavi's deputy, ran in Tabriz, and others ran in the north, where the group was strong. The Mujahedin attempted to demonstrate their broadened appeal by running on their ticket several moderate political figures...

Between the two election rounds, the Mujahedin announced that its members would disarm to prove that they were not initiating the clashes with the fundamentalists that had become endemic during the campaign. The fundamentalists responded by once again banning Mujahedin representatives from the university campuses. The group's allegations that vote tallies had been altered to deny Rajavi and Khiabani victories, were ignored.

Rajavi then began to hint that the Mujahedin were considering active opposition to the Khomeini regime. In the early summer of 1980 the Mujahedin staged several rallies in Tehran drawing up to 150,000 people to hear Rajavi promise to carry on the opposition to fundamentalist domination.

Freedom Fighters or Terrorists?

On June 25 Khomeini responded by a major statement against the Mujahedin, claiming their activities would derail the revolution and bring back "US dominance."¹⁹

For a year after Khomeini's remarks, the Mojahedin continued to work for democracy through peaceful political means. This era ended on June 20, 1981, when heavily armed Guards turned a peaceful demonstration called in Tehran by the Mojahedin into a blood bath. The day's events are recounted by Abrahamian:

On 20 June, vast crowds appeared in many cities, especially in Tehran, Tabriz, Rasht, Amol, Qiyamshahr, Gorgan, Babolsar, Zanzan, Karaj, Arak, Isfahan, Birjand, Ahwaz and Kerman. The Tehran demonstration, drew as many as 500,000 determined participants. Warnings against demonstrations were constantly broadcast over the radio-television network. Government supporters advised the public to stay at home: for example, Nabavi's Organization of the Mojaheds of the Islamic Revolution²⁰ beseeched the youth of Iran not to waste their lives for the sake of "liberalism and capitalism." Prominent clerics declared that demonstrators, irrespective of their age, would be treated as "enemies of God" and as such would be executed on the spot. Hezbollahis were armed and trucked in to block off the major streets. Pasdars were ordered to shoot. Fifty were killed, 200 injured, and 1,000 arrested in the vicinity of Tehran University alone. This surpassed most of the street clashes of the Islamic Revolution. The warden of Evin Prison announced with much fanfare that firing squads had executed twenty-three demonstrators, including a number of teenage girls. The reign of terror had begun.²¹

Resistance Against Tyranny

Thus, only after exhausting all peaceful avenues of political activity—and being denied all the legitimate rights of an ordinary citizen or a legitimate political movement—did the Mojahedin act, on the basis of their inalienable rights as stipulated in the Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, namely "to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression,"²² and took up arms.

The right has also been recognized by the Catholic Church, which in general opposes the use of violence. In a press conference in 1986, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the President of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, introduced a document called "Christian Liberty and Liberation," wherein it is specified: "Armed struggle is the last resort

to end blatant and prolonged oppression which has seriously violated the fundamental rights of individuals and has dangerously damaged the general interests of a country."²³ In his inaugural address, Abraham Lincoln also stressed, "This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing Government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it."²⁴

Even after thousands of executions by the Khomeini regime, Massoud Rajavi still expressed the movement's willingness to abandon armed resistance in a 1984 interview:

The Islam that we profess does not condone bloodshed. We have never sought, nor do we welcome confrontation and violence. To explain, allow me to send a message to Khomeini through you... My message is this: If Khomeini is prepared to hold truly free elections, I will return to my homeland immediately. The Mojahedin will lay down their arms to participate in such elections. We do not fear election results, whatever they may be.

Before the start of armed struggle, we tried to utilize all legal means of political activity, but suppression compelled us to take up arms. If Khomeini had allowed half or even a quarter of the freedoms presently enjoyed in France, we would certainly have achieved a democratic victory.²⁵

In contrast, Hashemi-Rafsanjani had spelled out the regime's policy on the Mojahedin in a much earlier statement as follows:

Divine law defines our sentences for them, which must be carried out: 1- kill them, 2- hang them, 3- cut off their arms and legs, 4- banish them. Had we caught and executed 200 of them just after the revolution, they would not have multiplied so much.²⁶

Under such circumstances, the options for any democratic force are clear: resistance or surrender. Those who, for whatever reason, deny the right to resist and brand it violence or terrorism, wittingly or unwittingly are advocating submission to the mullahs' dictatorship. The right to resort to violence when all peaceful political avenues are blocked is an internationally recognized principle, for a political movement or government; the U.S. State Department has acknowledged this right for many countries and opposition groups.

The Iranian Resistance's position on blind terrorism and indiscriminate violence has always been clear. It strongly condemns

actions that threaten the lives of innocent people. Contrary to the report's allegations, the Mojahedin have never engaged in activities, in Iran or abroad, that endanger the lives of innocent civilians. In the past 14 years, they have issued hundreds of statements denouncing such activities as hijacking, bombing, etc. Abroad, where all can openly engage in political activity, it is the Khomeini regime that has pursued a policy of assassinating the Resistance's activists, primarily from the Mojahedin.

In March 1994, Mohammad Mohaddessin, Chairman of the NCR Foreign Affairs Committee, wrote to Lee Hamilton, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee:

I wish to reiterate what the NCR President, Mr. Massoud Rajavi, has repeatedly stressed: The National Council of Resistance of Iran vehemently condemns terrorism in all forms and under whatever pretexts; all NCR members are bound by this principle. Even in confronting the religious, terrorist dictatorship ruling Iran, which Secretary of State Warren Christopher has accurately described as an "international outlaw," we have respected this principle and remain committed to it. As a result, although many Resistance activists have been assassinated by the regime's abroad, we have never reciprocated in kind, and have referred instead the matter to judicial authorities and the international community.²⁷

Accusing the Iranian Resistance of terrorism is rather like accusing the movement for American independence, or the French Résistance against the Nazi occupation, of terrorism. In all likelihood, the regimes of King George and Adolf Hitler did just that.

Therefore, a review of the Iranian situation between 1979 and 1981, even solely on the basis of sources accepted by the State Department, reveals that the report's authors have blatantly and rather shamefully distorted the facts in claiming that after the Mojahedin lost political power to the mullahs, "they then applied their dedication to armed struggle and the use of propaganda against the new Iranian government, launching a violent and polemical cycle of attack and reprisal."²⁸ The Mojahedin are not dedicated to armed struggle. As stated, if democratic political freedoms existed in Iran as they do in the West, there would have been no need to resort to arms. Unfortunately, in their quest to appease Tehran, the authors appear determined to portray the Khomeini regime as the Mojahedin's victim, going so far as to state: "The swath of terror cut by the MKO

was matched by an equally ruthless response from the Khomeini regime, many of whose current leaders - including Rafsanjani and Khamenei - were injured in these attacks."²⁹ The proceeding is an astonishing example of fabrication within distortion. For the record, Rafsanjani and Khamenei were the targets of assassinations in 1979 and 81 respectively, before the Mojahedin's armed resistance had even begun. The attempts were made by an extremist religious group named *Forqan*, and were in no way related to the Mojahedin. How else to explain this fabrication if not as an attempt to portray Iran's "current leaders - including Rafsanjani and Khamenei" as "victims" of the Mojahedin? Such a portrayal can only seek to legitimize the crimes of these "leaders" against the Mojahedin and the Iranian people.

Attacks at Home

The distorted account continues by accusing the Mojahedin of attacking "civilians"³⁰ inside Iran. Referring to international news services, the authors lay the blame for a series of bombings on the organization. The news services cited, however, had simply quoted the regime, and reported the Mojahedin's denials.³¹ *The Los Angeles Times* wrote: "The news agency (IRNA) blamed the blast on 'agents of international imperialism' - a reference to anti-government underground groups such as the Moujahedeen, Iran's main opposition group. However, in a statement issued in Paris after Tuesday's blast, the Moujahedeen charged that the bomb had been planted by the Iranian government 'in order to blemish the image of the Iranian people's just resistance.'"³²

Some media reports had independently confirmed that the bombings could not be attributed to the Mojahedin. The next day, *The Los Angeles Times*, reprinting the same Associated Press story the State Department cites, wrote: "In Athens on Wednesday, a previously unknown Iranian group calling itself SYS claimed responsibility for the two car bomb attacks. An anonymous caller told the Associated Press that the group is a nationalist organization that aims to make Iran as uncomfortable as possible for the regime of Ayatollah Khomeini."³³ The article adds: The "Moujahedeen maintains that it does not engage in indiscriminate attacks that injure innocent civilians,"³⁴ and notes that the regime had also blamed the U.S. for the explosions. The *Times* then carries the U.S. denial.

So there we have it. Eight years after an event for which the ruling regime blamed both the Mojahedin and U.S., the incident is being used by the U.S. State Department against the Mojahedin.

Over the past 15 years, in literally thousands of news reports, the clerical regime has attributed bombings in public places to the Mojahedin. An independent study by the British Parliamentary Human Rights Group examined the facts, laying bare the regime's policy of blaming the opposition for its own terrorist acts, such as the 1994 explosion at Imam Reza's shrine.³⁵ The U.N. Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities also held the regime accountable.³⁶ Reporting to the U.N. General Assembly, the Special Representative of the Commission on Human Rights ridiculed the regime's allegations against the Mojahedin:

When political crimes are involved, it should be borne in mind that the perpetrators will try to protect themselves by dragging in red herrings and that incriminating others is usually part of the preparation and planning of a political crime. It is best, therefore, to be suspicious of very obvious clues, as is the case of the woman attempting to flee the country through the Zahedan area carrying evidence relating to the murder of Reverend Michaelian.³⁷

The resolution subsequently adopted by the 49th session of the U.N. General Assembly tacitly blamed the Tehran regime for the murder of several Christian leaders, angering the mullahs' foreign ministry.³⁸

In reference to the explosion at Khomeini's tomb in 1992, the State Department report claims that the site is visited daily by thousands of Iranians, although the regime announced that at the time of the explosion, nobody was inside and there were "no casualties."³⁹ In its concern about these "daily visits by thousands of people,"⁴⁰ the Department appears more Catholic than the Pope. It is worth mentioning that the regime has persistently tried to liken Khomeini's tomb to the shrines of the Shi'ite Imams, expending enormous amounts of money and publicity in a bid to justify and whitewash its patriarch's crimes. Comparisons equating the tomb of the most despised despot in the world with the shrines of holy religious figures are deeply resented by the Iranian people. The explosion at Khomeini's tomb by Resistance supporters was an expression of popular hatred of the regime's abuse of Islam and historical figures.

Attacks Abroad

The report claims that Mojahedin sympathizers "occasionally carry out violent attacks against Iranian government targets located in the West."⁴¹ It further states that Mojahedin members stormed the regime's diplomatic missions in a "coordinated wave of attacks" in April of 1992.⁴² The passage borrows heavily from a news article printed at the time, but fails to mention the subsequent legal proceedings that disprove the claims contained therein.

What are the facts? On April 5, 1992, thirteen Iranian fighter jets launched an air strike on a National Liberation Army base along the Iran-Iraq border strip.⁴³ The air raid was a blatant violation of U.N. Security Council resolution 598 for a cease-fire in the Iran-Iraq War. According to information published at the time, the regime's fighter jets passed through the no-fly zone, rather than central Iraq, to launch a surprise attack on resistance forces and inflict a maximum number of casualties. They flew over the base for 50 minutes, dropping 30 tons of bombs. The Saudi daily *Asharq Al-Awsat* wrote that the mullahs' regime had informed the U.S. State Department 24 hours prior to the bombardment.⁴⁴ The State Department never denied this report, nor did it condemn the attack.

The Tehran regime subsequently announced that 1,500 NLA combatants, including the Iranian Resistance's leader, had been killed in the attack.⁴⁵ The report sent shock waves through Iranian communities around the world. Many had friends and relatives volunteering in the NLA. In a matter of hours, the regime's embassies became scenes of protest. In several cases, these escalated into clashes between embassy employees and irate protesters. The incidents were not in any way organized by the People's Mojahedin Organization, and were completely spontaneous. To support its account, the State Department refers to a FBIS translation of a news report broadcast by Voice of Mojahed radio. FBIS had inaccurately translated the report, in which regard the Mojahedin lodged a formal protest at the time.⁴⁶ The actual radio broadcast never indicated the Mojahedin were responsible for the attacks.

Many of the individuals who took part in the protests were arrested by the police and later tried. In many countries, they were either acquitted or received light or suspended sentences. The key point, however, is that none of the courts evaluated these acts of

protest as a premeditated crime organized by the Mojahedin, including the court in New York. The judge in that case granted the accused utmost leniency after determining that there had been no premeditation. A court in Canada examined the case of 21 Iranians who had staged a protest against the Iranian embassy in Ottawa. In his ruling, Judge Pierre Mercier wrote: "There was no evidence the 21 accused belong to the dissident Iranian group Mujahedeen Khalq or as the Crown has alleged any terrorist group."⁴⁷ He added: "The protesters had reason to be angry given the atrocities many endured under the regime of the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini..." The court also criticized the government for prolonging the case for political reasons.⁴⁸ Similar verdicts were issued in other countries. The State Department would have been better advised to respect the rulings of distinguished judges in Ottawa, New York, Paris, Stockholm, Oslo, Bonn, Bern, etc., and stay out of a judicial matter that had been investigated and deliberated for months and years by hundreds of lawyers, judges, prosecutors and juries.

Regrettably, the Department's total insensitivity toward the bombardment of an NLA base - violating U.N. Security Council resolution 598 and resulting in casualties and touching off this series of events - arouses suspicions about the motives behind these allegations. The non-reaction to the air strike emboldened the clerical regime to attack NLA bases on several other occasions.

The report also writes, "In December 1993, the Mojahedin stated they mistook two Turkish officials in Baghdad for Iranian diplomats and shot them dead."⁴⁹ Unfortunately, the authors have again refrained from addressing the facts. It is a matter of fact that in the circumstances ensuing from the Gulf war, the Mojahedin have been the targets of over 30 terrorist attacks in Iraq by the regime's agents. On the day of the incident in question, an automobile belonging to the regime's embassy in Baghdad approached one of the offices of the Mojahedin. The same office had been attacked shortly before by Khomeini's diplomat-terrorists using the same embassy car. The security guard at the office ordered the car to halt, but his warnings went unheeded. The guard reacted by firing at what he thought was a potential car bombing of the office. Unfortunately, one of the passengers was killed, not two as claimed in the report. Investigations later revealed that the automobile had been purchased by the Turkish diplomats a few days before the incident, and still carried the mullahs'

diplomatic license plates. The regime's embassy, of course, had not informed the Turkish diplomats of the car's past involvement in terrorist activities. The Mojahedin contacted the Turkish embassy at the time, to convey their condolences and apologies for the tragic mistake, and to inform the Turks of the details of the incident.

The November trial of two Mojahedin guards who fired on the Turkish diplomats clarified the record. Firstly, it was established that the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs had issued written warnings to the Khomeini regime's embassy on four separate occasions, demanding its diplomatic cars refrain from entering areas adjacent to the Mojahedin's offices. Secondly, the representative of the Turkish embassy in Baghdad testified that the slain diplomat had been advised not to use the car before removing the former license plates and affixing Turkish diplomatic plates. Thirdly, Iraqi guards testified that the car had been ordered to stop twice at the corner leading to the vicinity of the Mojahedin's office in Baghdad, but the driver had disregarded these warnings.

Again, the authors' accusations of Mojahedin terrorism serve to whitewash the mullahs' record. The results of investigations into numerous cases of terrorist activity by the mullahs' embassies in Baghdad, Switzerland, France, Germany and Italy, in addition to the various terrorist conspiracies that have gone to trial in Europe, lead one to reasonably conclude that Khomeini's diplomats are likely to attack the Mojahedin whenever given an opportunity.

After the publication of the report, a copy of a letter addressed to President Clinton by an Iranian supporter of the Resistance was received by the NCR's Representative Office in Washington. The Iranian stresses in his letter that he had met with Christopher Henzel of the Department's Near East Bureau before the report's publication. Mr. Henzel had asked him to provide some documents on the murder of the Turkish diplomat in Baghdad, which he promptly did. The author of the letter to the President has also questioned the impartiality of the report.⁵⁰

This section of the State Department's report is insidiously crafted to lead to the conclusion that there exists a "cycle of violent attacks and reprisals;"⁵¹ in other words, the regime's brutal crimes against the Iranian people and opposition are a consequence of the Mojahedin's military operations. The logic has been extended to foreign countries as well, where the regime's terrorism is also in

response to the Mojahedin's "violent attacks against Iranian government targets located in the West."⁵² The section entitled "Attacks in the West" expounds on the "wave of coordinated attacks" by "members of the Mojahedin" on "Iranian diplomatic missions," and on an "MKO attack on an automobile carrying Iranian Foreign Minister Velayati" in 1992, and "similar confrontations that have occurred in other European countries since 1991."⁵³ Significantly, there is no clarification that these "diplomats" were targeted with nothing more lethal than rotten eggs, presumably to paint a violent and terrorist picture of the Iranian Resistance. After detailing all of this, the authors devote only a few lines to summing up how "The Mojahedin also have been victims of Iranian government terrorism."⁵⁴

The Real Terrorist

"Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends [Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness], it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government...When a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security."⁵⁵ So declared America's founding fathers.

Using terms like "violence" and "terrorism," the authors fault the Iranian people for struggling to overthrow a tyrannical regime to secure their rights. In addition to executing over 100,000 people and imprisoning even more on political charges, the Khomeini regime has carried out in excess of 100 terrorist operations abroad against Iranian dissidents. The attacks have left 300 dead or wounded.⁵⁶ Some of the more noted cases, which occurred during Rafsanjani's presidency and with his expressed consent, include:

- The July 1989 assassination of Abdol Rahman Qassemloo, the leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran, and his companions in Vienna, Austria;⁵⁷
- The April 1990 assassination of Professor Kazem Rajavi, a distinguished human rights advocate and elder brother of the Iranian Resistance's leader, in Geneva, Switzerland;⁵⁸
- The August 1991 assassination of Shapour Bakhtiar, the shah's last Prime Minister, in Paris, France;⁵⁹

- The June 1992 abduction and murder of Ali Akbar Ghorbani, a Mojahedin member, in Istanbul, Turkey; ⁶⁰
- The September 1992 assassination of the leaders of an Iranian Kurdish group, in Berlin, Germany; ⁶¹
- The March 1993 assassination of Mohammad Hossein Naqdi, the NCR representative, in Rome, Italy; ⁶²
- The June 1993 assassination of Mohammad Hassan Arbab, a Mojahedin member, in Karachi, Pakistan.⁶³

The regime's terrorism against foreign nationals is common knowledge, and the State Department is certainly more informed than most. The most celebrated cases include the takeover of the American embassy in Tehran in 1979; the explosion of the U.S. and the French barracks in Beirut;⁶⁴ the taking of Westerners hostage in Lebanon; the decree to murder the British author Salman Rushdie; and the assassination attempts on his Norwegian publisher and Italian and Japanese translators.

The officials of the State Department's Near Eastern Affairs Bureau have often expressed a rationale that says opposition to the mullahs' export of fundamentalism and terrorism does not justify support for the Mojahedin, who also use violence and terrorism. Such logic is puzzling from a Department which talks to, negotiates with, and even supports some of the world's most violent, anti-democratic forces, who have no scruples about using violence or blind terrorism. Topping the list is the regime in Iran, with whom the officials of the Near Eastern Affairs Bureau so fervently seek a dialogue.

Although the statement that the Mojahedin and the Tehran regime simultaneously engage in terrorism may at first glance appear innocuous, but a closer look confirms that the State Department is not at all serious in its opposition to the regime. It is the Department that is always pleading for dialogue - with no preconditions no less, and the regime saying nay. For every 10 statements, letters or "fact sheets" the Near East Bureau has issued on alleged Mojahedin use of "terrorism," there is seldom one against the mullahs and their untamed terrorism. One might well ask, who is the real terrorist in Iran and the Middle East, the Khomeini regime or the Mojahedin?

If the United States genuinely believes that the Tehran regime is an "international outlaw" and the "main source of terrorism," and seeks to confront it, the worst possible approach is hostility toward

that regime's victims. There are few means available in the fight against this outlaw. Pressure, restrictions, and an international arms, oil, and technological embargo are all needed, but not enough to bring about change toward democracy and respect for international norms and covenants. The Iranian people and their resistance are the decisive factor; they will have the final say about change. Though some may not like it, international recognition of the Iranian people's Resistance is the only way to expedite change toward democracy, peace and stability in Iran and the region.

Fortunately, many U.S. senators and congressmen have endorsed the just and righteous resistance of the Mojahedin and National Council of Resistance in declarations or letters to Massoud Rajavi. A House majority wrote in summer 1992: "The NCR, backed by its military wing, the National Liberation Army of Iran, backed by the populace, and in step with strikes and demonstrations over the past few months within Iran, is capable of establishing freedom and democracy in Iran."⁶⁵ In autumn of the same year, 62 senators referred to the congressional statement, adding,

Resolutions by the U.N. Human Rights Subcommittee and the European Parliament deplored the continuing increase in terrorist activities against dissidents abroad, including the failed plot in December 1991 to assassinate Mr. Massoud Rajavi, President of the National Council of Resistance of Iran. On April 5, 1992, the Rafsanjani government, alarmed at the spread of popular protests, crossed international borders... We are convinced that the time has come for the free world to join together against the human rights abuses of the Iranian regime. Recently, a majority of the members of the U.S. House of Representatives, and 1,300 parliamentarians from 19 other countries issued statements condemning the violations of human rights in Iran and supporting the Iranian people's Resistance.⁶⁶

162 members of the House of Representatives wrote a letter to Mr. Massoud Rajavi when his brother, Dr. Kazem Rajavi was assassinated: "We...ask you as the Leader of the Iranian Resistance, to assure your countrymen that we support their peaceful and democratic aims."⁶⁷ In a letter to Mr. Rajavi in June 1984, Senator Edward Kennedy stressed: "... The Iranian people are ready for change. And they are being aided by your efforts to promote goals of peace, democracy and freedom in Iran. There are many in America who support these goals in Iran; and who feel a great sense of

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solidarity with the Iranian people who have suffered so greatly."⁶⁸

If, however, the State Department prefers to deal with the religious, terrorist dictatorship ruling Iran rather than the Iranian people and Resistance, so be it. The Mojahedin and National Council of Resistance will go their own way, relying on the people of Iran and not slackening the pace towards the regime's overthrow and establishment of a democratic, pluralistic government in Iran.

VIII

Mojahedin & Iraq

In the broadest sense, the Iranian people's Resistance consists of three sections. Its social section, under the direction of the Resistance's command headquarters inside Iran, is based underground in Tehran and other Iranian cities. The political arm of the Resistance has offices in Europe and North America. The Resistance's President-elect, Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, the NCR's central office, and its 18 committees are in Paris. There are also offices of the President-elect in Europe and North America. The military arm of the Resistance, the National Liberation Army of Iran, is based along the Iran-Iraq border frontier.

As for the Mojahedin, some of its sections are in Iran and others operate from the border region within the framework of the National Liberation Army. Abroad, the offices and chapters of the Mojahedin were dissolved in 1994 and all members and facilities put at the disposal of the President-elect's offices.¹ Only the organization's press spokesmen are presently abroad.

Iran-Iraq War

When the Iran-Iraq War erupted and Iraqi forces crossed into Iran in 1980, the Mojahedin condemned the occupation of Iranian territory, declared their readiness to defend the homeland and immediately dispatched large numbers of their members and supporters to the southern and western fronts. From the very first weeks of the war, the Revolutionary Guards harassed and mistreated the Mojahedin fighters, arresting many. In a series of articles in November 1980, *Mojahed*, newspaper declared the organization's readiness to continue fighting at the fronts, but warned against further arrests and imprisonment.

A State Department unclassified report sent to Chairman Hamilton in 1984 noted: "Iraq invaded Iran (September 1980)... Mujahedin units went to the front immediately. They were tolerated by the fundamentalists only in the first hectic days of the war, and most were soon expelled."² During the war, a number of Mojahedin supporters were killed and many captured. Years later, when Iraq was preparing to release all Iranian POWs in 1989, these Mojahedin completed the necessary legal processing and returned to the ranks of the organization.

In June 1982, Iraqi forces withdrew from Iranian territory to behind the international borders. From then on, only Khomeini and his regime insisted on perpetuating the war. Coining slogans about "liberating Qods via Karbala," the regime made the most of the conflict to clamp a lid on domestic dissent. After June 1982, the Mojahedin saw no reason for continued hostilities. Characterizing the conflict as an unpatriotic war contrary to the interests of the Iranian people, they demanded an end to the fighting. Since the regime's reluctant acceptance of a cease-fire in 1988, its officials have gradually acknowledged the terrible price paid for prolonging hostilities. Over 1,000 billion dollars in economic damages³, and several million casualties and refugees attest to the validity of the Iranian Resistance and Mojahedin's opposition to the war. Today, their position is supported by all Iranians.

NCR Peace Policy

On January 9, 1983, Tariq Aziz, then Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, met with Massoud Rajavi, the NCR President, at the latter's residence in Auvers-sur-Oise, France. The two issued a joint communiqué on the need for a cease-fire and a solution to end the devastating conflict. The statement reads in part: "Sayed Aziz explained to Mr. Rajavi the position of Iraq in sincere desire to realize peace between Iraq and Iran, on the basis of full independence and territorial integrity, respect of the free will of the people of Iraq and the people of Iran..."⁴

Mr. Rajavi "explained the views held by the just resistance of the Iranian people, about the peaceful settlement of the disputes between the two countries which might be achieved through direct negotiations between the two sides within the framework of the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of both countries regarding the mutual respect

by both countries of the non-intervention policy in the other's internal affairs and their respective neighbourly relations...⁵ He stressed that the Khomeini regime will not accept peace unless in the position of absolute desperation and weakness. Reiterating his condemnation of every sort of harassment of civilians, Mr. Rajavi asked the Iraqi government to take into consideration the immunity and the security of Iranian cities, villages and defenseless civilians. He also requested particular attention, in conformity with the Geneva Convention, to the case of Iranian POWs, especially the military personnel.⁶

On March 13, 1983, the NCR presented a peace plan, unanimously adopted by its members. It states: "The National Council of Resistance hereby declares that it considers the 1975 Treaty (preceded by the Algiers agreement the same year) and the land and river borders stipulated in the aforementioned treaty as the basis of a just and permanent peace between the two countries."⁷ The NCR declaration underscored the need for an "immediate declaration of cease-fire," "withdrawal by both countries of their forces to the border lines as specified in the protocols on Re-demarcation of Land Borders between Iran and Iraq and the protocol on Demarcation of Iran-Iraq Water Borders and the Descriptive Minutes of the Maps and Aerial Photographs," "exchange of all prisoners of war within a maximum period of three months after the declaration of the cease-fire," and "taking the question of determining the damages due to the war to the International Court of Justice in order to determine the damages due to the war and the manner in which Iran's rights should be met."

On March 21, 1983, the Iraqi government formally replied to the NCR peace plan. Published by the Iraqi media on the same date, the statement read: "We hail the peace initiative expressed in the Council's statement and would like to express Iraq's desire to realize peace and to cooperate with the Council or any Iranian to that end, and to establish relations on firm grounds."⁸ The official spokesman, the Minister of Culture and Information, announced: "Iraq is ready to look into these points and has the true and honest desire to reach a just agreement with the National Council or any competent Iranian authority yearning for peace."⁹

A new chapter had been opened in the Iran-Iraq war. The National Council of Resistance had signed a peace accord with Iraq, and Khomeini's belligerence had been dealt a strategic blow. Subsequently, the Council and Mojahedin embarked on an extensive peace

campaign, from 1983 to 1986, in and out of Iran. In its April 1, 1984, declaration, unanimously approved, the NCR stressed: "The meeting between NCR President Rajavi and the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, the proposal of a peace plan and efforts to have it adopted by international bodies and organizations, the campaign focusing on the need for peace in Iran, the calls for soldiers to disobey Khomeini's belligerent agents and desert the war fronts to join the Resistance's forces, and the calls for a halt in the bombings of cities and villages - are not only approved, but admired. Consistent with its program and that of the future provisional government, the National Council of Resistance, as the sole democratic alternative, will do its utmost to pursue its plan on the basis of safeguarding the Iranian people's interests and welfare. The NCR considers the policy of vigorous promotion of peace as tantamount to patriotism and humanitarianism." Resistance supporters demonstrated and rallied in various Iranian cities. The regime's war mobilization began to wind down, as more and more people refused to go to the fronts.

Internationally, the Iranian Resistance's tremendous effort against Khomeini's bellicosity bore fruit. On the third anniversary of the joint communiqué and NCR peace plan, more than 5,000 distinguished political figures; 221 parties, unions, syndicates, associations and assemblies from 57 countries the world over signed a universal declaration, condemning the "warlike policies," of the "medieval" Khomeini regime and expressing support for

The peace plan of 13 March 1983 that was presented by Mr. Massoud Rajavi, leader of Iranian Resistance, ...broadly welcomed by the Iranian people and also has so far drawn extensive international support. It has received the backing of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (Resolution No. 849 dated 30 September 1985), the European Parliament (Document B2-527/85 dated 11 June 1985) and over 3,000 political parties, organizations and personalities.¹⁰

Some 60% of the signatories to this universal declaration were parliamentarians, representing over 500 million people throughout the world. Labor unions endorsing the Peace declaration expressed the abhorrence of millions of workers toward Khomeini who was continuing the war "in order to suppress the rising nationwide Resistance of the Iranian people."¹¹ At least 60 ministers and deputy ministers; 11 leaders, presidents and vice-presidents of the Christian

Democrat, Liberal and Socialist international; scores of parliament speakers and hundreds of parliamentary group leaders; as well as 210 members of the European Parliament and 48 members of the Council of Europe endorsed the statement. A list of the signatories was published in 1986 by the National Council of Resistance of Iran.¹²

Mullahs React

The Iranian Resistance's anti-war campaign inside Iran and the giant strides it took internationally, made life miserable for Khomeini. No longer could his regime tolerate the presence of the Resistance's leader in France. Using a combination of hostages, blackmail and concessions, the regime did its utmost to curb Mr. Rajavi's activities in France.

In December 1984, a Kuwaiti airliner was hijacked by the Khomeini regime's operatives, leading to the death of two passengers. The French daily *Le Monde*, wrote:

In the view of [the regime's prime minister] Mr. Moussavi, the extradition of the hijackers will not be considered so long as the leader of the terrorists... is not extradited. Without mentioning any names, the prime minister is referring to Mr. Massoud Rajavi, the Mujahedin leader, who is a political refugee in France.¹³

In July 1985, Tehran radio reported that "in a gathering of the ambassadors and chargé d'affaires of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Europe and the U.S.," attended by the foreign minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, the regime's prime minister had declared: "Today, extensive support is accorded to grouplets that oppose the Islamic Republic of Iran. Support has been expressed by representatives of the European and British parliaments as well as by the Socialists in France."¹⁴ In August the same year, Tehran radio quoted Moussavi as saying: "Internationally, the dependent grouplets create problems for us everyday... Take note that the [Mojahedin], who today enjoy the sanctuary given them by U.S. senators, French Socialists and the parliamentarians of Britain's sinister colonialism, are issuing these statements against us."¹⁵ A few weeks prior, Tehran radio quoted Rafsanjani as telling the French chargé d'affaires: "Saying 'we accept political refugees' is only an excuse... These [Mojahedin] are criminals, not political refugees."¹⁶ According to the minutes of confidential

negotiations between Rafsanjani and the French chargé d'affaires on the afternoon of March 30, 1985, published a year later in *Mojahed*, the French official informed Rafsanjani that French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas sought "balance and improvement in the relations between Tehran and France... Individuals such as Rajavi have had no contact with the Government of France, but with political parties in France, Italy, Britain and elsewhere because the Mojahedin consider themselves socialists."¹⁷

In 1985, the issue of the French hostages in Lebanon heated up, as did other terrorist threats by the Khomeini regime. This, coupled with the contacts between the regime and French government, coinciding with the Irangate affair in the U.S., resulted in new restrictions on the activities of Massoud Rajavi in Paris.

Departure to Iraq

On May 1, 1985, the French chargé d'affaires met with Ali Khamenei, then the regime's president. The Frenchman offered a report on "the latest developments in normalizing Franco-Iranian relations in view of the Islamic Republic's conditions, including giving no sanctuary to terrorists and counterrevolutionaries."¹⁸ On May 21, his Iranian counterpart in Paris met with Roland Dumas to discuss "existing differences and the presence of counterrevolutionaries in France."¹⁹ When the new French Government took office in early 1986, there were more talks and deals with the regime to secure the release of the French hostages. Thereafter, began a series of comings and goings by representatives of Tehran and Paris.

Following a series of assassinations in Paris, the Iranian chargé d'affaires declared on February 14, 1986:

We have consistently informed French officials of the presence of a number of fugitive terrorists on French soil... The French officials should take note of this, and eliminate this nest of corruption in order to ensure internal security.²⁰

A month prior, the French weekly *VSD* had run an article entitled: "Tehran ups its demands as the horrifying price for the French hostages in Lebanon: Activities of exiles will be restricted and some will even be sacrificed. Example: Massoud Rajavi, the leader of the People's Mojahedin, until now protected by two squadrons of gendarmes at his headquarters in Auvers-sur-Oise. There is a risk

that he will be one of the first to be left without any protection."²¹

On the evening of April 2, a bomb exploded a few hundred meters from Mr. Rajavi's residence. The next morning, Agence France Presse wrote: "The mayor of Auvers reiterated that unless Mr. Rajavi departs, calm will not return to Auvers-sur-Oise."²² On April 16, the French daily *La Gazette* quoted "judicial sources" as saying one of three bombers "had been a political activist of the extreme right."²³ The investigative sources said "the three" whose identity had not been revealed "wanted to protest the apparently heavy traffic on the bridge."²⁴

On April 15, through its official organ *Ettela'at*, the Khomeini regime addressed the Government of France:

If the French want to reconsider their relations with Iran, they must shut down the bases of the [Mojahedin] in France. Why should the French hold themselves captive to the Americans? Expel the [Mojahedin] from your country; the U.S. knows where to take them. You can hold on to Bakhtiar and Bani-Sadr. This is the only way that our people will think of France as a friendly country.²⁵

On April 20, *The New York Times* wrote: "French officials have said that they may limit the activities of some dissidents residing in France, including Massoud Rajavi, the leader of the People's Mojahedin."²⁶

Meanwhile, a politically bankrupt Marxist group, called the "Minority," began causing trouble in a coordinated fashion in front of the Resistance leader's residence. The free rein given to these trouble-makers and to the regime's operatives, especially in light of the explosion that had already taken place, indicated the trend of future events; further limitations on Mr. Rajavi's activities were to follow.²⁷ Residents of Auvers issued a joint statement, complaining about the "repeated rampages" by the Minority group "which has caused chaos in our township and endangered our security." Other countries, fearing abductions of their citizens, were unreceptive to the idea of providing a new location for the offices and residence of Mr. Rajavi.²⁸

The National Council of Resistance held a formal session on May 23, 1986, deciding to frustrate the regime's conspiracies and pressures. Voting unanimously to send the NCR President to the Iran-Iraq border region, the move was also undertaken to enable Mr. Rajavi to reorganize the military forces of the Iranian Resistance. On June 7,

Rajavi left France for the Iran-Iraq frontier, along with 1,000 Mojahedin members.²⁹

Meeting Iraqi President

At the airport in Baghdad, Mr. Taha Yassin Ramazan, the First Deputy Prime Minister, representing the Iraqi president, headed a delegation of senior Iraqi officials, including a number from the Revolution's Command Council, the Speaker of the Parliament, and the Foreign, Interior, Culture and Information, Higher Education, Defense and Commerce ministers, to welcome the Iranian Resistance's leader.³⁰ Subsequently, Mr. Rajavi left directly from the airport to worship at the holy Shi'ite shrines in Najaf and Karbala. On June 15, Mr. Rajavi met with President Saddam Hussein. The next day, the Iraqi media reported the meeting as their top news story. They quoted the Iraqi President as saying that Iraq's relations with the Iranian Resistance were based on "peace, mutual respect of sovereignty, respect for the right of the two peoples to choose their political and ideological ways."³¹ The Iraqi President stressed that "the leadership in Iraq respects the Iranian Resistance, its ideological and political independence, and its freedom to work to achieve its objectives."³² The Iraqi President called Mr. Rajavi "an honourable guest and a crusader of peace and good-neighbourliness between the two neighbouring countries."³³

While expressing his gratitude for "the affection he had met in Iraq," Mr. Rajavi expressed appreciation "for the Iraqi government's acceptance of the Iranian Resistance's peace plan as an acceptable basis for the start of peace negotiations."³⁴ He added that he

did not conceal the fact that several years ago the Mojahedin entered into battle against Iraqi forces, but ever since Iraq proved to Iranians and the world her readiness for peace, all weapons should have been aimed at Khomeini's regime, the only party that has wanted the war to continue. This is especially so now that the Iranian people desire the attainment of peace and world public opinion has testified to this just demand of the nations.³⁵

In the meeting, Mr. Rajavi also raised the subject of Iranian prisoners of war and asked for the "special personal care and attention of the Iraqi President."³⁶ Saddam Hussein accepted this request and issued the necessary orders.

National Liberation Army

In 1986, the military forces of the Mojahedin and Iranian Resistance had expanded significantly, requiring a reorganization. By then, the Iranian people had realized the Khomeini regime's belligerence, and public discontent over the war had spread throughout the country. The citizenry enthusiastically welcomed the Resistance's campaign for peace. The Mojahedin and Mr. Rajavi's move to the Iranian frontier generated a new morale and a sense of hope among the people of Iran. On the one hand, the Resistance and its leadership were more accessible than in Paris, thousands of kilometers away. On the other, for the first time, Iranians saw the prospect for an end to the Iran-Iraq War and the establishment of peace looming. Thousands of young Iranians, men and women, rushed to join the Resistance on the border.

In June 1987, the formation of the National Liberation Army of Iran along the Iran-Iraq frontier was officially announced. NLA units had begun operations against the *Pasdaran* several months prior.

There is no credibility to the Department's contention that the presence of the Iranian Resistance's military arm in the border region runs counter to the interests of the Iranian people and consequently, has "discredited them among the Iranian polity."³⁷ Massoud Rajavi's departure for the Iran-Iraq border strip and formation of the NLA brought many advances for the Iranian Resistance. It enabled the Resistance to expose Khomeini's efforts depicting Iraq and the United States as the Iranian people's main enemy and discredit the regime's propaganda campaign aimed at blaming them for the war. Following the withdrawal of Iraq from Iranian territory and its readiness to negotiate a peaceful settlement, only Khomeini sought to prolong the war. An internal analysis of the conflict by the regime stressed that "peace, in those circumstances, was very dangerous and a victorious peace was not an option." Khomeini considered the war as a strategic weapon in his battle to hang onto power. He had repeatedly vowed to fight on as long as one building was left standing in Iran.

Essentially at the initiative of the U.S. and the United Nations Security Council's other permanent members, the body adopted a number of resolutions, including Resolution 598 in July 1987, denouncing the mullahs' belligerence and calling for an immediate cease-fire. The international consensus on the need to end the

devastating conflict is the best testament to the legitimacy of the positions taken by the Mojahedin and Iranian Resistance. Anyone remotely familiar with the U.S.'s position on the hostilities cannot but feel revulsion at the hypocrisy of the State Department's allegations today against the Mojahedin.

The Iran-Iraq War left two million casualties, three million refugees, 1,000 billion dollars in damages and destroyed 50 cities and 3,000 villages on the Iranian side alone. On the basis of an opinion poll conducted by the Iranian Resistance inside the country, 83% of Iranians opposed the war, 7% supported the conflict and the remaining 10% were neutral. Millions of Iranians endured the daily cost of the war's perpetuation with the flesh and blood of their children, and with their own homelessness, destitution and misery. Thus, the Iranian Resistance had to make peace a strategic slogan, despite the risks or adverse publicity. The Resistance was, is and will remain proud of its peace policy. Are the policy planners of the Near Eastern Bureau suggesting that the Iranian Resistance should have remained silent about Khomeini's belligerence, allowed him to dump all the nation's human and material resources into the furnace of the war? Should we have stood aside as he spread the flames of this senseless conflict throughout the region with his exported fundamentalism and Islamic caliphate? Not to mention that amid Khomeini's calls for the "liberation of Qods via Karbala," the Irangate masterminds were only adding to the regime's bellicosity by providing it with weapons.

The Kuwaiti Crisis

The ultimate test of the Mojahedin and NLA's independence came in 1990, with the Kuwait Crisis. With the whole world watching, the Iranian Resistance weathered the political storm, survived the biggest military bombardment the world has ever known, and thrust back a massive onslaught by the Khomeini regime. The circumstances would have meant the end of anything less than a truly independent, nationalist movement.

The mullahs welcomed war between their two arch enemies, Iraq and the United States. In private, they concluded that the Gulf War would be very beneficial to them. Thus, in a dirty double game, they tried to push the players toward hostilities. On the one hand, as admitted later by senior Iraqi officials, Rafsanjani and other Iranian authorities repeatedly advised their Iraqi counterparts in 1991 not

to evacuate Kuwait, assuring them of Iranian backing in the event of war against the United States.³⁸ On the other hand, the mullahs told the allied forces that Iran was on their side, and condemned the occupation of Kuwait. Meanwhile, confident of the outcome, they prepared to eliminate the Iranian Resistance on the Iran-Iraq frontier and establish a religious dictatorship in that country modeled after their own. Immediately after the end of the war, the mullahs dispatched tens of thousands of revolutionary guards into Iraq.

The Mojahedin and the Iranian Resistance had repeatedly stated that their presence in the border region was only to fight the religious, terrorist dictatorship ruling Iran. Immediately after the occupation of Kuwait and the Iraqi peace initiative to Tehran, the Mojahedin halted their radio and television broadcasts and stopped their publications. They did not want to be distracted from their main concern. Aware that the crisis would be to the detriment of the Iranian people and Resistance, the Mojahedin believed that the crisis would inevitably overshadow the problem posed by the Khomeini regime and its crimes. This soon proved to be the case, as Tehran rapidly gained concessions from both Iraq and the allied forces. Added to these were the billions of dollars in added revenues for the regime due to the rise in oil prices in 1990, enabling it to put a temporary lid on many of its economic crises.

The War of Cities

The authors of the report claim that the "National Liberation Army became a tool in Iraq's conflict with Iran."³⁹ In a feeble attempt to prove the point, the report goes on to say: "In 1984 and 1987, for example, the Iraqi government cast cease-fire proposals as a response to the requests of the 'peace-loving' Rajavi"⁴⁰ in a plan to "undercut the Iranian government's internal support."

The initial claim is without basis, which explains why the authors' attempt to support it is so preposterous. Actually, after the joint communiqué for peace was issued in 1983, Mr. Rajavi condemned the attacks by whichever side whenever the "war of cities" or other assaults on population centers flared up, inflicting damages on innocent civilians. In formal, public letters, all of which have been published, he called on the government of Iraq to halt such attacks, which he stressed,

are not only illegitimate and unnecessary, but give Khomeini the opportunity

to portray his wamongering policies as legitimate, serving to prolong his rule, and to delay the trend toward a just peace, which is impossible until this regime falls. These attacks seriously undermine our extensive movement inside Iran and worldwide for a just peace.⁴¹

On three occasions prior to the end of the war, the Iraqi Government reacted affirmatively, although only to a limited degree and with certain conditions, to these appeals.⁴² The first time, on February 14, 1984, Iraq accepted to "temporarily halt the bombing of Iranian cities for one week... due to Mr. Rajavi's peaceful gesture and as a goodwill initiative... on the condition that the Khomeini regime refrain from inflicting damages on (Iraqi) cities, villages and civilian targets."⁴³ The second time, the government of Iraq accepted Mr. Rajavi's request on the eve of *Id-al Fitr*, marking the end of the holy month of Ramadan. On both occasions, Mr. Rajavi was still residing in Paris. The third and last time, in February 1987, Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council decided to "accept Mr. Massoud Rajavi's request to temporarily halt the bombing of the cities, contingent upon the Iranian regime's reciprocal action."⁴⁴ The day before, the NCR President had appealed for the bombing halt in a meeting with the Iraqi President. The decision was referred to Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council. The next day, Iraqi media simultaneously reported the meeting and the Iraqi leadership's decision to stop the bombings.

The war of the cities had become intolerable for the Iranian public. Mr. Rajavi's intervention, resulting in a temporary halt in the attacks by Iraq, saved thousands of Iranian lives and prompted expressions of gratitude toward the Iranian Resistance's leader. Regrettably, the authors' hostility toward the Mojahedin and people of Iran is such that they have distorted an initiative that saved many innocent lives. In good conscience, such a humanitarian act, even by one's opponent or enemy, deserves respect. If, however, that is too much to ask, at the very least it should not be belittled.

Contrary to the authors' claims, the National Liberation Army of Iran has never fought in any front alongside the Iraqi army. Those who suggest otherwise overlook the obvious: After June 1982, Tehran's military operations from Faw to Suleimaniya were exclusively offensive, while Iraq was at all times on the defensive. The NLA, meanwhile, sought to destroy the regime's machinery of war and

suppression by attacking the Guards Corps' bases and centers on Iranian territory. In June 1988, the NLA conquered the town of Mehran. Some 40 journalists were on hand to report the victory.⁴⁵ Khomeini, presumably having guessed the NLA's next target, subsequently "drank the chalice of the poison of the cease-fire," to the disbelief of just about everyone.

Many foreign journalists and observers of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations, who have on a number of occasions visited the NLA bases, can attest to the Resistance's freedom of action. This is also evident in the Iranian Resistance's statements and positions. During the Iran-Iraq war, for example, when missiles were being fired, civilian targets attacked, or chemical weapons used, Massoud Rajavi repeatedly condemned the tactics "by whichever side, Iran or Iraq."⁴⁶ These facts notwithstanding, The regime itself has also acknowledged the Mojahedin and NLA's independence vis-a-vis Iraq. Two years after the Persian Gulf War, the state-controlled *Kayhan Havai* wrote:

In private circles, prominent Iraqis say that Baghdad does not have a free hand with the Mojahedin. Certainly, controlling an armed group that has impressive coordination and connections outside Iraqi territory does not seem an easy task for this country.⁴⁷

We conclude this matter with a remark by the President of Iraq in July 1988. Speaking in the presence of a number of senior Iraqi ministers and officials, he replied to claims by Khamenei, then the regime's president. Describing the Mojahedin as the most important threat to the regime, he said: "The Mojahedin are combatants, whom we respect." He further stressed that the Mojahedin have "complete independence in their decisions," adding,

To clarify the historical record, I declare that we once asked the Mojahedin a question about their homeland, Iran. Believing that their response might reveal some information about their country and possibly result in harm to the Iranian people, they flatly rejected our request. Of course we respect their position as an independent political force.⁴⁸

Weapons

The NLA's weaponry is generally war booty obtained during different operations against the *Pasdaran*. For example, during the

"Forty Stars" operation in June 1988, in which the NLA captured the Iranian city of Mehran, the army seized \$2bn. in weapons, including 200-plus tanks, personnel carriers and heavy field guns; thousands of vehicles and medium caliber weapons; thousands of tons of ammunition; and countless small caliber weapons.⁴⁹ The NLA has also purchased some of the weapons it needs.⁵⁰ Documents on purchases of \$150 million worth of weaponry, vehicles and equipment from Western countries are available and can be published. The necessary funds are entirely a product of the Iranian people's unsparing support and assistance, both in and out of Iran, and of the revenues from the Resistance's business ventures at home and abroad. Receipts for these funds are available, and have been published over the years in the Mojahedin's publications.

In short, the Mojahedin seek only the unique opportunity which Iraq's geography provides: territory with access to their homeland, on which they can train and prepare their forces to support the Iranian people's uprising and bring about the overthrow of the most sinister dictatorship in contemporary history.⁵¹ The Iranian Resistance takes great pride in this undertaking, which only enhances its prestige among the people of Iran. Without an organized military force, the Resistance *per se* would not have carried much weight and would have had to make due with sloganeering. And where should, the report's authors suggest, the thousands of male and female combatants sought by the mullahs' regime, go?

Today, nearly four years after the Persian Gulf War, the regime persists in its efforts to export terrorism and fundamentalism and to impede the Middle East peace process. Without doubt, Khomeini's heirs are the principal threat to peace and stability in the region. Taking advantage of the special regional and international circumstances in the aftermath of the Gulf crisis, the mullahs are trying to use the Mojahedin's presence in Iraq to generate animosity against them.⁵² There is, however, increasing regional and international understanding of the Iranian Resistance's presence in the Iran-Iraq border region.

Let us also recall that prior to and after the Mojahedin move to Iraq, the United States and Europe both enjoyed excellent relations with Iraq. Many American senators and senior State Department officials traveled back and forth to that country, and Iraqi officials were received by the U.S. President.

Blatant Contradiction

Some of the State Department's baseless allegations about the Mojahedin's relations with Iraq were dealt with in the first chapter. Here, let us simply add that the Department's far-fetched allegation of Mojahedin "diplomatic activity" on behalf of the Iraqis is inherently flawed and contradicts previous allegations. Having strained so hard to depict the Mojahedin and NCR as an insignificant force with no support, inside or outside of Iran, the authors undercut their own argument. Mojahedin dependence on Iraq is among the report's basic precepts. What benefit can the Iraqis gain from the diplomatic activity of a group "shunned by most Iranians"?⁵³ How is it that suddenly Iraq needs, on the international level, the political support and, in the north and south of Iraq, the military backing of so insignificant a force? Charges of Iraqi use of the Mojahedin in its conflict with Tehran are the strangest of all.⁵⁴ According to the State Department, the Mojahedin are not a serious contender and are viewed by Iranians as worse than Khomeini. Could someone please explain, in that case, to what benefit they could be used by the Iraqis in their conflict with Tehran?

It is, to say the least, something of an oxymoron for the State Department of the sole superpower in the world to issue a 41-page report on a group it describes as shunned by most Iranians and isolated internationally, while at the same time attributing such a role to that group. The facts are clear, and the authors know best that their allegations are libelous. Their quarrel with the Mojahedin is about something else entirely – the Mojahedin's political independence and refusal to compromise on principles of democracy and Iranian independence. It goes without saying that Iranian dependence on Iraq (a country approximately one fourth of Iran in size and population) is not taken seriously by any politician for various "geopolitical reasons such as the international and strategic balance of power, and other factors such as population, historical heritage, etc."⁵⁵

Iraqi Kurds

The State Department report accuses the Mojahedin of suppressing Iraqi Kurds.⁵⁶ In chapter I we have referred to the contradiction inherent to this claim, as well. To clear the air, however,

let it be said that this example confirms that the proponents of appeasement will distort even the most evident truth if politically expedient.

In the same way that they respect the autonomy of Iranian Kurds within Iran's territorial integrity, the Mojahedin support recognition of the rights of Kurds in Iraq. Massoud Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iraq has maintained close relations with the Khomeini regime since the first days of its rule. Barzani's group had bases inside Iran, but it did not collaborate with the Khomeini regime against the Mojahedin and never challenged them. Despite encounters in the border region, both in Iran and in Iraq, Barzani's forces and the Mojahedin combatants never opened fire on one another and have maintained and continue to maintain an amicable relationship.

Jalal Talebani, another Kurdish leader and head of the Patriotic Union of Iraqi Kurdistan (PUK), unfortunately chose a different approach. He first wrote to Massoud Rajavi in early 1984, expressing a desire for good relations with the Mojahedin:

Greetings to my honorable and dear brother, Massoud Rajavi.
On behalf of the Patriotic Union of Iraqi Kurdistan (PUK) politburo, I would like to express my greetings and very best wishes to you and other Mojahedin brothers in your just struggle against the reactionary gang of zealots who rule Iran... We are therefore always ready to strengthen our good relationship with the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI).⁵⁷

A couple of years later, however, Talebani formed an alliance with the mullahs' regime. In a letter to Hossein Ali Montazeri, then the designated successor to Khomeini, Talebani declared his sincere devotion and his group's readiness to cooperate with Tehran. In an effort to curry favor, Talebani's group carried out a number of attacks on the Mojahedin, who had bases in the Kurdish areas of Iraq as well as other regions. In July 1986, armed members of this group ambushed four Mojahedin members on the Kirkuk-Suleimaniya road, killing them in a hail of bullets. Mrs. Fatemeh Za'erian, five of whose immediate relatives were executed by the Khomeini regime, was among the victims. Her young child was badly wounded. Three months later, in October 1986, the PUK attacked Resistance combatants in Posht Asham village as they were crossing the border into Iran.⁵⁸ Ten were killed.⁵⁹ In other attacks in subsequent years, the same group killed or wounded more members of the Mojahedin

and National Liberation Army. Despite their ability to respond militarily, the Mojahedin never reciprocated.

Crisis Aftermath

During the Persian Gulf War, the Mojahedin and NLA evacuated all of their bases in the Kurdish areas in the north and the regions in the south of Iraq, concentrating their forces in the central region of the Iran-Iraq border. The move reduced the possibility of being caught up in the hostilities and precluded attacks from Khomeini's regime in different regions. Moreover, the Resistance sought to refrain from getting embroiled in internal Iraqi affairs.⁶⁰ The decision cost the Iranian Resistance millions of dollars in material damages; all of the installations it had constructed in those areas were abandoned, and the bases in the Kurdish region were later ravaged.

In the post-war era, the mullahs' regime took advantage of the circumstances to try to kill two birds with one stone – establish an Islamic Republic in Iraq and destroy the Iranian Resistance. In a full-scale attack on the NLA's bases in March 1991, seven Guards Corps divisions and brigades crossed the international borders and penetrated into Iraqi territory, attacking different NLA bases. During the bombardment, the NLA had scattered its forces, and could not, therefore, deploy all its combat capability on the battlefield. In 15 days of heavy fighting, the NLA crushed the Guards Corps' repeated offensives.

In these assaults, in addition to its own forces, the regime tried to make maximum use of its Iraqi Kurdish agents. According to a document captured from the Guards Corps, "all subordinate garrisons" were ordered to "accommodate as needed the passage" of the regime's Kurdish allies "subordinate to the Guards Corps' Ramezan garrison," where anti-Mojahedin operations are planned and directed. The Mojahedin made this document public at the time.⁶¹ Another document, dated March 7, 1991, is a congratulatory message from Brigadier Mohammad Ali Ja'fari, Commander of the 15th Ramezan Corps, on the "Islamic Revolution of the Muslim people of Iraq."⁶² In another document, on March 26, "the command of the Bassij resistance forces" ordered the "regional Bassij commanders nationwide" to "dispatch volunteer Iraqi forces to Qods garrison," set up by the Guards Corps.⁶³ The Revolutionary Guards captured by the Mojahedin in the course of these battles and the multitude of

documents seized were made available to international authorities and the news media. They provide indisputable proof that the mullahs were intent on destroying the Mojahedin at all costs.

As far as the Iraqi Kurdish groups were concerned, in early March, the Mojahedin sent a number of messages through the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran - Revolutionary Leadership, to the leaders of the Iraqi Kurds, explaining the regime's designs on the Iranian Resistance. The Mojahedin stressed that they did not seek to engage the Iraqi Kurds unless attacked.⁶⁴ They reiterated that the Resistance's one and only aim is to topple the mullahs' regime, which explained their presence in the central region of the Iran-Iraq border, the Iranian Resistance's only passage into Iran. They also specified that they had evacuated all their bases in other regions, including Iraqi Kurdistan. Owing to the geographical distance, at no time and at no place did the Mojahedin come into contact with Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iraq. But on March 11, 1991, Talebani's forces attacked a group of Mojahedin near the city of Tuz, as they were evacuating one of their bases. They killed commander Reza Karamali and wounded a number of his companions. Talebani's group also ambushed two NLA combatants near one of the Mojahedin's bases. After torturing and sexually assaulting their victims, the group murdered them and mutilated their bodies.⁶⁵ On March 25, during large-scale battles between the NLA and the regime, a platoon of 19 combatants, riding in four armored vehicles, lost radio contact with the command center. The group lost its way in the unfamiliar terrain, and mistakenly advanced several kilometers toward the city of Kelar, where they were captured by members of the Talebani group and the Kurdish Hezbollah (a proxy group of the Iranian regime). Although the Mojahedin and NLA immediately acknowledged the error and issued statements to that effect on the same day,⁶⁶ the Talebani group and other pro-regime Kurds executed 17 of them. The other two, Hassan Zolfaqari and Beshar Shabibi, were handed over to the mullahs' Guards Corps in Qasr-e Shirin (inside Iran). An official of the Talebani group, Sadeq Husseini, formally announced the news of their extradition.⁶⁷ The Mojahedin referred the case to the International Committee of the Red Cross, requesting ICRC intervention to rescue the two men. Both were later executed by the Khomeini regime.⁶⁸

The Khomeini regime is the source of all the accusations of

Mojahedin involvement in murders of Kurds in Iraq. When the internal turmoil in Iraq was at its peak, the regime's newspapers fabricated ridiculous reports of Mojahedin massacres. They claimed: "A Mojahedin woman drove a tank over the bodies of the dead and wounded,"⁶⁹ "Mojahedin forces actively collaborated with the Iraqi Ba'athist army in the suppression of the Iraqi people's uprising and committed many crimes. For this reason, the people of Suleimaniya executed six Mojahedin women,"⁷⁰ and "In Kifri, Kelar, ... the Mojahedin fought face to face with ordinary people. Popular forces killed many and arrested a number of them, including several women."⁷¹

The charges of Mojahedin involvement in the suppression of Iraqi Kurds are completely unfounded, and only serve the interests of the mullahs ruling Iran. In this context, allegations by individual Iraqi Kurds were apparently designed to serve the same ends, or to reciprocate the regime's assistance.⁷² When the unrest in Iraq ended, the Mojahedin endeavored to come to a mutual understanding with Iraq's Kurds, and thereby avoid any clashes. As Iraqi Kurds can certainly attest, senior NCR officials met with officials of the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iraq in Iraq (including Iraqi Kurdistan), Europe and the United States, and enjoy amicable relations. The Department of State's adamant re-hashing of the past, three years after the event, makes one wonder. If it is so concerned about the people of Iraqi Kurdistan, why was no action taken to stop Tehran's shelling and bombardment of Kurdish areas in Iraq that killed and wounded many innocent people and left thousands more homeless throughout 1992-1994?

Means to End Tyranny

Beyond what has been said, the unreasonable bickering by the report's authors, or those who advise them, about the Mojahedin's presence in Iraq bears an important political message. These policymakers have used every opportunity to convey the message that they are not interested in overthrowing the mullahs. Obviously, the State Department is free to express its views. The question is whether the Department is suggesting that the Mojahedin forgo their struggle against the Khomeini regime, and give up on a democratic and modern government, committed to the U. N. Charter and political and economic cooperation with the international community.

The Resistance's military arm is the most serious guarantee for the overthrow of the clerical dictatorship. The NLA will carry out its duty at the suitable time, in step with the Iranian people's movement inside Iran. Moreover, many Iran experts note that the Resistance movement and NLA have been a key factor in impeding the mullahs' expansionism, terrorism and fundamentalism. The overwhelming majority of the Iranian people are enraged at 15 years of clampdown, economic deprivation, corruption and rampant plundering. They insist on the mullahs' overthrow.⁷³ Are the policymakers at the Near East Bureau suggesting that the Mojahedin stop resisting? They should realize that leaders and members of those Iranian groups seeking to negotiate and compromise with the mullahs' regime were murdered at the negotiating table.⁷⁴

Politics aside, if resistance is recognized as the natural right of a people, then the right to maintain an organized military arm, essential to any serious movement, must also be recognized. Such an army is not an abstraction, and must be based somewhere it can function. Under the circumstances, can the State Department suggest an alternative site, other than the Iran-Iraq frontier, for the Resistance's military arm?

Here, we must reiterate that the Iranian Resistance and Mojahedin, which embody the Iranian people's hope for democracy and independence, do not seek the advice of Irangate diehards in the State Department on what to do or what not to do, on how or where to resist. The Iranian Resistance represents the Iranian people's aspirations, and is continuing the path laid out by the nationalist movement of Dr. Mossadeq. In our independent pursuit of democratic principles, we seek the understanding and friendship of all nations and governments accepting the United Nations Charter, Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the legitimate right of the Iranian people's Resistance for freedom and independence. We stress that the religious, terrorist dictatorship ruling Iran is our only enemy, but we beg friendship from no one. We simply advise those who set the stage for the overthrow of Dr. Mossadeq's legal and democratic government in 1953, and who are now blindly and hysterically hostile to the Iranian people's just Resistance, not to arouse the enmity of the Iranian people again.

IX

Mojahedin Structure

The State Department's report examines the structure and inner workings of the National Council of Resistance and the Mojahedin. The authors have intentionally interpreted these two very different entities as one and the same, to reach foregone conclusions.¹

The National Council of Resistance is a coalition of organizations, groups and personalities with different ideologies and outlooks who have voluntarily joined forces for a limited period of time (no longer than six months after the overthrow of the Khomeini regime) on the basis of a specific program to which they are all committed. Their relationships are based on pluralistic democracy.

The Mojahedin, on the other hand, is a political organization with a specific ideology and strategy, and a defined political and organizational methodology. People join it voluntarily on the basis of their ideals and objectives. It is, therefore, very different from a broad political coalition.

On behalf of the Mojahedin, Massoud Rajavi proposed the formation of such a coalition, and founded the National Council of Resistance of Iran. In contrast to the dictatorships of the shah and Khomeini, all Mojahedin members believe that a single political organization or party cannot establish democracy in Iran; only with the participation of all advocates of democracy, independence and national sovereignty is such a task possible.

Ideology

The Mojahedin's ideology is based on a democratic, progressive interpretation of Islam, according to which elections and public suffrage are the sole indicators of political legitimacy.² As

unambiguously explained in the Mojahedin's statements and publications,³ propagating the Word of God and Islam is meaningless without freedom and respect for individual volition and choice. The Quran says the most important characteristic distinguishing man from animals is his free will. It is on this basis that human beings are held accountable. Without freedom, no society can develop or progress.

The Mojahedin believe that the human right of freedom is the hallmark and guarantor of genuine social progress. Otherwise, the stage is set for the emergence of dictatorship, which does not necessarily remain independent. From the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad as well as of those of Imam Ali, his designated successor, the Mojahedin have learned that there must not be any limits to the people's freedom, up to the point of armed rebellion. This belief is reflected in their public statements and publications. For the Mojahedin, freedom is not a luxury, but an indispensable necessity. Massoud Rajavi elaborates on the Mojahedin's views:

With the victory of our Resistance, we will overcome one of the major obstacles to the success of contemporary revolutions. This same obstacle has been the most important factor in their deviation and failure. It is the concept of invading (under any pretext) the sacred limits of freedom. Our worldview is monistic, and the eminence of our species lies precisely in mankind's freedom of choice; hence, the revival of freedom is in essence the revival of mankind and man's vanquished revolutions...

We are not anyone's liberator. For a nation to appreciate the value of her freedom, she must free herself. Therefore, we are not anyone's liberator. Everyone, both as an individual and as a member of society, can free himself only if he tears asunder the chains of coercion and compulsion on his own."⁴

According to the Mojahedin's interpretation of the Quran, and the traditions of the Messenger of Islam and historical leaders of Shi'ism, freedom, equality of the sexes, equal rights for ethnic and religious minorities, human rights and peace are not mere political commitments, but ideological principles. The lives and struggles of the great prophets of God, such as Moses, Jesus and Muhammad, are brilliant examples of unrelenting commitment to these principles. They never advocated, either in words or deeds, ruthlessness, war, aggression or oppression. All but one of the chapters in the Quran begin with the phrase, "In the Name of God, the Merciful, the

Compassionate." This God is the exact opposite of the God Khomeini and the mullahs preach. Therefore, tolerance of dissent is part and parcel of the Mojahedin's ideology. The Quran gives glad tidings to those "who give ear to the Word and follow the fairest of it."⁵ Likewise, during the ten years (622-632 A.D.) he ruled over large parts of Arabia, the Prophet of Islam never made any important decision without consulting the Muslim *ummah* (society). On many occasions, he submitted, against his better judgment, to the views of his disciples.

Ali, the first Shi'ite Imam, presents another historical example. Urged by his companions to take harsh action against the *Kharajites*,⁶ who opposed him, Ali replied: "So long as they do not harm us, we will not take any action against them. If they debate with us, we will do likewise. We will continue to pay them their share of the treasury. We will allow them to go to the mosques to pray. Only if they resort to violence and killing will we reluctantly fight them."

The Mojahedin reject any form of religious dogmatism or rigid interpretations of the Quran and Islam. According to the Muslim Holy Book, there are two types of verses in the Quran, *Muhkamat* and *Mutashabehat*: "He it is Who has sent down to thee the Book: In it are verses, Basic or fundamental; They are the foundation of the Book, others are allegorical."⁷ Muhkamat or Basic verses form the ideological precepts of Islam, and contain the philosophical essence of Islam's worldview and outlook on mankind. Mutashabehat or the allegoricals basically relate to the methods and rules of conduct of daily life and, as such, are never rigid. While preserving the same monistic essence and spirit, they are adaptable to human progress, technological advancement and the social norms of the time. Otherwise, they become a useless, inflexible set of canonical laws. Therefore, any rigid and reactionary interpretation of Islam, exemplified in our times by Khomeinism, is totally anti-Islamic and contrary to the spirit of the Holy Scripture.

The Mojahedin believe that genuine Islam is so dynamic it never impedes social progress. Contrary to what the mullahs say, not only does Islam not oppose science, technology and civilization, but it also cherishes them. The basic principles of Shi'ism accentuate this point. Although the mullahs abuse and take advantage of the concept of *Ijtihad* (contemporary interpretation of Moteshabeh verses by qualified scholars), it is a distinctly Shi'ite principle which requires Islamic scholars and sociologists to develop Islamic methods and rules

appropriate to the times. Contrary to what the mullahs preach, it is not a skill to be monopolized by the clerics or any other group. Far from it, Ijtihad is a guiding principle for all adherents, encouraging public participation in the administration of social affairs. Profoundly committed to democratic freedoms and man's right to choose, Islam calls for social justice, fair distribution of wealth, and, in the long run, a society devoid of oppression, discrimination and exploitation.

Praxis

The above-mentioned principles form the ideological bond which binds the Mojahedin internally and guides them in the political, social and economic spheres. The organization has striven to its utmost to adhere to these principles over the past 30 years. According to this ideology, God alone is perfect, devoid of deficiency and shortcomings. Man influences and is influenced by circumstances. For this reason, the Mojahedin have never claimed, as individuals or as a political or social movement, to be above reproach or immune to mistakes. In today's world, no one dares to make such ludicrous, pitiful claims, but the Khomeini regime's Vali-e faqih.

From the beginning, the Mojahedin's battle with Khomeinism was purely ideological, for which reason their first assault on Khomeini's religious dictatorship focused on ideology. They exposed and rejected Khomeini's views by citing the Quran, the conduct of the Prophet of Islam and of the Shi'ite Imams and leaders. In his first and last meeting with Khomeini on April 26, 1979, Massoud Rajavi refused to kiss Khomeini's hand, a customary gesture in meeting the supreme religious authority. Khomeini was outraged. Citing Imam Ali's conduct, Mr. Rajavi then pointed to the heart of the problem: the Islamic viewpoint on the crucial need for democratic freedoms. As later reflected in the capital's press, Khomeini reluctantly replied that "Islam respects freedom more than anything else. Islam does not oppose freedom, unless it contradicts social mores."⁸

In early 1980, Khomeini went on television and begged the Mojahedin not to use the term "reactionaries" in describing the mullahs. In light of Khomeini's clampdown on freedoms and demagogic abuse of Islam to deceive the public, however, the Mojahedin could not forgo the term. In spring 1980, Khomeini stopped Massoud Rajavi's lectures on philosophy in Tehran's Sharif University

of Technology. Then he launched a coup in the universities nationwide, the nefarious "cultural revolution." All universities, a bastion of support for the Mojahedin, were closed down in a brutal clampdown by club-wielding hoodlums, in which many students were wounded and killed.

A few weeks earlier, *Le Monde* had written, "One of the most important events not to be missed in Tehran are the courses on comparative philosophy, taught every Friday afternoon by Mr. Massoud Rajavi. Some 10,000 people presented their admission cards to listen for three hours to the lecture by the leader of the People's Mojahedin on Sharif University's lawn." Rajavi's ideological and political message was that "freedom is the essence of evolution and the principal message of Islam and revolution."⁹

"In the weekly conferences at Sharif University," *Le Monde* continued, "Mr. Rajavi gets help from the Quran, the Old Testament and the Bible as well as from Plato, Socrates, Sartre, Hegel, Marx, etc. to explain the Mojahedin's ideology. The courses are recorded on video cassettes and distributed in 35 cities. They are also published in paperback and sold by the hundreds of thousands of copies."¹⁰

Early on, in March 1979, Khomeini ordered a referendum on his "Islamic Republic." With the motto, "Islam yes, reaction never," the Mojahedin called on Khomeini to specify what he meant by "Islamic Republic", before taking public polls. Khomeini replied that the content would be specified later on.¹¹ In summer, shortly before Khomeini formed an ersatz Assembly of Experts instead of the promised Constituent Assembly, Rajavi delivered a series of speeches about the government of Imam Ali and the constitution of an Islamic government. He declared in his lectures during the holy month of Ramadan at Tehran University, "The very essence of our republic, which must be specified in the constitution, is enmity to despotism."¹²

The most prominent distinction between the Mojahedin's interpretation of Islam and Khomeini's, therefore, is democratic freedoms. It is over this issue that the two sides have been engaged in a full-fledged ideological battle from day one. Citing Imam Ali's opposition to the expansionist wars waged under the name of Islam, the Mojahedin opposed the mullahs' policy of "export of revolution" from the outset, describing it as anti-Islamic and contrary to national interests. To substantiate their argument, they also cited from the Quran, which says, "No compulsion is there in religion".¹³

Tomorrow's Iran

Committed to the principle that the sole criterion for political legitimacy is the vote, and that resistance is legitimate only against repression and dictatorship, the Mojahedin proposed a maximum tenure of six months for the Provisional Government to take power after the mullahs, during which time sovereignty will be transferred to the people. The NCR program also affirms "complete freedom of thought and speech, and the banning of censorship and inquisition... This freedom is not bound by any principal restriction, up to the point of armed struggle against the legitimate and legal system of the country." Likewise, it is stated, "Achieving national sovereignty through the instrumentality of the provisional government of the Democratic Islamic Republic of Iran is the most valuable product of the just Resistance of the Iranian people." The program emphasizes that the Khomeini regime's worst crime was its usurpation of the Iranian people's most vital legitimate right, the right to popular sovereignty. In such circumstances of absolute repression, political legitimacy has no real indicator other than resistance to restore these trampled rights.

The experience of other movements which refused, under various pretexts, to yield to public suffrage after the overthrow of dictatorship, show that free elections and commitment to the vote are the only means of keeping democratic movements from deviating from their original courses. In the words of Massoud Rajavi:

The Mojahedin profoundly believe that to avoid the deviations that beset contemporary revolutions throughout the world, they must remain wholeheartedly committed to the will of the people and democracy. If they are to act as a leading organization, before all else the populace must give them a mandate in a free and fair election. It is not enough to have gone through the trials of repression, imprisonment, torture, and executions under the shah and the mullahs. The Mojahedin must also pass the test of general elections. If the Mojahedin were to choose to compensate for the lack of popular mandate by relying on their past sacrifices, organizational prowess or arms, their resilient, lively, and democratic organization would soon become a hollow, rotten bureaucracy... If the people don't vote for us (after we have overthrown the mullahs' regime), we shall remain in the opposition, holding firmly to our principles.¹⁴

Many western observers criticize the National Council of Resistance for setting a six-month limit on the Provisional

Government, saying it is too short a time to install a parliamentary system of government. The Resistance's response is very clear: Khomeini betrayed the trust of the nation, whose goal in overthrowing the shah was crystallized in the motto "freedom and independence." To restore this trust, necessary for the reconstruction of tomorrow's Iran, the people must be assured that the past will not be repeated. The Mojahedin had to choose between their own interests and consolidating their power, on the one hand, and their principles, commitments and the public trust, on the other. They chose the latter, and thus argue that the people's elected representatives must quickly take the reins into their own hands and determine what government, system and constitution they have in mind.

Contrary to what the State Department report tries to convey, the Mojahedin's ideology is nothing mysterious. For many years, they have unambiguously set forth the foundations of their beliefs and ideological principles, briefly reviewed here, in their publications.

Neither the Mojahedin nor NCR are naive about establishing democracy in a country ruled for several decades by two dictatorships. The difficulties have been aggravated by the mullahs' attempts to disrupt and destroy all social relationships through brutal suppression and religious tyranny. Under the clerical dictatorship's omnipresent repression, many relationships of trust, such as ethnic and regional ties and even family bonds, have been disrupted. The Resistance envisions a difficult time ahead, when it must try to heal the open wounds of a society whose rulers sought to imprison even human emotions within their narrow, intolerant bounds. The going will be equally rough for any attempt to restore peace and calm, and to universalize democracy after the overthrow of the Khomeini regime. The endeavors of the Mojahedin, NCR, and particularly the Resistance's President-elect to promote solidarity among various sectors of the society are rooted in this reality.¹⁵

Relations Within & Without

We know from the history of liberation movements, and can logically and scientifically deduce from social and historical developments, that political movement can offer nothing to a society that it does not of itself possess. One can believe the promise of democracy and flourishing talents in tomorrow's Iran only if the Resistance movement's internal relations are democratic today.

Particularly after the overthrow of the shah and their leader's freedom from prison, the Mojahedin had the opportunity to experience full-fledged democracy within the organization. The unity, coherence and rapid growth, including the influx of hundreds of thousands of members and full-time sympathizers, as well as the organization's open political campaign from 1979 to 1981, attest to its internal democracy. For fourteen years, the Khomeini regime, with the backing of its domestic and foreign allies, has tried to divide and somehow destroy the Mojahedin. The mullahs have unfortunately succeeded with many other political currents, which suffered several splits and were eventually dismantled. As acknowledged by friend and foe alike, however, the ploy has failed dismally with the Mojahedin, despite various military, political, regional and international pressures, and despite 100,000 martyrs and 14 years of torture and imprisonment. The Mojahedin were not annihilated, nor did they disintegrate; rather, they increased in power, prowess and credibility.

One reason is that the Mojahedin adhered to their political principles and insisted on democracy and political freedoms, as the Resistance movement's pivotal demands. More importantly, they remained profoundly committed to safeguarding democracy within the movement. It would have otherwise been impossible for them to withstand the intolerable pressures and tortuous circumstances of these past years.

Those genuinely interested in fighting the ruling medieval dictatorship and establishing democracy and a popular regime in Iran, have found ample opportunities and facilities in their democratic relations within the Mojahedin. It is a Mojahedin tradition to hold open discussions about sensitive issues of the day, some lasting hours, or even days and weeks, depending on the subject. Eventually, they conclude with a common viewpoint. Those familiar with the Mojahedin first hand know that a major part of their time is spent in lengthy meetings, devoted to arriving at a common ground for every decision. It is no accident that despite the intense suppression and pressures of the past 14 years, divergent views and ideas have not led to splits in the organization. The discussions on restructuring the organization and forming an all-female Leadership Council of 12 members and 12 candidate-members in 1993, for example, lasted two months.¹⁶

Structure

The People's Mojahedin of Iran is the first and only of Iran's political parties to make public the names and particulars of its officials and their manner of election. This has been the case over the past decade, despite the organization's involvement in a clandestine nationwide armed resistance.

In 1979-81, the names of all members of the Mojahedin's Central Committee as well as officials who administered the organization's affairs in various cities were made public. They were published in *Mojahed* on different occasions, such as their nomination as candidates in the elections, or identifying them as speakers or as hosts of a meeting in the course of the extensive political and social activities of the time. Even after the beginning of the armed resistance, in the second half of 1981, the names of the members of the Political Bureau and Central Committee were made public. Despite the harsh conditions, the members of these organs were elected every two years by the membership and available lower-ranking officials. The difficult, tortuous conditions they had endured of imprisonment and struggle shed light on their qualifications and accountability, facilitating the voting. This is not to suggest that mistakes were not made in choosing officials; rather, despite the Mojahedin's unusual practice of encouraging all members to openly criticize one another and higher officials, there were very few cases of lower officials and members not concurring in the election of members to the Political Bureau and Central Committee.

The Mojahedin's Central Council functions as the parliamentary body within the organization. Even in the difficult circumstances of these years, when members have been scattered, the Central Council has met regularly; absent members participated in the discussions through advanced communications. The Council's meetings take place in the form of a forum, where members express their views, debate issues, and try to convince each other on policies and strategy, elections of higher officials, and reviews of the conduct and status of members. An internal pamphlet put out in October 1982 articulated the hierarchy within the Mojahedin and the ways and means of administrating affairs. It was studied, discussed and adopted by all members. Accordingly, the Central Council was made up of the heads of different departments, deputies to the Central Committee, the

Central Committee and Political Bureau and their advisors. Then as now, candidates for membership in the Central Council were nominated by members and officials of the sections where they worked. Those elected by a majority vote in the Central Council had a two-year tenure. Reports and appraisals of the Political Bureau and Central Committee were regularly conveyed to all Central Council members, and measures or policies were implemented only after amendments and general ratification in the Central Council.

In autumn 1984, the annual meeting of the Political Bureau and the Central Committee was held in Paris, as in 1982 and 1983. It was followed by the meeting of the Central Council, which then had 160 members. Together, the meetings lasted more than two months. At the time, 30% of the Mojahedin's members were women; 15% of the Central Council were women. Tens of thousands of Mojahedin women had been imprisoned or executed by the Khomeini regime, many of them viciously tortured.

In these sessions, the Political Bureau and Central Committee nominated Maryam Azodanlou, later to become Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, as co-leader of the organization. She had come to France from Iran two years earlier. A graduate of metallurgical engineering, she began her political activities with the Mojahedin in the 1970s. After the revolution, she became an official of the social section and head of a major network of organization's sympathizers in Tehran. The Mojahedin had nominated her as a candidate from Tehran for the 1980 parliamentary elections.

The Central Council and other members of the Mojahedin welcomed her nomination, electing her in view of her competence, qualifications and experience. She had come to symbolize all the Mojahedin women.

In June 1985, after the marriage of Massoud and Maryam Rajavi, the Mojahedin Central Council, which had expanded to 575 members, issued a message of congratulations, bearing the signatures of all its members. Expressing abhorrence at the Khomeini regime's "frenzied lies and political assaults" on the Mojahedin and their leadership,¹⁷ the statement, published in *Mojahed*, emphasized that all the members of the Central Council had "freely and in full knowledge" elected their leaders. Therefore, the "barrage of ill-intentioned assaults against the Mojahedin" from "remnants of the shah and Khomeini and their allies, both rightists and so-called leftists" were

in vain. The Central Council also stressed:

The political alternative to Khomeini's dictatorship has emerged, without doubt, from among the forces of the Iranian people's anti-monarchic revolution, and not from within the Khomeini regime. The era of ignorance and of spontaneous movements, however victorious, has passed. The complexities of our national situation... dictate that this alternative be aimed and organized, and that it respect Islam, the faith of the greater majority of the people of Iran.

This alternative's legitimacy derives from its resistance against the suppressive regimes of the shah and Khomeini. It must be capable of preventing bloodletting, and of guaranteeing peace, democracy and national security as well as territorial integrity and socio-economic development. This alternative must have a program with specific deadlines for the transfer of power to the people and establishment of national and popular sovereignty.¹⁸

The statement concludes, "Given the present polarization of forces and political status quo at this historical juncture, the National Council of Resistance is the only democratic alternative for post-Khomeini Iran."

Six months later, at the conclusion of their annual session in Paris, the Political Bureau and Central Committee announced that they had dissolved to form a single organ, the Executive Committee, to administrate the organization's affairs.¹⁹ From then on, the Central Council consisted of the heads of sections, as well as the Executive Committee members and their deputies. As for the election of the organization's leaders, they concluded that every member must make this choice "directly, without intermediaries."

Massoud Rajavi, then the Mojahedin's Secretary General, elaborated on this point before a gathering of 3,000 members and sympathizers in Paris.

The experience, conduct, *modus operandi*, and mechanisms of electing the leadership in traditional parties of both the left and right have shed light on a fundamental point in the concept of organization. In view of our ideological principles and the numbers and quality of the Mojahedin's membership, the leadership's election should be direct, without intermediaries, free, and undertaken in full awareness by each and every member.

Therefore, members should study and examine, research, question and criticize the leadership, so that their relationship has a real basis. We do not accept blind trust. Likewise, everyone is free to cancel his or her allegiance to the leadership, whenever he or she wishes, to choose a better ideology,

strategy or organization. Let every individual follow his own ideals. Our only condition is that he respect our organizational rights and protect our intelligence and security.²⁰

Four months later, Mr. Rajavi departed for Iraq. There, too, the Mojahedin regularly announced in their radio and television programs as well as in their publications, the names of the Executive Committee members, their deputies, and other officials of the organization elected according to the Mojahedin's ratified regulations.²¹

In October 1989, Mrs. Maryam Rajavi was enthusiastically elected Secretary General of the Mojahedin by the entire membership.²² "This is the supreme ideological and organizational fruit of the efforts of a generation who rushed to do battle with the anti-human enemy and its evil regime on a scale far beyond human limits and tolerance. This generation has kept aloft the standard of our nation's honor in the darkest era of her history."²³

In October 1991, Mrs. Rajavi invited all members of the National Council of Resistance to be her guests at a Central Council meeting to witness the election of new members and of a deputy secretary general. The audience also listened to the Secretary General's report on political, military and organizational matters, and discussions within the council on strategy. At the conclusion of this session, 54 new members were added to the Mojahedin's Central Council, bringing the total to 837. The members had between 10 and 25 years of experience within the organization.²⁴ Mrs. Fahimeh Arvani was elected Deputy Secretary General, as announced by the Central Council in a statement in this regard.²⁵

In the decade from 1981-91, some 30% of the Mojahedin's Central Council members lost their lives in the battle with the Khomeini regime. Five percent could not endure the difficult conditions of the struggle and returned to normal life. Some 10 to 12 people committed treason and collaborated with the enemy.

In the same session, reported by all of the Mojahedin's media outlets, Mrs. Rajavi formulated the tasks of the Central Council, henceforth to be headed by the Deputy Secretary General, as follows:

First responsibility : Biannual determination of membership of those officials proposed for the Central Council...

Second responsibility : Deciding basic policies and strategies...

Third responsibility : Examining the conduct and status of members, and

reviewing their performances in their specific responsibilities...

Consequently, in summer 1993, Mrs. Rajavi suggested fundamental changes in the management of the organization, which were unanimously endorsed by members and officials. In the Central Council meeting of October 1991, seventy-five of the 149 members of the Executive Committee were women. In other words, in the six years since Maryam Rajavi's emergence as leader of the Mojahedin, women had gradually undertaken more and more political and military posts, and competently passed their tests of leadership. Eight years after her election as co-leader of the Mojahedin, Mrs. Rajavi was now proposing a "Leadership Council" of qualified women. The proposal contrasted radically with the mullahs' backward outlook, and went straight to the heart of their anti-democratic, misogynous culture. After 28 years of political and military struggle with two dictatorial regimes, the Mojahedin elected 12 women to a two-year term on the Leadership Council; 12 others were nominated as candidate members. The election marked a climax in the ideological and intellectual revolution within the Mojahedin, and may be viewed as a gauge of the profound depth of democracy in the organization.²⁶

On August 28, 1993, the National Council of Resistance of Iran elected Maryam Rajavi as President for the transitional period during which power will be transferred to the people of Iran. On September 17, Mrs. Rajavi resigned from her posts in the Mojahedin Organization and National Liberation Army of Iran. On the same day, in a large gathering of thousands of Mojahedin and the NLA combatants and attended by Massoud and Maryam Rajavi, Ms. Ozra Alavi Taleqani was elected as the Deputy Commander in Chief of the National Liberation Army, and Mrs. Fahimeh Arvani as the organization's Secretary General.²⁷ A month later, the Resistance's President-elect moved her headquarters to Paris.

Members and candidate members of the Leadership Council are elected in three stages in three consultative sessions. In the first stage, a proposal is discussed within the Leadership Council. In the second stage, the issue is taken to the meeting of heads of departments and their deputies. Finally, a nomination is discussed in the meeting of all members, and then voted on.

In August 1994, simultaneous with the opening of offices of the Iranian Resistance's President-elect, the Mojahedin announced that

all their offices and organizational networks outside Iran, with the exception of their press offices, had been dissolved. By then, the number of members and candidates for membership in the Leadership Council had increased threefold. Fifty-four members and candidate members announced their readiness to serve in the offices of the President-elect, and resigned their posts in the Mojahedin. Twenty-three women formed the Mojahedin's new Leadership Council.²⁸

In view of the reports published and publicized on the mechanisms of election to positions of leadership in the Mojahedin, summarized here, it is very naive to speak about lack of democracy within the organization.

Astonishing Charges

The structure and conduct of the Mojahedin has been examined in two separate sections in the State Department report, the section on history and the section on structure. The authors of the report have not lost any opportunity to label the Mojahedin as "undemocratic," hurling a barrage of accusations: The Mojahedin are organized into "compartmentalized cells of activity"²⁹ which respond only to central authority. They acquire "adherents and supporters through indoctrination."³⁰ They are subject to "authoritarian leadership,"³¹ have formed a "personality cult,"³² and have created "a rigid hierarchy in which instructions flowed from above and the primary responsibility of the rank-and-file was to obey without asking too many questions."³³

They produce their "own handbooks, censorship index, world outlook, historical interpretations and, of course, distinct ideology."³⁴ Those "members who tried to leave were jailed... Moreover, they were condemned to execution for their dissent, but the orders are stayed until the MKO 'reaches victory' in Iran... [Members] were only allowed to read Mojahedin publications" and "were monitored by informers... the Mojahedin forced couples and families to separate."³⁵ "Members living in the West are sometimes said to reside in communal houses, permitted little money of their own and kept on tightly controlled schedules."³⁶

"The language used by Mojahedin members among themselves, in contrast with the dialogue they conduct with westerners, is often hierarchical and apocalyptic."³⁷ "Excerpts of broadcasts of the clandestine 'Voice of Mojahed' are representative of MKO style: 'Sister

Maryam Rajavi... has called on all our compatriots... to raise the cry of protest.... (Protest by) setting fire to the centers of oppression."³⁸

"Female 'leaders' are presented not as individuals... but as dependents— the wife, daughter, or sister of male MKO members."³⁹

One wonders whether the report belongs to the State Department, or is a joint publication of the Khomeini regime's Guards Corps and Intelligence Ministry.

Women

The Mojahedin believe in complete equality of the sexes, and demand active participation of women in the nation's social and political life. This has been clarified at length in the plans adopted by the National Council of Resistance and the program of the Provisional Government.

From the very first days of Khomeini's rule, the Mojahedin opposed all restrictions on women, including the compulsory *hejab* (veiling). Though committed to Islamic covering, like other Islamic rites, the Mojahedin view any form of compulsion in this regard as contradictory to their beliefs. For this reason, in 1979-80, when women were attacked by Khomeini's club wielders chanting "either the veil or a hit on the head," the Mojahedin demonstrated in protest. In these same years, tens of thousands of women sympathizers were recruited and organized throughout the country. In the 1980 parliamentary elections, many of the Mojahedin candidates were women.

Thousands of female officials, members and sympathizers were executed in subsequent years.⁴⁰ The mullahs' brutal suppression of women attracted more women to the Resistance, who continued to occupy more key positions and higher posts in the movement. "I don't know of any other example in history where a resistance group has been so bolstered by the participation of women," says American expert Dr. Joyce Starr, of the Center for Strategic and International Studies.⁴¹ Today, all 23 members of the Mojahedin's Leadership Council, the majority of commanders in the National Liberation Army, and one-third of the NLA's combatants are women.

The report claims, however, that "the original call for women's rights in Mojahedin ideology was advocated by the Marxist faction. Today's female 'leaders' of the MKO are often presented not as individuals who have earned their positions on merit, but as

dependents – the wife, daughter, or sister of male MKO members.⁴² The assertion that “the Marxist faction” promoted women’s rights is a sheer lie. The Mojahedin have never had a “Marxist faction,” and the Marxists who launched a coup in the organization in the 1970s never called for women’s rights. Rather, they ravaged the Mojahedin’s achievements and sowed distrust among the organization’s members and sympathizers, particularly the women.

The assertion that women have risen to positions of leadership because of family ties is another cowardly lie. The report offers no evidence to back up its claim. A list of the names of high-ranking female members of the Mojahedin would have precluded such a statement. None of the members of the Leadership Council or commanders of the National Liberation Army has been appointed because of family relationships, and only a small percentage (some 15%) are related to veteran male officials. Rather than repeating Ervand Abrahamian’s baseless conclusions about the 1970s, the State Department could easily have investigated the claim.

More importantly, these women have emerged from a multi-dimensional, 16-year political, social, cultural and military battle with the Khomeini regime. The Mojahedin and Iranian Resistance are a responsible and deadly serious movement, which has taken on a medieval dictatorship. Such a movement cannot pass the reins of authority to unqualified men or women.

In the ideology of Khomeini and the fundamentalism ruling Iran, women are considered inferior and of negative value. The most distinctive feature of the mullahs’ enmity to democracy is their antagonism towards women. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the Mojahedin, both in their ideology and in their political and social conduct, accord women the greatest of respect. This serves as a measure of their devotion to democracy. The growing role of women in the Resistance, particularly the role of President-elect Maryam Rajavi, has had tremendous political, social and organizational impact. In addition, the women of the Mojahedin pose a cultural and ideological challenge to the fundamentalist rulers of Iran. Through them, the Mojahedin have demonstrated in practice that, in contrast to the mullahs, Islam does not deny women’s rights and freedoms. Furthermore, Islam holds free, combative and responsible women in the highest regard.

Sectarian Behavior

The report has tried very hard to portray a negative image of the Mojahedin's internal relations. The terms used are same as those applied by the shah and Khomeini's dictatorships. From the viewpoint of an impartial observer, however, the Mojahedin's internal structure, relationships and decision-making procedure leave no room for such accusations. At best, they reveal the authors' true intentions.

There is one question, of course, that the report of necessity avoids: How has this organization, characterized as a sect lacking popular and international support, survived despite 30 years of suppression by two dictatorships, the execution of its leaders and members under the Shah, the execution of some 100,000 of its members and sympathizers, and the imprisonment of an even larger number of them under the Khomeini regime? Indeed, not only has it survived, but it has remained the main, most active and most effective opposition force to the mullahs' regime.⁴³

The report's rationale to prove that the Mojahedin are a sect is more ridiculous than the allegation itself. For example, "they have their own books."⁴⁴ All organizations, institutes and societies publicize their views in their publications and books. How is that undemocratic and indicative of "indoctrination"?

The report has also tried to convince the reader that the Mojahedin are dependent on Iraq. Such statements, however, are contradicted by those alleging that the Mojahedin are a "sect," such as the Mojahedin Organization has "set up its own communes, printing presses, offices, militia, training camps, barracks, etc. in Iraq..."⁴⁵ Clearly, independent Mojahedin barracks, schools, etc. do not suggest dependence on Iraq. Aside from that, in what way is possession of printing presses and offices tantamount to behaving like a "sect"? According to this logic, most political parties in Europe should be called "sects."

It is further alleged that the Mojahedin have forced couples in Iraq to divorce and send their children to Europe and the United States.⁴⁶ The State Department must be held accountable for having given the task of preparing this report to individuals who have repeated, verbatim, allegations used by the mullahs and remnants of the shah's regime. The National Liberation Army is based on the territory of a country where family life on or near military camps

became impossible during the unprecedented bombardment of the Persian Gulf War, and has remained so since due to the international embargo. In the midst of the bombardment, families, voluntarily and sometimes in writing, asked the organization to help send their children to Europe and the United States to live with relatives or sympathizers. Despite many difficulties and dangers, the movement spent millions of dollars to move these children to safe places. The alternative was to accept the possibility of extensive casualties among them. Would not such a choice have warranted the disapproval of the State Department?

Furthermore, the policy is not without precedent. In World War II, children were separated from their families and sent out of London during the bombardment. If the practice is objectionable, the State Department should have issued a statement criticizing Winston Churchill.

Clearly, the military camps bombarded in May 1988, April 1992 and May 1993 by the Khomeini regime's air force, shelled with mortars in November 1993 and October 1994, and attacked with Scud-B missiles in November 1994 are no place for family life or for children. Where in the world is family life carried on in military camps during wartime or when military missions are being conducted? Although their work is peaceful, even Red Cross employees voluntarily avoid marriage and family life during their missions in various parts of the world. How is it that a Resistance movement is expected to provide for family life and the protection and care of small children?

In the past four years, the Khomeini regime's guards and terrorists have launched 30 armed attacks on the Mojahedin on Iraqi soil.⁴⁷ They have repeatedly launched armed attacks on families whose residences had been moved from the Iran-Iraq border strip to Baghdad. In summer 1993, the Khomeini regime's agents even attacked the Baghdad residence of elderly mothers of the Mojahedin's martyrs with RPG-7 rockets. In a word, today, all of Iraq has become the "frontlines" for Mojahedin and NLA combatants. Unlike the past, no place is "behind-the-lines."

This slandering of parents who have made such sacrifices for their country's freedom, is all the more outrageous because the detractors are unwilling to do anything to prevent these attacks by the mullahs' regime, or even to voice some protest to the regime's missile attacks and air raids, violating international law and

agreements. Had it been otherwise, perhaps these parents would not have been forced to remain apart. Rather than insulting the mullahs' victims, our detractors would do better to stop buying millions of dollars of oil, providing Tehran with the funds to step up its crimes and export terrorism and religious despotism. As the Persian saying goes: "If you do not want to heal our wounds, at least do not pour salt on them."

The charge of being a "sect" is further discredited by the fact that the Mojahedin is obviously willing to expand its relations with the outside world. In the course of the report's preparation, the organization insisted on presenting its views directly to the authors of the report. Actually, in dealing with the Mojahedin, the officials of the State Department's Near East Bureau have been behaving more like a sect, ignoring the views of the American people, their congressional representatives, the press, and other countries, and disregarding the will of the Iranian people. The wholesale barrage of accusations and slander against this Resistance itself smacks of fanaticism.

Intolerance

The State Department offers an autocratic image of the Mojahedin's inner workings, intolerant of dissenting views. According to the report, dissidents are treated badly, even imprisoned and sentenced to death. In response to these allegations, repeated for years by the mullahs' regime, the Mojahedin have frequently declared that they welcome visits by impartial international delegations, to which they have set no preconditions, other than guarantees regarding intelligence and security matters.

In August 1991, the NCR Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman declared in Geneva: "In reply to the fabrications of the anti-human enemy and its operatives, who have brazenly claimed, to cover up their own torture and massacre of political prisoners, that the Resistance maintains prisons where 800 Mojaheds are incarcerated, we invite a delegation of lawyers, reporters and representatives of international organizations to visit the bases of the Mojahedin and the National Liberation Army of Iran along the Iran-Iraq frontier. The delegation can see first hand the Mojahedin and the National Liberation Army, and meet the combatants of freedom, who long for liberty and democracy in Iran. The doors to all offices and bases of

the Mojahedin are open to all, because they have nothing to hide. Even the Khomeini regime's representatives can join the delegation, on the condition that Rafsanjani also promises to accept the very same delegation, accompanied by representatives of the Resistance, to visit the regime's prisons and torture centers in Iran, and commits his regime to opening all doors to this delegation."⁴⁸

If the authors have even one case or one person who they think has really left the Mojahedin due to internal despotism, one person who was denied the possibility of engaging in a dialogue about political, strategic and ideological problems or a lack of freedoms, we suggest that they take him or her along, so that this individual can see or talk to anyone he or she wishes, and they can publish the results in their next report.

The Mojahedin is a living entity. New individuals and groups join the organization everyday, while others, for specific and quite understandable reasons that relate to their personal conduct, are dismissed or leave voluntarily. All such cases in recent years emanate from an inability to tolerate the difficult conditions of struggling against a religious fascism unprecedented in Iran's history. With few exceptions, most people who cannot endure these difficult conditions continue their political support for the Resistance, as the only solution to the mullahs' regime.

The Mojahedin's record in this respect is so far above reproach and the avenues for dialogue so readily available that there is no room for complaint. The falsity and absurdity of such claims by persons who have broken ranks with the Mojahedin are laid bare by the very fact that a short while after leaving the Mojahedin, these same individuals have been sent to Europe or the United States with Mojahedin money, subsequent to which they have sold their services to the Khomeini regime or joined ranks with the mullahs against the Resistance.

If the Mojahedin are to be criticized, it should be for exercising undue flexibility to safeguard these person's reputation. Otherwise, they could have taken preemptive measures, by exposing the dismissed individual *a priori* so that he or she could not be used as a weapon in the hands of the enemy or others hostile to the Resistance. The Mojahedin have, however, exposed such persons whenever necessary, by publishing in their newspapers the reasons, in these persons' own writing and bearing their signatures, when they have

collaborated with or joined the enemy.

There is no combative force to rival the Mojahedin in the Iranian political landscape today, within or without the framework of the nationwide Resistance. This has been the case for many years. Thus, anyone within the Mojahedin normally does not challenge the war of liberation against the mullahs which the Mojahedin have undertaken, other than to admit his or her own inability to tolerate the conditions of armed struggle against the mullahs. The first question confronting such an individual is what strategy is more effective, and which political organization is offering that option. In other words, since no such strategy and no such political organization espousing it exist, the point is moot. Armed Resistance is the last resort against the mullahs' regime, after all other methods of struggle have proven futile.

The Mojahedin are combatant Muslims, a fact clarified twenty years ago, when they confronted the opportunist Marxists who had shattered their organization. Hence, anyone opposed to the Mojahedin's ideology does not become a member in the first place. Ideological differences, therefore, are not a viable excuse for leaving the ranks of the organization.

Nor can one imagine that multitudes of Mojahedin or their supporters residing in different cities in Europe, the U.S. and Asia, are being compelled to do anything. How could anyone be held within the Mojahedin's ranks against his/her will for even a day, let alone for many years, given the propaganda barrage of the Khomeini regime, its allies and the likes of the State Department report? Unless of course, the report's authors are suggesting that the Mojahedin exercise a far greater influence than such propaganda, to the extent that they can mesmerize tens of thousands of their fellow compatriots, body and soul, compelling them to turn out for large-scale demonstrations in 15 countries of the world.

From a political standpoint, the individual who has left should have a political alternative in mind, which regrettably does not exist. If one did, those preparing the report would not have gone to the trouble of writing 41 pages of slander and vituperations against the Mojahedin and Iranian Resistance. They are fully aware that, under the current circumstances, the National Council of Resistance is the only viable alternative to the mullahs' regime.

One must conclude that logically, the real reasons why certain persons have been dismissed or chosen to leave the Mojahedin in

recent years are to be found in the personal choices of the individual(s) in question. It is unjustified to blame the Mojahedin for an individual's inability to tolerate a tough, bloody war against a regime which the U.S. Secretary of State has described as "an international outlaw" and "the leading sponsor of terrorism in the contemporary world."

If the State Department of the sole superpower in the world claims to be fully knowledgeable about the Mojahedin and to have access to comprehensive information, it should be able to make public the names of the "dissidents" being held against their will in the National Liberation Army's bases, and assist them by publicly offering them political asylum. Obviously, the authors are themselves aware that their allegations are unfounded. When speaking about "death sentences" for "dissidents," they are compelled to offer the ridiculous explanation that the Mojahedin sentence dissident members to death, but postpone carrying out the verdict until after the regime's overthrow.⁴⁹

The Mojahedin and National Liberation Army of Iran informed the International Committee of the Red Cross of the release of some 2,650 officers, non-commissioned officers, soldiers and *Pasdaran* of the Khomeini regime who had been captured in the course of the NLA's military operations. Meanwhile, Mojahedin members and sympathizers were being executed *en masse* in the regime's prisons. The ICRC had been kept informed of the Mojahedin's treatment of these prisoners through repeated meetings with them, and has always lauded the Mojahedin for its humane conduct. It should be recalled that although some of these prisoners had killed a number of the Mojahedin's or NLA's combatants, they were released on the orders of the army's Commander in Chief. As for the members of this group who voluntarily joined the NLA, the ICRC paid repeated visits to the NLA's bases and spoke privately with them. There was never a single complaint about the Mojahedin's treatment.⁵⁰

In summary, the ICRC has monitored all affairs pertaining to the POWs, and has officially confirmed the humane nature of their treatment.⁵¹ In this light, are these allegations about mis-treatment of its own members by a movement that has humanely treated its enemies to be viewed as anything other than a repetition of the clerical regime's propaganda? Furthermore, the authors have regrettably demonstrated their unwillingness to listen to the replies of the "accused," whereas in any court of law, even if the case is cut and

dried, the accused and his counsel have the right to reply. Despite having the Mojahedin's written replies at their disposal, the authors have felt no obligation to make the slightest reference to them. Political expediency has taken precedence over the first principle of justice.

Solely from a humanitarian standpoint, the Department would have done better to grant at least one entry visa in the past 14 years and pay the travel expenses for someone who, for whatever reason, had left the Mojahedin and intended to return to normal life as a refugee. Having done so, the Department would be in a better position to criticize a Resistance movement which has given its life's blood in this struggle. To date, the Mojahedin have been obliged to assist such persons on their own. Which should we believe: All this compassion and detailed discourse about individuals who left the dictatorial Mojahedin whose strategy, ideology, and policies have failed, or the refusal to give visas or asylum to the mothers, wives or children of the martyrs?

We suggest that to alleviate the authors' concern about the fate of former members who want to pursue a normal life, the State Department set aside a quota for their political asylum, and inform the Mojahedin thereof. We would be most grateful.

Censorship

Another accusation involves the Mojahedin's "censorship index"⁵² and charges that their members "are only allowed to read Mojahedin publications".⁵³ If this allegation pertains to Mojahedin members who live in the West, it is particularly ridiculous. The report's authors are asked to please present their documents and explain how Massoud Rajavi manages to enforce such authority and censorship from the Iran-Iraq border on people mainly educated in Western universities. If the allegation pertains to Mojahedin sympathizers inside Iran, where the mullahs' regime is ruling, the State Department is barking up the wrong tree.

If, however, the Department is referring to a third group, those members and sympathizers who are in the Iran-Iraq border strip with the rest of the NLA's combatants, we may state in response that the many observers who have visited the NLA camps have seen for themselves that the combatants' personal belongings include portable radios, and they are free to listen to the Khomeini regime and foreign

broadcasts. In addition, a daily news bulletin is provided for all combatants. The bulletin contains reports from all international media. This has been the practice since the foundation of the National Liberation Army, eight years ago.

The authors of the report may interpret this as another form of censorship or indoctrination, in which case they are free to examine any number of the news bulletins, several thousand if they so desire, to make sure there has been no censorship. If they find anything to the contrary, indicating censorship, propaganda or indoctrination, they can expose the Mojahedin by revealing these documents.

In addition, all NLA bases, and all offices of the National Council of Resistance and Mojahedin in various countries have public libraries containing books and articles from different sources, not necessarily compatible with the principles of the NCR and Mojahedin. Any visitor can examine them for himself. It should, further, be noted that a political organization cannot have contradictory rules and regulations relevant to geographic location, allowing its members in the West complete freedom, while censorship abounds elsewhere, particularly since individuals are often assigned from place to place.

If none of these points is sufficient, a glance at the weekly publication of the Mojahedin, the monthly publication, *Showra* and the weekly paper, *Iran Zamin*, will attest to the falsity of the allegation.⁵⁴ To further allay the fears of the authors of the State Department report, we should point out that of all the publications by Iranian political groups, *Mojahed* most frequently reflects the exact statements, articles and viewpoints of its enemy, the Khomeini regime, and opponents. In describing censorship in the internal relations of the Mojahedin, the State Department is apparently taking a leaf out of its own book.

The fact is that in carrying out their policies, the Mojahedin do not hide anything from anyone, particularly their members and sympathizers. The Iranian Resistance's success in recruiting members and activists depends on their full knowledge and proficiency with details. Otherwise this Resistance would not have lasted for a day under the mullahs' propaganda barrage. Nor could it have overcome the State Department's malicious attack for ten years.

As a liberation movement, with legitimate democratic aspirations, the Mojahedin have been able to stand on their own and carry out their policies against the mullahs, remnants of the shah and their

allies, only by making their positions public, in total honesty. In this light, it is understandable why the State Department, which seeks to advance an unjust and illegitimate policy against the Iranian people's Resistance and in favor of the Khomeini regime, has no option, despite its power and facilities, but to resort to censorship, violate the principles of impartiality, distort the facts, and fabricate lies.

Blind Obedience

The claim that decision-making in the Mojahedin takes place at the top and members must carry out the decisions without asking any questions, is another cheap fabrication. Any form of cooperation with the Mojahedin or recruitment into its ranks is entirely voluntary. According to Ervand Abrahamian, on whose writings the larger part of the report is based, the majority of the Mojahedin's members are from the intelligensia. For more than a decade, many members of the Mojahedin have resided for years in Western countries, where they are currently working. During this period, the organization has maintained an extensive network in various countries, with numerous offices, branches and support societies. Its members, therefore, inside Iran, at the Iran-Iraq border-strip, and in Europe and North America, have been in continuous contact with the outside world. So we are not talking about an isolated group, but an organization which, as acknowledged in the State Department report, has been able to attract much support among congressmen and parliamentarians through the activities of its members.

The question arises, therefore, if the structure of the organization denies members the right to ask questions, let alone make comments or criticisms of higher officials, how are these decisions made at the top carried out, particularly since, again according to the State Department, the organization does not pay its members and they have no financial motivation to submit to such authority. At the Iran-Iraq border, where people have converged from Iran and abroad to form the National Liberation Army, what motivates them to join a movement which does not allow them even to ask a question? Why should they make such sacrifices, endure so much pressure and torture, and even forego their spouses and children? Obviously no one in his right mind would accept such nonsense. The people of Iran have heard many such claims by the dictatorships of the shah and Khomeini, who contend that Iran's freedom fighters are "linked to

foreigners," or have been "brainwashed" by the "Great Satan."

These farcical allegations aside, the National Liberation Army, like any other army in the world, including the U.S. Army, has its own rules and regulations, and its own command hierarchy. Of course, there is a significant difference between the NLA and conventional armies. The U.S. or other conventional armies reprimand and severely punish officers and soldiers who desert the battlefield, or even in peace-time refuse to perform their duties.

In the NLA, combatants fill out forms in which they voluntarily agree to serve in the army until the overthrow of the Khomeini regime.⁵⁵ In practice, however, even in time of war or maximum alert, whenever someone has broken his or her vows, or could not tolerate the conditions, the individual, without exception, was immediately sent abroad or to the refugee camps in Iraq (supervised by the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees). The Mojahedin have even gone so far as to spend large sums of money to send hundreds of Iranian refugees from Iraq's Ramadi refugee camp to Europe, as the UNHCR in Baghdad is fully aware.⁵⁶ Obviously, the Mojahedin had no moral, political or organizational commitment to do so.

Regrettably, the report also criticizes the Mojahedin for paying tribute to their members and officials executed by the Khomeini regime, accusing them of "sectarianism." The State Department's rationale is that those who have been martyred by the Khomeini regime for the cause of democracy in their country were obsessed by Mr. Rajavi's "personality cult"⁵⁷ and had to "obey without asking too many questions."⁵⁸ How can hundreds of thousands of blindly obedient people endure execution and torture? This is an unforgivable insult to all those who gave their lives for Iran's people and freedom. Is there any message in the State Department's logic other than to defile the Resistance in favor of the Khomeini regime? How do those who have not yet apologized to the people of Iran for launching the anti-democratic coup of August 1953, against the legal and democratic government of Dr. Mohammad Mossadeq, dare pretend such concern about democracy or the lack thereof in the Mojahedin?

Intelligence & Security Risks

In evaluating the structure and conduct of any political group, including the Mojahedin, it is very important to take their

circumstances into account. The Mojahedin were founded under a dictatorial regime. After the overthrow of the Shah, they were subject to the new regime's harassment. Shortly thereafter, a religious decree was issued for the execution of the Mojahedin's members, sympathizers, and even their families. In such circumstances, it is naturally misleading to compare the organization to political parties in democratic Western countries. In a democratic country, the police do not raid a political party. They do not arrest and execute its members in large groups, assassinate its activists, or launch air raids, mortar and missile attacks on its centers. Members do not keep cyanide pills under their tongues as a precautionary measure in case they are arrested or abducted while in the street. The Khomeini regime tortures Mojahedin members for days, weeks, months and even years to extract information and obtain even one more address of their sympathizers. Even outside Iran, as in the case of Ali Akbar Ghorbani in Turkey (June 1992), the Khomeini regime has no qualms about kidnapping, lengthy torture, mutilation and assassination of its opponents.

Because they are at war with the mullahs' brutal regime, the Mojahedin must be very careful about safeguarding intelligence, and enforce strict security and safety regulations. Obviously, the enemy is always conspiring to obtain more information and strike at them in any way possible. Nevertheless, throughout these years, the Mojahedin have never prevented the departure of people who could no longer tolerate the conditions of struggle. Of course, this entailed many risks for their members and combatants. The regime's Air Force raided the NLA's camps by using intelligence obtained from some people who had left the army and subsequently cooperated with the regime.⁵⁹

All countries, including the democratic countries, have very strict regulations for their military forces and other organs which could yield intelligence jeopardizing national security and the lives of their citizens. Joining any of these organs requires observation of certain rules and regulations. Leaving them is even more difficult, especially in wartime. The fate of Shapour Bakhtiar, the shah's last prime minister, exemplifies the mullahs' extraterritorial terrorist plots, underlining the need for strict security measures and protection of intelligence. Bakhtiar was murdered at his home in a Paris suburb in August 1991 by one of his close associates, an agent of the Khomeini

regime. This person was able to lead two of the mullahs' terrorists into the house to murder him.⁶⁰

Playing the Mullahs' Game

What is the State Department's problem? Can all this clamor about no democracy in the Mojahedin while inviting the mullahs to engage in a dialogue be interpreted as anything but a step against democracy and human rights in Iran? In determining its relations, support, money and facilities for countries, parties and opposition groups the world over, the State Department is not known for being overly mindful of their observation of democracy. Was the shah's dictatorship, which brutally suppressed Iran's people for years, not supported by the United States? During the Cold War, were the Khmer Rouge and Pol Pot not tacitly endorsed by the United States as part of its policy to counter Soviet influence? Does the U.S. desire to improve relations and establish dialogue with Iran's ruling regime because it is democratic?

The problem, therefore, is not with the Mojahedin, but with the political landscape in today's Iran. The medieval regime is falling apart, and a democratic, independent and popular alternative is about to take power. Those factions whose interests are threatened by the establishment of democracy in Iran, who for years have insisted that Iran's medieval rulers will reform if conciliated, find their only answer is to reject and undermine this Resistance. They use democracy like a club to strike at this Resistance and its leadership, both of which have proven their commitment to democracy in thirty years of struggle. They will tell any lie, however fabricated or distorted. They use character assassination, much like during the Mossadeq era, to obstruct the establishment of a democratic and independent Iran.

Today's Iran, however, is a whole different set of circumstances. The existence of a just, nationwide, legitimate and organized resistance will reduce their animosity to wishful thinking. Many analysts, personalities and representatives of the American people strongly oppose their policy, evaluating it as harmful to the United States' interests. Addressing a hearing of the Foreign Affairs Committee at the House of Representatives, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher indicated the increasing U.S. concern about Iran's nuclear activities: "Those who help, make it easier for Iran to sponsor terrorism and threaten peace. These countries must suffer the

consequences of their actions. We believe that the international community must take ever firmer steps in countering Iran's outlaw behavior. For this reason I propose to other countries to stop granting credit to Iran and refrain from every nuclear cooperation with Iran."⁶¹

The Secretary is absolutely correct, but everyone knows that the best way to help is to give political concessions to the mullahs' regime by brazenly attacking the Iranian people's just and legitimate Resistance, the sole democratic alternative to this terrorist outlaw. Therefore, the authors of the report and some officials of the Near East section of the State Department should be the first to take Mr. Christopher's advice seriously, and avoid "any form of cooperation" with the mullahs' regime, as contrary to the interests of the Iranian people and resistance. Anything short of this will encourage more of the mullahs' terrorism and violations of human rights, and, as they did in the Irangate affair, they must "suffer the consequences of their actions."

X

Democratic Alternative

Upon Massoud Rajavi's initiative, the National Council of Resistance of Iran was founded in July 1981 in Tehran. Functioning as the Iranian Parliament in exile, it was formed to overthrow the mullahs' religious dictatorship, establish a pluralistic democracy in Iran, and replace the rule of velayat-e faqih (guardianship of the supreme jurist) with national sovereignty. The NCR subsequently moved its headquarters to Paris.

In lengthy sessions in the second half of 1981 and early 1982, some lasting for weeks, the NCR drafted, adopted and published its constitution as well as the platform and immediate tasks of a provisional government, whose goal is to transfer sovereignty to the people of Iran. This will be done in "no more than six months after the fall of the Khomeini regime" with the election of a Constituent Assembly through a "ballot which will be direct and secret."¹

Rejecting the tyrannies of both the shah and Khomeini, the NCR invited all political personalities and organizations seeking democracy, independence and national sovereignty for Iran to join. According to the NCR constitution, "the Council's decisions are made with the approval of two-thirds of the attending members, provided that no objection is made by any of the member organizations."² Membership in the NCR is conditional upon "commitment" to its ratified decisions, and every new member must submit this commitment in writing to the NCR President along with his or her application to join the NCR. As per the constitution, requests for membership are discussed and voted on in the earliest session. The determining factor is the member's practical adherence to the Council's decisions, rather than full acceptance of them or of the platform. In other words, every

Council member can stick to his or her own views, and work to get them ratified by the Council through the democratic process outlined in the NCR constitution.

Currently, the NCR has 235 members,³ of different religious, non-religious, liberal and nationalist persuasions, as well as representatives of ethnic and religious minorities. They include six political opposition organizations. The remaining 229 are renowned political, cultural or social figures as well as specialists, artists, intellectuals, athletes, scientists, military officers and commanders of the National Liberation Army.

The National Council of Resistance and the Provisional Government adhere to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its related international covenants, including "freedom of association, freedom of thought and expression, media, political parties, trade unions, councils, religions and denominations, freedom of profession, and prevention of any violation of individual and social rights and of public freedoms."⁴

The NCR's declaration on the Relations of the Provisional Government with Religion and Denominations specifies: "All forms of discrimination against the followers of various religions and denominations in the enjoyment of their individual and social rights are prohibited. No citizens shall enjoy any privileges or be subject to any deprivations with respect to nomination for election, suffrage, employment, education, becoming a judge or any other individual or social rights, for reason of belief or non-belief in an particular religion or denomination."⁵

In its plan on women's rights, the NCR recognizes "the right to elect and be elected in all elections, and the right to suffrage in all referendums," "the right to employment and free selection of profession, and the right to hold any public or government position, office or profession, including the presidency or judgeship in all judicial institutions," "the right to freely choose clothing and covering," and "the right to use, without discrimination, all instructional, educational, athletic, and artistic resources; and the right to participate in all athletic competitions and artistic activities."⁶

The National Council of Resistance adopted a plan for the autonomy of Iranian Kurdistan, wherein it recognized the right of the people residing in that region to have their own legislative body run "the internal affairs of the autonomous region." It further specifies

that "the administration of all affairs of the autonomous region of Kurdistan," except for those related to foreign policy, national defense, national security, foreign trade and customs, "falls within the authority of the autonomous organs."⁷

The NCR's plan for peace with Iraq emphasizes the "undertaking of guarantees by both parties in arranging for the repatriation of both countries' refugees, and for those who have been driven out of their country, by proclaiming general amnesty and by safeguarding their lives and their properties." Article 7 of the plan emphasizes the "drawing up of the plan for a definitive peace treaty between the two countries based on full respect for national independence and sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-interference in internal affairs, good neighborliness and security of borders against encroachment."⁸

According to the Immediate Tasks ratified by the National Council of Resistance of Iran, "investigation of the crimes of the Khomeini regime's officials" will be "carried out in public courts with the presence of juries and international observers."⁹ The Provisional Government is committed to provide "the right of defense and the right of activity for lawyers' associations."¹⁰

The Provisional Government also accepts "national capitalism and the bazaar, private and personal ownership and investment."¹¹ It believes that "enmity towards industrial countries"¹² derives from the backward ideas of the Khomeini regime. While rejecting "unequal relations"¹³ in its program, it stresses that it does not "wish to and cannot live isolated from the surrounding world."¹⁴

The Provisional Government of the Democratic Islamic Republic of Iran and the National Council of Resistance will resign immediately after the Constituent Assembly's "declaration of its readiness to assume its responsibilities."¹⁵ The National Legislative and Constituent Assembly will be formed at "the latest, no more than six months after the fall of the Khomeini regime and the establishment of the Provisional Government."¹⁶ Appointing the new government, drafting the country's new constitution, and determining the new republican system are the tasks of the Constituent Assembly.¹⁷

Structure

In addition to the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran, discussed at length in the previous chapter, other NCR member-organizations are as follows:

The National Democratic Front (NDF)

A secular group, the NDF was reorganized in 1979. It is comprised of respected political figures who supported the late Dr. Mossadeq in the 1950s and '60s. Mr. Hedayat Matin-Daftari, Dr. Mossadeq's grandson and a distinguished lawyer and well-known advocate of human rights in Iran for many years, is the president of the NDF. During the shah's last years, he was elected vice-chairman of the Iranian Bar Association. One of the Front's founders, Shokrollah Paknejad, a renowned political figure for two decades, was executed by the Khomeini regime in 1981.

Association to Defend Iran's Independence and Democracy (DAD)

Founded in 1979, DAD is comprised of religious and secular Iranians as well as specialists and technocrats. Ayatollah Jalal Ganje'i heads the group. One of Khomeini's first students, Ayatollah Ganje'i ranks far above Khamenei and Hashemi Rafsanjani in the religious hierarchy, but parted ways with Khomeini because of his emphasis on the rule of the velayat e faqih and religious despotism. Ayatollah Ganje'i was a political prisoner under the shah and a candidate for the 1980 parliamentary elections from Rasht, northern Iran. A distinguished cleric, he is a well-known opponent of the fundamentalist interpretation of Islam.

The People's Fedayeen

This group split from the leftist Organization of Iranian People's Fedayeen Guerrillas and vehemently opposed dependence on the former Soviet Union. The original organization was formed in 1968 and waged armed struggle against the shah's dictatorship. It was the most popular and influential of the Marxist groups. Many members and sympathizers were executed under the shah.

In post-revolutionary Iran, however, the organization came under the influence of pro-Soviet elements, and subsequently split into various factions. The People's Fedayeen left the organization and drafted their own platform for a democratic system in Iran. They applied for membership in the NCR in 1984, and were accepted as a member in 1985. Mr. Mehdi Samé, a mechanical engineer who was imprisoned by the Shah from 1970 to 1978, is the organization's representative in the National Council of Resistance.

Towhidi Merchants Guild

The guild was formed in 1979 by industrialists and bazaar merchants opposed to Khomeini's dictatorship. Many of its secret members continue their commercial activities in Iran. Over the years, they have played an important role in providing financial backing for the Resistance. The traditional bazaar is crucial to the Iranian economy, and its opposition to the shah in the final years of his rule was instrumental in the fall of the monarchy. Mr. Ibrahim Mazandarani, a well-known businessman from Tabriz and a political prisoner under the shah, is the Guild's representative in the NCR. The Khomeini regime executed a number of members of the Towhidi Merchants Guild in the mid-1980s for giving financial aid to the Resistance.

Committed Professors of Iran's Universities and Schools of Higher Education

Also founded in 1979, this group is comprised of university professors and academics. Opposed to the regime's policies, especially the "Cultural Revolution," the group soon gained the support of a large segment of Iran's scholars. Dr. Mohammad Ali Sheikhi, former head of Tehran University's Technical Faculty, is the president of the group. A graduate of metallurgical engineering from the U.K., Dr. Sheikhi is the author of several books on technical and political issues.

The President and official spokesman of the National Council of Resistance is Mr. Massoud Rajavi. The Council has a secretariat and six secretaries who administer its affairs. The NCR's 18 committees function as the basis for the future Provisional Government. Seven of the committee chairs are from the Mojahedin, three from the National Democratic Front, one from the People's Fedayeen, one from the Committed Professors of Tehran Universities, one from the Association to Defend Iran's Democracy and Independence. The four remaining chairs are filled by independent personalities of different political persuasions.¹⁸ The average age of the NCR committee chairs is over 50. Nine of them have graduate degrees from France, Britain, the United States and Germany, and eight are graduates of Iranian

universities. The Chair of the Denominations and Freedom of Religion Committee is a cleric.

In its annual session in August 1993, the National Council of Resistance elected Mrs. Maryam Rajavi as President for the transitional period.¹⁹ Her term will begin after the mullahs' overthrow, and extend until the ratification of the new constitution by a freely elected National Legislative and Constituent Assembly, and the election of a new president. Her tasks will include "supreme supervision"²⁰ over "proper implementation of the NCR's declarations and decisions."²¹ She is authorized to undertake "the duties and responsibilities of the NCR President in his absence,"²² within the framework specified and ratified by the Council. The NCR's members agreed that the election of Mrs. Rajavi, as a symbol of national unity, is the best guarantee for the reconciliation of Iranian society, which has suffered severe spiritual and material harm under the mullahs. A woman head of state further ensures democracy and pluralism during the transitional period and the transfer of sovereignty to the people, they noted.

Based in Paris, Mrs. Rajavi has become the focal point of hope and attention of Iranians in the country and abroad. Since her election, thousands of Iranians, many distinguished professionals and specialists in Europe and North America, have actively involved themselves in the movement. They have written to Mrs. Rajavi, declaring their readiness to cooperate with the NCR committees and take part in the reconstruction of a prosperous Iran. Renowned Iranian artists, banned from performing or forced into exile, have also declared solidarity with the President-elect's efforts to build a free Iran. In July 1994, Marzieh, Iran's legendary singer with a remarkable 50-year record, left Iran for France to announce her support for Mrs. Rajavi.

Mrs. Rajavi, 42, a metallurgical engineer, was a leader of the Iranian student movement in the 1970s. One of her sisters was killed under the shah and another, pregnant at the time of arrest, was executed along with her husband in the Khomeini regime's prisons.

In August 1993, the NCR chose the Lion and Sun as the Council's official emblem, placing it on the Iranian flag. "Since ancient times, the Lion and Sun has been the symbol of safeguarding Iran from evil,"²³ said the Council. For 12 years, the national Iranian anthem, "O' Iran, Land of Pearls," has been the NCR's official anthem.

Deliberate Exclusion

The Council's positions, constitution and structure, briefly reviewed in this chapter, have been detailed in its publications in the past. In the State Department's treatment of this issue, unfortunately, the authors intentionally ignored the Council as an independent entity, and discussed it as part of the Mojahedin. The report makes baseless allegations and intentionally distorts several issues to deny that the National Council of Resistance is the regime's only viable alternative.

The authors lash out at the Mojahedin for not making notorious operatives of the shah's SAVAK and bogus, non-existent groups members of the NCR. It is more than inconsistent to accord these non-entities - alliance with whom would discredit the Resistance - such stature, while belittling the Mojahedin's allies in the Council.

It is perfectly true that the Mojahedin, as the most popular political and military force in Iran, are the largest member of the National Council of Resistance. For this reason, the Council deserves all the more credit for establishing a democratic process which grants the Mojahedin exactly the same rights as other Council members. The remnants of the shah's regime and Khomeini's mullahs have tried for years to portray the Mojahedin and National Council of Resistance as one entity with two names. It is unfortunate that the Department of State has not referred to any of the detailed, well-documented responses of the Iranian Resistance.

Appeasing Tehran's Mullahs, published in September while the report was being prepared, replied specifically to the allegations reiterated in Ms. Sherman's letter to Rep. Torricelli in July 1994. Three chapters of the book were devoted to detailed responses, including documents, which proved the charges were unfounded. As in previous cases, the book was provided to the State Department by the House Foreign Affairs Committee. In response to repeated objections by congressmen to the Department's refusal to hear the Mojahedin or NCR representatives, officials stated on numerous occasions that they were aware of Mojahedin publications and would consider them. They also claimed that their research team had reviewed all the Mojahedin and NCR publications from the 1960s through October 1994. The falsity of the claim only underlines their political insincerity.

In 1993, in reply to inquiries by members of Congress, the Department claimed that the Mojahedin and NCR are one and the same. Mohammad Mohaddessin, Chairman of the NCR Foreign Affairs Committee, wrote in this regard²⁴ to representatives Ronald Dellums (D-CA) and Dan Burton (R-IN). A copy of his letters was later sent to President Clinton. Mr. Mohaddessin wrote:

The [State Department's] "fact sheets" say: "The close links between the NCR and PMOI make the two organizations virtually indistinguishable." This claim is supported by the observation that "Massoud Rajavi would have sole responsibility for the appointment of cabinet ministers under the provisional government." In response, it must be asked which democratic tradition faults a close relationship between a political organization (the Mojahedin) and the political coalition (NCR) of which it is a member, and cites that relationship as indicative of the two being "indistinguishable"? In addition, does the President of the United States "not have sole responsibility for the appointment of cabinet ministers"? As specified in the NCR's constitution, Mr. Rajavi is responsible for nominating cabinet ministers, who must be confirmed by the NCR's membership, which is also authorized to impeach ministers in office. The provisional government is duty-bound to comply with the NCR's resolutions. Is this same procedure not followed in the U.S.?

In article 8 of its constitution, the National Council of Resistance specifies: "The right to question and to interpolate the Provisional Government, or any of its members, is reserved for every member of the Council."²⁵ In article 7, it specifies that the Provisional Government is duty-bound to "act in accordance with the program and the immediate tasks assigned to the Provisional Government and in accordance with the Council's future decisions" and to undertake the administration of affairs for six months. As Mr. Rajavi stressed in August 1993, when he introduced the chairs of the NCR committees, the Provisional Government is a coalition government. Only seven of the 18 chairs of the NCR committees are from the Mojahedin; the rest are renowned personalities, neither ideologically nor organizationally affiliated with the Mojahedin, of varied political views.

The State Department's claim about the two being "indistinguishable" is supported by the observation that leading NCR representatives are also closely affiliated with, if not members of, the PMOI. As mentioned, the NCR serves as a parliamentary body;

therefore, some members of the Mojahedin - or of other organizations belonging to the NCR - are also members of the NCR. Far from being concealed, this issue was publicly announced. Indeed, according to the Department's logic, the U.S. Congress and Republican Party should be faulted for being "indistinguishable," because all congressional committees and sub-committees are chaired by Republicans. As mentioned, 60% of the NCR's committees are chaired by non-Mojahedin members.

Actually, the NCR demonstrated that it is even a step ahead of democratic countries when, in the fall of 1991, it declared that any NCR representative in a given country who belongs to a member-organization must relinquish his or her membership in that organization to fulfill the responsibilities of an NCR representative without regard to any organizational duties or posts, and in complete impartiality.

Ignoring the Facts

The report asserts: "Although the NCR claims that it is a democratic organization, its practices do not sustain the rhetoric."²⁶ In another reference the report states, "The Mojahedin determined who could join... who was worthy of being given... voting rights... Critics were either squeezed out of the National Council or silenced."²⁷ The charges are utterly baseless.

As detailed earlier in this chapter, the Council's constitution entitles all members to an equal vote in the decision-making process, and all member-organizations have the right to veto. The NCR's constitution does not discriminate between members, and there are no amendments that make an exception of one or more members, under any circumstances. The NCR president is not entitled to any special powers in crisis situations, in contrast to virtually every other political organization or government, including the government of the United States of America, which grants special powers to the head of state or organization to enable it to react quickly to special circumstances.

The Iranian Resistance is confronting the most brutal dictatorship of our times; the circumstances are never ordinary. Nevertheless, all NCR decisions are made with the agreement of two-thirds of the members present, provided that no member organization vetoes the decision. Members and those familiar with the NCR's conduct over

the years will testify that all of the Council's decisions in the last 14 years have been made in a completely democratic fashion and in accordance with the above procedures. At the same time, any of the member-organizations can block the adoption or implementation of any plan by exercising their veto powers. Thus, neither the Mojahedin, nor the NCR president, nor any other person or organization can impose its will on the body. Those who accuse the NCR of not being democratic would do well to cite one single case where the Mojahedin or the NCR president have breached these constitutional regulations.²⁸

The report states, "Once a *bona fide* coalition, the Council disintegrated in the 1980s, when many of the resistance groups that had joined in 1981 left the organization because of their objections to Rajavi's dictatorial methods and his unilateral decision to ally with Iraq."²⁹ The Department accepts that the Council was initially a viable one, and, therefore, internal democratic processes were observed at the time. The Council's constitution has not changed.³⁰

The report bases its finding on Bani-Sadr's and the KDP's "withdrawal," and concludes that they "prompted a mass exodus."³¹ As explained in detail in chapter I, neither Bani-Sadr nor the Kurdistan Democratic Party left the Council. Both were expelled by unanimous vote for violating the NCR constitution and program, i.e. violating the internal democratic process of the Council. There was no "mass exodus" and no "unilateral decision to ally with Iraq." The attempt to thus explain the so-called withdrawal of the KDP is so shallow that the authors have overlooked the fact that this party enjoyed active contacts with the Iraqi government and had a presence in that country long before Mr. Rajavi met with Mr. Aziz in Paris in 1983 or moved there in 1986.

Furthermore, the withdrawal or expulsion of one or more members from a political coalition has never been indicative of an absence of democracy within that movement. Since the election of the Clinton administration, for instance, many top officials have been fired, or have resigned for personal reasons or because of differences with the President. Political alliances and coalitions are formed on the basis of common enemies and shared values. They are prone to change. There is no basis for inferring that a coalition is undemocratic because some individuals or parties have left it. There have been numerous cases of individuals or even groups splitting off from the

Democratic or Republican party, for example. These people have gone on to form their own platforms due to differences with other members or the party leadership. This in no way indicates an absence of democracy or the use of dictatorial methods by that leadership.

Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran

Among the sources the State Department cites in describing the NCR as undemocratic is a letter from the KDP that states, "In view of our working experience with the Mojahedin between 1981 and 1986 and of their attitude toward the Iranian democratic opposition since then, we consider the Mojahedin an anti-democratic and sectarian organization who can not be trusted to be faithful to democratic aspirations of the Iranian people."³² To establish the truth, or lack of it, of the allegation that the KDP's "working experience" revealed the Mojahedin to be "anti-democratic and sectarian," it is necessary to briefly review the history of relations between the Party and the Mojahedin.

Like other Iranian Kurdish groups, the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran nominated Massoud Rajavi as the democratic opposition's candidate in the 1980 presidential elections. Subsequently, Abdol Rahman QassemLou, the KDP Secretary General, referred to Rajavi as his "elder brother." He sought a more extensive Mojahedin representation and attendance at their headquarters in Kurdistan. At the beginning of the armed resistance, a number of Mojahedin went to the KDP's political bureau headquarters on the western border of Iran. Before installing their own radio transmitters, the Mojahedin used the KDP's small transmitter for nine months to broadcast their radio messages and programs. The presence of the Mojahedin in this area provided precious political backing for the Party, which Mr. QassemLou warmly welcomed.

In October 1981, immediately after Mr. Rajavi announced the program of the Provisional Government, the KDP joined the NCR and recognized it as "the unique alternative." In subsequent official statements, Mr. QassemLou described his Party's alliance with the National Council of Resistance as a source of pride and honor, reflecting the desire of all the people of Kurdistan.

On the NCR's second anniversary in 1983, the KDP Secretary General asserted in his message:

Democracy Betrayed

The emphasis that the National Council of Resistance is the only democratic alternative is not a hollow motto, but a statement of fact, because... there are no other alternatives. The American-made monarchist groups cannot be called alternatives. Firstly, our history and bloody struggles of the past years have once and forever buried monarchy in our country. Secondly, "monarchists" and "constitutional monarchists" cannot become democratic alternatives... Since its formation, the key to the National Council of Resistance is that its main force is the People's Mojahedin, an organization which has bravely risen up against the Khomeini regime; an authentic organization which has grown from within the heart of the society and has a revolutionary history; an organization which understood that the Khomeini regime could not be overthrown except through armed struggle, the principal form of struggle. The presence of the People's Mojahedin in the National Council of Resistance guarantees the Council's non-compromise with the Khomeini regime. It also attests to the fact that the NCR is a revolutionary alternative, which will not reconcile itself to the mullahs' regime.³³

In September 1983, the Mojahedin announced their views on the autonomy of the Kurds within the framework of Iran's territorial integrity. Subsequently, in a letter to the Mojahedin in the fall of that year, the KDP Secretary General described the Mojahedin's position as "a cause of joy for members of the Democratic Party and all the people of Iranian Kurdistan."³⁴ He emphasized that the policy "will be very effective in reinforcing the National Council of Resistance as the only democratic alternative."³⁵ Subsequently, the KDP politburo also praised the Mojahedin's views, adding: "The announcement of these positions is a firm response to all those who do not know the Mojahedin and think that their talk of Kurdish autonomy is tactical and that the Mojahedin do not believe in the people's right to determine their own destiny."³⁶ In an interview with Voice of Kurdistan, December 15, 1983, Dr. Qassem lou acknowledged: "The People's Mojahedin Organization played a remarkable role during the discussions and negotiations on the plan [for the autonomy of Iranian Kurdistan]. It made a tremendous effort to have this plan ratified in its present form."³⁷

Several months later, in April 1984, the KDP, along with the Council's other members, signed a declaration stressing that the NCR was the only viable democratic alternative. It said of the Council's peace plan:

The National Council of Resistance would like to once again declare that the measures taken to date in support of peace (i.e. the meeting between the

NCR president and Iraq's vice-premier; drafting of a peace plan and efforts to have it ratified in international bodies; peace campaigns inside Iran; call on soldiers to disobey Khomeini's war directives, leave the fronts and join the Resistance's forces; and call for a halt to the bombardment of cities and towns) are not only endorsed, but praiseworthy. The National Council of Resistance, as the only democratic alternative in view of its program and that of the future government, will in future do anything in its power to advance its peace plan in the interests of the Iranian people. The National Council of Resistance considers a consistent defense of peace as patriotic, progressive, and humanitarian.³⁸

Along with other members of the Council, the KDP also signed a declaration on September 28, 1984, which provides an unambiguous response to the State Department allegations today. The declaration reads in part:

The claim that the Council has no independent existence and what does exist is principally "a puppet of the Mojahedin" is not new. The monarchists, Bani-Sadr and his newspaper have for some time repeated this claim. Our compatriots, however, should know of the Council's internal relations and be aware that: Firstly, despite all the slander by the aforementioned newspaper, the Council has not made any political decision to date that it has not made public. Secondly, it was Bani-Sadr who unjustly benefited from an exceptional and advantageous position in the Council. Bani-Sadr, adhering to a double standard, was the Council's president and at the same time never felt bound by his signature to the Council's program and ratifications. Rajavi was criticized repeatedly by other Council members for the unusual flexibility and special consideration that he had observed in respect to Bani-Sadr since the Council's formation. Nevertheless, Council members never lost their confidence in Rajavi. Rajavi never had any political negotiations with Bani-Sadr about which he did not inform the Council, and the Council never made any decisions that Rajavi did not enact, let alone not counteract. Therefore, claims of "personal dealings" by Rajavi with Bani-Sadr, although they reflect the personal wishes of the publishers of Bani-Sadr's paper, are totally false.³⁹

As the struggle became prolonged, the Kurdistan Democratic Party began whispering about the legitimacy of negotiating with the Khomeini regime. The issue was first raised that same year with Ibrahim Zakeri, then the Mojahedin's representative in Kurdistan. He was told privately, "If the Mojahedin will guarantee that they will overthrow the regime within six months, establishing the NCR in power, we will discontinue our negotiations with the regime for up

to six months. Otherwise, we cannot struggle for 25 years."

Negotiating with the mullahs' regime was a blatant violation of the constitution of the National Council of Resistance. The KDP had itself repeatedly emphasized that "the Council must insist on its principles. Any infringement or deviation from these principles will lead to the NCR's loss of credibility... Doubtless, the secret to success lies in respect for mutual commitments, adherence to the NCR's accepted principles, and endeavoring to put them into practice."⁴⁰

By October 1983, the Khomeini regime's suppressive forces had driven the Kurdistan Democratic Party out of its last footholds in the villages and regions on the western Iranian border, forcing it to establish its bases on Iraqi soil. Since the Kurdistan Democratic Party mostly relied on local *Peshmarga*, whose sphere of activity was limited to the area wherein they lived (as opposed to educated urban combatants), this loss of territory severely reduced the Party's capabilities and demoralized its leadership, some of whom began to view their only solution as reconciliation with the mullahs.

Kurdistan, the KDP's official organ, first reported on the negotiations between the Party and the Khomeini regime's agents in September 1984. The policy was immediately condemned in an NCR session. The NCR President and a number of Council members warned Qassemloo against pursuing the policy, but to no avail. Finally, in a statement on November 3, 1984, the Mojahedin condemned the Party's actions and called for "mutual adherence" to the "common obligations" set forth by the National Council of Resistance.⁴¹ Subsequently, the NCR President and members did their utmost to dissuade the Kurdistan Democratic Party from approaching the regime. The letters as well as the minutes of the sessions held in this regard are available.

In the NCR's session on January 7, 1985, "all of the members attending the session, except the Kurdistan Democratic Party... condemned political negotiations with the regime, described them as contrary to the signed commitments to the Council."⁴² In that session, Rajavi addressed Qassemloo, the KDP's Secretary General, in front of all members, saying that if, as Qassemloo had stated, the Party's problem was a shortage of arms or funds, and that this was why they had caved in to the mullahs, the Mojahedin were willing to share (whatever they had). Immediately afterwards, as a goodwill gesture, Rajavi ordered the Mojahedin to give their own guns to Qassemloo's

party. To everyone's shock, Qassemloo first pointed out that he wanted metalstock automatic rifles, rather than woodstock automatic rifles, adding that he preferred money to guns. Rajavi ordered that he be provided with a map of Iran and 100,000 French francs.⁴³ Several days later, the KDP representative in France acknowledged receiving the assistance. A week later, however, Qassemloo sent the money back, and it became amply clear that shortages of funds and arms had been but an excuse, particularly since Qassemloo also demanded his "party's right of independence" to establish contacts and negotiate with the Khomeini regime.

In a message on February 11, 1985, the NCR President addressed the KDP, stating: "I sincerely and most honestly appeal to the Kurdistan Democratic Party to honor the sacrifice of our nation's martyrs, particularly the Kurdish *Peshmarga*, and announce, in no uncertain terms, its decision not to resume any political negotiations with the anti-human enemy at present or in future."⁴⁴ Mr. Rajavi specified: "I sincerely hope that the Democratic Party will make a firm decision and boycott all political negotiations with the illegitimate Khomeini regime... and thereby provide for the elimination of its differences [with the NCR]."

Unfortunately, the appeals were in vain. Finally, in April 1985, after six months of futile negotiations with the KDP, the National Council of Resistance unanimously decided to terminate its cooperation with the Kurdistan Democratic Party, and expelled it from the coalition on the basis that the KDP's "political negotiations with the Khomeini regime, contradicting Article 1 of the Constitution of the National Council of Resistance, are considered a fundamental violation of the Council's existence, nullifying its membership in the NCR."

Significantly, Qassemloo never sought to leave the NCR, and did his best to retain the benefits of membership while negotiating with the Khomeini regime. He knew well that he would not find other allies like the Mojahedin or other NCR members.

A Persian-language bulletin published abroad wrote at the time:

This so-called politburo of the Kurdistan Democratic Party wants... to overthrow the Islamic Republic regime and believes it is futile to negotiate with it, and at the same time sees such negotiations as useful and is willing to forego all intentions of toppling the regime. It seems that the politburo has forgotten its motto of "democracy for Iran, autonomy for Kurdistan."

While they pretend to speak from a position of strength, despite losing their lands, there are numerous indications that the inclination to negotiate with the regime actually emanates from the weakness overcoming the Kurdish fighters, unequal in strength and despairing of achieving a military victory. The politburo has therefore concluded that it must allow for political negotiations at any cost.⁴⁵

As attested by the minutes of the NCR sessions, immediately after QassemLou was himself established in Iraq, he repeatedly encouraged the NCR President to move to that country. He also persistently asked the Mojahedin to assassinate Edris and Massoud Barzani, brothers who were leaders of the Iraqi Kurds and at the time residing west of Tehran. Mr. Rajavi vehemently rejected the proposals.⁴⁶ While a member of the NCR, QassemLou continuously asked for more and more financial, military, technical, public relations and medical support from the Mojahedin. For their part, the Mojahedin did not have any qualms about helping the KDP as much as they could.

Some of the pertinent documents are available. One is signed by Dr. Sadeq Sharafkandi, then the Party's number-two man, later to succeed QassemLou as Secretary General and, like his predecessor, to be assassinated by the Khomeini regime. Signing as Saeid Badal, his *nom de guerre*, on April 15, 1984, Sharafkandi wrote: "On behalf of my comrades in the leadership and all members and supporters of the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran, particularly the personnel of the radio, I would like to extend my most sincere gratitude to the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran for two years of unrelenting support and cooperation." The statement is in reference to the lengthy period during which the "anti-democratic and sectarian" Mojahedin broadcast the KDP's daily radio program.⁴⁷ As Abdollah Hayaki, known as Mamousta Abdollah (the incumbent successor to the Party's leadership) had pointed out in an October 23, 1983, letter to the Mojahedin, "The Mojahedin's radio was the only possible way for the Party to broadcast Voice of Kurdistan."⁴⁸

Most important was the political support the Mojahedin and other members of the NCR afforded the KDP vis-à-vis the Khomeini regime's malicious political attacks, even prior to the formation of the Council. In his first speech after Khomeini seized power in February 1979, Mr. Rajavi defended the rights of the people of Iranian Kurdistan and spoke of the need to eliminate the dual oppression

they endured.⁴⁹ Later, despite the mullahs' harassment and violent attacks, the Mojahedin, as the only nationwide, Muslim, democratic force, advocated defense of Kurdish rights on a national scale. Khomeini, who had issued death decrees for the Kurdish leaders, was enraged at the Mojahedin's support for the Kurds and lashed out at the organization for speaking on their behalf.

Obviously, the differences between the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the National Council of Resistance of Iran did not, as the State Department has suggested, relate to "the lack of democracy" within the NCR, but to the KDP's desire to compromise with the Tehran regime and the NCR's insistence on the need to establish democracy in Iran. Just as today, the dispute between the State Department and the Iranian Resistance relates to the issue of negotiations with this "permanent feature" and the NCR's insistence on replacing Khomeini's dictatorship with a pluralistic democracy.

Some time later, Jalil Gadani, Secretary General of the faction which split from the KDP, revealed that an associate of QassemLou had told him: "Some time ago, QassemLou reached an agreement with the regime to oppose the Mojahedin." Same old story. Opposition to the Mojahedin and National Council of Resistance is a prelude to compromise and rapprochement with the Khomeini regime. For his part, Mr. Rajavi told QassemLou and his group: "I hope that the KDP's distancing itself from us will be limited, and that its endeavors to negotiate with the regime will not prove harmful to the party. Even if the Party continues to churn out slander against us, however, I will continue to wish them well, because I hope to never see their future ruined."⁵⁰ The Mojahedin also emphasized that negotiating with the regime was both futile and dangerous, and would expose them to the mullahs' terrorists. Today, not only QassemLou, but also his successor as KDP Secretary General have been assassinated by the Khomeini regime's agents, confirming, however regrettably, the accuracy of the Iranian Resistance's predictions.

The National Council of Resistance also condemned the armed conflict between the KDP and Koumula (another Iranian Kurdish group) and their indiscriminate slaughter of POWs, as well as their various forms of extorting ordinary people. In this light, QassemLou's sudden transformation into a "democrat" upon his arrival in Europe is somewhat startling.

The KDP's reconciliation and negotiations with the Khomeini

regime were accompanied by blatantly undemocratic relations within the Party, as Qassemlou's former friends began revealing in spring 1988. Many of the party's veteran officials and well-known figures opposed the policy,⁵¹ as did many ordinary Kurdish people, who wrote letters to the NCR President to this effect.

Qassemlou and his colleagues gradually squeezed all opponents out of key positions in the party. In 1987, Qassemlou forced the Party Congress to support a fixed slate for the politburo, designed in a way to preclude opposition to the negotiation policy. Consequently, 15 members of the leadership split off and formed the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran- Revolutionary Leadership. This new party strongly opposed the policy of negotiations with the regime and maintained close ties with the Mojahedin and National Council of Resistance.

In conclusion, it is important to note that Qassemlou's humiliating submission to the mullahs' regime severely damaged his Party's prestige. Still dreaming of the regime's moderation, after the cease-fire in the Iran-Iraq war he expressed surprise in an interview with the BBC that nobody from the regime was interested in talking to the KDP. A short while later, a Guards Corps commander in Kurdistan said nobody was interested in what he had to sell, but if he wanted, "he can return to the cradle of Islam and be granted clemency."

About Democracy

The State Department suggests that the National Council of Resistance and the Mojahedin are "undemocratic" because of their refusal to form a coalition with historically anti-democratic forces tied to the shah and Khomeini. The report states: "Other opposition groups which never became part of the Council and with whom the NCR refuses to associate include: the monarchists, notably the Iranian Constitutionalists and the Flag of Freedom Organization of Iran; and the main factions of the People's Fedayeen Guerrillas."⁵² The report also says: "In an early demonstration of its intolerance for dissent, the Mojahedin refused to allow the participation of the Liberation movement (also known as the Freedom Party), a prominent liberal opposition group,"⁵³ and refused to admit the communist Tudeh.⁵⁴ The authors of the report add: "Other resistance groups were wary of the Mojahedin's brand of revolutionary Islam. The National Front

(Mossadeq's nationalist party) refused to join the Council because it objected to the concept of Islamic government. Two other Marxist organizations, which similarly objected to the religious aspect of the Mojahedin's ideology, also refused to join.⁵⁵ A brief look at the nature, actions and political history of these groups, for whose exclusion the State Department castigates the Mojahedin, establishes that the Department's representations about democratic concerns have been less than sincere.

The Freedom Movement

The Freedom Movement, led by Mehdi Bazargan, the first prime minister after the fall of the shah, is one of the State Department's favorite groups. The movement is avowedly loyal to the Islamic Republic regime, despite occasional nagging at the mullahs. It does not seek to replace that regime, and considers itself a "loyal opposition." Even after the start of mass executions in 1981, the group reiterated its pledge of allegiance.⁵⁶ During the executions *en masse* of political prisoners in summer 1988, the Freedom Movement emphasized that no members of the nationalist, popular groups had been killed. The party's inclusion or exclusion from the National Council of Resistance, which believes the fundamentalist regime should be replaced with a democratic government, is, therefore, a non-issue.

On many occasions, Mr. Rajavi called on the group to renounce its support for the regime and cease acting as a political foil. In 1985, when Bazargan traveled to Germany, Mr. Rajavi wrote to urge him not to return to Iran and to complicity in the regime's crimes.⁵⁷ Regrettably, Bazargan and his colleagues preferred to continue what they themselves described as their "cowardly and treacherous life" under the regime. Bazargan has since passed away. After his death, Mr. Rajavi commented that Bazargan's political life was a testament to the irreformability of the mullahs' regime. A decade ago, the Iranian Resistance's Leader told him that he would never be restored to power under the mullahs. Fortunately, in the last days of his life, Bazargan testified to the Khomeini regime's inability to reform. In an interview with *Frankfurter Rundschau* on January 12, 1995, Bazargan estimated the popular base of the mullahs' regime at less than 5%, adding that the mullahs "will commit so many evil deeds that they perish because of it."

Tudeh Party & Fedayeen Majority

The Iranian Communist Tudeh Party was formed in 1942, during the Soviet occupation of northwestern Iran during the Second World War. The party, from its inception, acted as a KGB proxy in Iran and pursued policies dictated by the Soviets. In the 1940s, the Tudeh attracted a large following in Iran's northern provinces by manipulating the unfamiliarity of the populace with its goals and the special international circumstances prevailing at the time. Many Iranian army officers joined the Tudeh.

The Soviets distrusted Dr. Mossadeq, objecting to his opposition to special privileges for Moscow in Iran's northern oil fields. Toeing the Soviet line, the Tudeh obstructed, opposed and attacked Dr. Mossadeq. In the aftermath of the 1953 coup that reinstated the shah, the Tudeh was also suppressed. Many Tudeh members were arrested; all of their arrested leaders eventually cooperated fully with the shah. Many former Tudeh leaders later became SAVAK and court officials. The Tudeh's tainted past undermined its credibility among Iranians.

Some Tudeh leaders who had sought sanctuary in the Soviet Union and East Germany, returned to Iran with the fall of the Shah in 1979 and reestablished the party apparatus. Not surprisingly, in blind obedience to Moscow, the Tudeh collaborated with the mullahs until 1984, when they were arrested by the Khomeini regime. The party admitted to cooperating with the *Pasdaran* against the Mojahedin and other opponents. In summer of 1981, the Tudeh Secretary General, Nooreddin Kianouri, issued an outrageous call to the French government to extradite Massoud Rajavi to the Khomeini regime. The party supported the mass executions of 1981 and wrote in its newspaper that "Rajavi and U.S. imperialism" were responsible for the killings. After the arrests of 1984, and particularly after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the party slipped into oblivion.

The Fedayeen Majority is a faction of the Organization of People's Fedayeen Guerrillas of Iran. This Marxist-Leninist organization was formed in the late 1960s and waged armed struggle against the shah. After the fall of the monarchy, a major split occurred in the group and a faction calling itself the Majority joined ranks with the Tudeh in 1979. This group mimicked Tudeh policies and, much like the Tudeh, was allied with the regime until the arrest of its members in 1984. The group's treachery knew no bounds. Its members cooperated

with Khomeini's *Pasdarán* in the interrogation and torture of Mojahedin and other political prisoners.⁵⁸ The Majority marched in step with the Tudeh, calling Mojahedin policies "liberal" and advantageous to U.S. interests. Today, the regime and its allies essentially make the most of their hysteric enmity toward the Mojahedin.

The National Front

The National Front, led by Dr. Mohammad Mossadeq, was formed in the late 1940s. It was a popular movement which represented different sectors of Iranian society. After the shah was restored in 1953, the National Front was, for all practical purposes, dissolved. In the 1960s, during Kennedy's presidency, the Second National Front was founded, but its activities came to end with the crackdown in the winter and spring of 1963. Dr. Mossadeq never endorsed the Second National Front from his home in exile. After 1963, the Third National Front was formed abroad, yet it, too, was rapidly dismantled.

In the wake of the shah's overthrow, Dr. Mossadeq's followers founded the National Democratic Front in 1979. The NDF is presently a member of the NCR.

In recent years, various individuals in Europe have occasionally announced the formation of the "National Front." Most have been linked to the regime. One, Ahmad Anvari, put out a publication, *Jebhey-e Melliyoun*, for some time in London. The publication, devoted to opposing the Mojahedin, was halted in 1991, and Anvari returned to Iran, where he closely cooperates with the clerical regime. The regime has on occasion also misappropriated the name of the National Front to issue statements against the Iranian Resistance. A recent incident involved statements issued in Washington, D.C., against the July march in support of the NCR's President-elect. In reality, however, today there is no such group as the "National Front." Perhaps the State Department can provide an organizational address indicating otherwise.

If the Department is using the term "National Front" in reference to Mr. Karim Sanjabi, the first foreign minister of the Khomeini regime and a leader of the Second National Front, it should be pointed out that in his memoirs, published in 1989, Sanjabi specified that "The National Front now lacks any organizational structure" and "the publications presently put out under the name of the National

Front... are not official organs." Sanjabi added that he had learned much to his regret that some members of the National Front had "opportunistically or to earn a living" turned to Shapour Bakhtiar and "receive salaries from him."

The authors can rest assured that nothing is left of the National Front but its name. A coalition cannot extend membership to a non-entity. Any questions in this regard can be referred to Sanjabi, now 90 years of age and a resident of the U.S.

In his memoirs, Sanjabi has written that one of his points of departure with the Mojahedin was "the latter's acceptance of the Kurdistan Democratic Party and membership of Dr. Qassem lou in the NCR." "Where did the KDP and Qassem lou get the right," he asks, "to demand autonomy on behalf of the people of Kurdistan?"⁵⁸ Sanjabi adds: "Qassem lou and his gang, like the Koumula, are really secessionists and are linked to the policies of foreigners. They want to cover up their true nature."

Despite his differences with the Mojahedin, Sanjabi says in his book:

The struggle and sacrifices of the Mojahedin against the despotic, ignorant and anti-Iranian regime of the mullahs are irrefutable... And one cannot deny the fact that the heroic operations of those men and women who tied bombs around their waists and sacrificed their lives to eliminate the blood-thirsty enemy are amazing manifestations of bravery and of the historic resistance of this nation against oppression and injustice. The Mojahedin have sacrificed their lives more than any other group. Thousands of them have been executed, and thousands more are suffering under torture in prisons. No movement and no organization which struggles against the mullahs' despotic regime can and must not ever ignore the tremendous impact of their struggle.⁵⁹

Monarchists

As far as the monarchists are concerned, claims of their existence in Iran are farcical. For all practical purposes, they are an extinct species within Iran. There is not one instance of activity by a monarchist group inside Iran that would support the notion that they have some sort of support or even actually exist.

Among Iranians abroad, there are a number of "organizations" and individuals who profess support for the monarchy. They do not, however, represent anyone or anything but themselves and their "organizations," usually a mere post office box address or an

answering service. Essentially, their only activity, at the behest of their benefactors, is to issue statements opposing the Mojahedin, for use in branding the National Council of Resistance of Iran as "undemocratic."⁶⁰

More importantly, however, these groups' officials are essentially former members of the shah's regime, and are therefore implicated in that regime's crimes, especially during its last 25 years. These are the same people who were ousted from Iran by the entirety of the Iranian nation, and their return to power in Iran is about as likely as the return of monarchy to France. All political and ethical principles aside, it is common sense that union with such notorious forces would only disgrace the Mojahedin and NCR, and serve as a propaganda windfall for the regime, which would promptly label the Mojahedin as supporters of the return of monarchy to Iran. If such alliances are a gauge of democracy, we would rather leave them to these people's advocates in the State Department

For instance, one of the groups mentioned in the report is the Flag of Freedom. Previously the State Department referred to the group as the Campaign for Democracy and Human Rights in Iran.⁶¹ The group is headed by Manouchehr Ganji, a former minister until the final days of the shah's regime. Ganji was also a high-ranking official of the SAVAK. During his studies abroad, he was responsible for surveillance of opposition student activities. In the 1970s, he was head of the College of Law at Tehran University, a post from which he was ousted by students for his involvement with the shah's secret police.

Another group mentioned is the Iranian Constitutionalists. According to the group's handful of members, it has never taken shape. Mehrdad Khonsari, referred to as its spokesman, has said: "We never succeeded in bringing together all of the different monarchist tendencies. It is obvious now that this is much more difficult than we had thought, and I don't think it will happen anytime in the near future."⁶²

Indeed, any knowledgeable Iran observer cannot but regard this part of the report, its criticisms and lessons on democracy, as utterly ridiculous. In the words of the Leader of the Iranian Resistance, the best yardstick for evaluating the democratic nature of a movement is the extent to which it has put up a fight against dictatorship and the degree to which it is willing to sacrifice for democracy. If that is

the case, the Mojahedin have passed and repassed their test for three decades.

The Crux of the Matter

The National Council of Resistance of Iran welcomes diverse political views and its doors are open to all democratic forces. The NCR's program represents the common denominator of the political agendas of its members. Any prospective member can join the Council by accepting its program. This does not necessarily mean that they must forgo their own political or ideological preferences. All are free to hold their own views, even if they differ from those of other members, including the Mojahedin. All can strive to add items from their agendas to the Council's platform by participating in the democratic process recognized in the Council. The groups mentioned by the State Department, however, have no record of believing in or abiding by democratic principles. The NCR has never cooperated with them, nor is there any reason to believe it will do so in the future. Any cooperation with such groups violates the NCR's founding principles and its goal to end dictatorship and establish democracy in Iran. One of the primary reasons for the Council's endurance and unity vis-a-vis the mullahs' religious, terrorist dictatorship is the insistence on these very principles and the refusal to join ranks with such groups.

After 10 years of animosity and the same old accusations against the Mojahedin and NCR, the State Department has nothing new to add to its accusations - an admission of the NCR's non-collaboration with such groups. The Department further admits that the NCR was initially a "bona fide coalition" consisting of "many elements of the Iranian opposition." In previous communications as well, the Department has confirmed that "The NCR did, at its inception, include a diverse range of Iranian opposition groups." Therefore, in all fairness it must be said that if the absence of such groups did not prevent the Department from assessing the NCR as a bona fide coalition then, it should not, logically, be a factor now. We can only conclude, therefore, that such excuses now are intended to further a policy so disgraceful that the Department hesitates to come out with it.

The Khomeini regime is at its lowest point, engulfed in economic and social crises. Corruption is rampant. The problem of succession in the religious leadership is irresolvable, creating deep splits in the

higher echelons and desertions among the ranks of the very supporters upon whom the regime relies for suppression. Public discontent is on the rise. Rafsanjani has failed, despite Western hopes to the contrary. Even many "moderation" theorists in the West have admitted that ahead lies only deepening crises. On the other hand, regardless of the State Department's allegations, there is no serious contender for power in Iran other than the National Council of Resistance. Precisely because there is such an alternative, all of the regime's problems quickly turn into political issues that threaten its existence. Therefore, the Iranian Resistance has a greater chance than ever before of establishing democracy in Iran. This does not sit right with the holdouts for Irangate and supporters of essentially the same policy that resulted in the 1953 coup.

The unrealistic inflation of persons and groups that have no chance in Iran is but a propaganda ploy to weaken the resistance. It is, moreover, futile, because the circumstances in Iran today are different from those of 1953. The Department is ill-advised to pursue a line which will lead to yet another policy failure in Iran.

XI

Popular Base

The State Department report alleges that the Mojahedin and Iranian Resistance lack popularity and a social base. While only the electorate can best gauge the popularity of a person or a political organization, the prevailing repression in Iran eliminates the possibility of a valid public opinion poll.

In a letter to Rep. Lee Hamilton in 1984, the State Department acknowledged that between 1979 and 1981, before the imposition of total repression and despite the many limitations on their activities, "The Mojahedin rallies attracted hundreds of thousands of people."¹ The Department also noted that the Mojahedin were the only "group with enough first-round votes to qualify candidates for the run-off. Rajavi and Khiabani seemed assured of winning..." In his book, *The Iranian Mojahedin*, Ervand Abrahamian writes: "The Mojahedin candidates won enough votes to frighten the IRP [Islamic Republic Party, closely tied to Khomeini]. They did so well in some constituencies... that the local authorities had to close down the voting polls on the very last day of the elections to prevent their victory... In the provinces as a whole, the Mojahedin collected as many as 906,480 votes, yet won no seats. The IRP, on the other hand, obtained no more than 1,617,422 votes, and yet won over half the ninety-six seats filled in the first round."² The strong showing was especially significant in light of the fact that "Khomeini threw the whole weight of his charisma behind the clergy," and publicly attacked the Mojahedin in his New Year's speech, coining the slogan "*A monafeq* [Mojahed] is more dangerous than a *kafer* [nonbeliever]."³

After the first round of the elections, the Mojahedin publicized numerous documents, revealing that in Tehran alone the ballot boxes

had been stuffed with half a million votes in favor of the ruling IRP candidates, some arriving at the electoral monitoring headquarters from one to 15 days after the vote. Yet even the rigged results showed that in Tehran, one in four voters had cast their ballots for Massoud Rajavi. In other cities, the announced figures should have given the Mojahedin a total of 35 seats (relative to the Islamic Republican Party), but Khomeini did not allow even one member of the Mojahedin to be elected to the *Majlis*. According to the officially declared figures, the 25 representatives from the ruling party elected in other cities had a total of 506,673 votes; Mr. Rajavi received 531,943 votes in Tehran. When the Mojahedin called for new elections in Tehran, Khomeini's Revolutionary Council appointed a sham commission to investigate the complaints.

Between the two election rounds in 1980, *Le Monde* wrote:

With his educational lectures and his youth (only 32 years old), Mr. Rajavi has a large following. His political rallies in the capital and other cities attract crowds of 100,000, 200,000 and sometimes 300,000 people. His fame is nothing new. In 1971, during his trial just before the magnificent 2,500 year celebrations at Persepolis, he and the other central committee members of the Mojahedin condemned the dictatorship and despotism of the monarchic regime with a deadly courage. He was sentenced to death, but an exceptional campaign on his behalf was undertaken worldwide. Amnesty International, different European human rights organizations, associations of jurists, French political figures such as Francois Mitterrand and President Georges Pompidou asked the shah for clemency. Six months later, the shah gave in and commuted his death sentence to life imprisonment. But until January 1979, two weeks before the regime's collapse, he underwent the most brutal forms of torture.⁴

Commenting on the rigged elections, *Le Monde* adds:

On the basis of documents, the Mojahedin repeatedly exposed the irregularities, pressures, rigging and brutalities that tainted the first round of elections. Some 2,500 of their supporters were injured, 50 seriously, in attacks by armed hezbollahi bands during election rallies. The elections were held in the shadow of the Islamic pasdaran's weaponry...

Mojahedin representatives who tried to complain at the polling stations, were thrown out, beaten and even arrested... As for the Mojahedin request that Tehran's election results be declared null and void, the Revolutionary Council has designated a commission to look into the matter and prepare a report in a month... Rajavi says that it would be "regrettable if the *Majlis*

did not reflect the popular will. We have played the democratic game fairly, because we consider ourselves as supporters of coexistence among different political tendencies... A monopolized parliament will only aggravate our differences and engulf our country in an ominous turmoil."⁵

During the presidential elections, Khomeini issued a fatwa, vetoing Rajavi's candidacy because he had boycotted the velayat-e faqih constitutional referendum. To prevent an outbreak of clashes, Mr. Rajavi withdrew, inspiring even Khomeini, according to his son, to praise his nobility and graciousness. *Le Monde* wrote in this regard:

... According to diverse estimates, had Imam Khomeini not vetoed his candidacy in the presidential election last January, Mr. Rajavi, would have gotten several million votes. He was, moreover, assured of the support of the religious and ethnic minorities - whose rights to equality and autonomy he defended - and a good part of the female vote, who seek emancipation, and the young, who totally reject the "reactionary clergy" ...⁶

When Rajavi subsequently ran in the parliamentary elections, all political parties and groups existing at the time, except the ruling party, endorsed his candidacy. During the second stage, his supporters included the nationalists, ethnic and religious minorities, the communists, large sections of the bazaar, and many writers, intellectuals and academics. Even Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan issued a statement calling on voters to endorse Massoud Rajavi, as the "representative of an enthusiastic segment of faithful youth."⁷

As the President Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr acknowledged, on the basis of an opinion poll taken by his office, Rajavi was the most popular candidate for the vice-presidency, with 38%. Other political figures, such as Mohammad Hossein Beheshti, the leader of the ruling party, were the choice of no more than 10% of those polled.

As for the Mojahedin's influence in the bazaar, considered the traditional base of support for the mullahs, sufficiently telling are the many businessmen whose names appear in the list of execution victims of the Khomeini regime. Khomeini retaliated harshly against the bazaar for its extensive financial and political backing of the Mojahedin. For example, the daily *Ettela'at* wrote in October 1981 that "15 major bazaar merchants were arrested in connection with the Mojahedin." Among those executed were Haj Hossein Tehrani Kia, Haj Atta Mahmoudian, Ali Asghar Zehtabchi, Ahmad Javaherian

and Hassan-Ali Safa'i, all highly respected in the Tehran bazaar. Hundreds more from the Tehran bazaar and other cities are on the list of the martyrs.

Thus, as long as peaceful political activity was a possibility, the Mojahedin were Iran's most popular political organization. It is important to recall that during this era, Khomeini was not yet recognized as the despicable figure he is today, nor had the Mojahedin yet paid so heavy a price to liberate their homeland, inspiring the trust of their people. Despite severe restrictions on their freedom of action, the Mojahedin's popular base grew at a rate alarming to the mullahs, as acknowledged by the Department of State and its sources.

The Department's unwillingness to acknowledge even those facts to which it previously subscribed is particularly unsettling. Instead, it avidly sets about proving its hollow hypothesis. The Mojahedin are unpopular, we are asked to believe, because the Resistance's forces are based in Iraq, and because the Mojahedin and NCR sought an end to Khomeini's war. An important point gets lost in the State Department's shuffle. The overwhelming majority of the Iranian people were opposed to Khomeini's belligerence during the Iran-Iraq conflict. After the withdrawal of Iraqi forces in June 1982, there was no justifiable reason for continuing hostilities. For this reason, from the outset, the public supported the Mojahedin and NCR's demand for peace and efforts to end the devastation. Mr. Rajavi's move to the Iran-Iraq frontier was also a welcome step. In addition to the thousands of patriotic youths who joined the Resistance forces, many army officers and soldiers also deserted Khomeini's ranks to join the National Liberation Army of Iran. In the ensuing battles against Khomeini's forces, more Iranian military personnel deserted *en masse* and cooperated with Resistance forces on the field. Soon the *pasdaran* were the only force that fought the Mojahedin.

The hypothesis is all the more feeble six years after Khomeini quaffed what he described as the "poisonous chalice of the ceasefire," and five years after he died. The regime's current leaders, including Khamenei and Rafsanjani, have acknowledged the astronomical cost of the unpatriotic war, and have persistently tried to expand their relations with Iraq, previously described as "the infidel."

If the Mojahedin's presence in Iraq were so discrediting, it is only common sense that the regime would play it up, and certainly not try to undermine it. On the contrary, Tehran has done everything

possible to have the Mojahedin ousted from Iraq and restrict their freedom of action. It is common knowledge that the mullahs' first formally announced demand on the government of Iraq, as well as the first condition they set on normalizing relations with that country, is the Mojahedin's expulsion. At the same time, the Mojahedin's presence in Iraq is way down the list of the regime's grievances against the organization in its propaganda barrages. The charge is really directed at an international audience to tarnish the image of the Resistance abroad. It is but one aspect of the regime's bid to manipulate the special regional, international, and domestic situation in Iraq to the Resistance's detriment. For its part, the Iraqi government has correctly stated that the Mojahedin are equally present in western countries.⁸

The NCR peace policy was vindicated when Khomeini at last succumbed to a cease-fire, after eight years of destruction and national debilitation. Support for the NCR rose dramatically. The regime's subsequent dealings with Iraq and attempts to improve ties further discredit the State Department's theory. At the same time, the proximity of the Resistance's forces to Iranian territory, enabling them to make a decisive move, is heartening for Iranians, which is why the regime has been telling its supporters for the past year that the Mojahedin no longer have a significant force in Iraq, that most have gone abroad and only 600 remain.

Certain circles within the State Department need to portray Khomeini's warmongering as acceptable, despite the Iranian people's inclinations, United Nations resolutions, and measures by international organizations and societies, so that they can conclude on that hollow basis that the Mojahedin lost their popularity due to their peace campaign and the presence of Mr. Rajavi and the Resistance's military arm along the Iran-Iraq frontier. According to a Reuters dispatch from Washington, however, the recent Scud missile attack and flare-up of hostilities between the Mojahedin and Iran's rulers "indicates that Tehran does not share that view."⁹ Beyond all this, since the arrival in Paris of Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, the Resistance's president-elect, the Mojahedin's popularity is no longer at issue.

A Test of Popularity

Assessing anybody's popularity under Khomeini's religious tyranny is no easy task. One reliable indicator is that in the last 14

years, over 100,000 people have been executed and a greater number imprisoned on political charges. The overwhelming majority were members or sympathizers of the Mojahedin. Despite this brutal suppression, there is no question that the Mojahedin are today Iran's principal opposition force, domestically and internationally. Kenneth Katzman of the Congressional Research Service writes: "Most observers acknowledge that PMOI is the most active and effective Iranian opposition group, and statements from Iranian officials suggest that they are genuinely concerned about the group's capability to fan domestic unrest."¹⁰

The regime's propaganda is also a telling sign. Despite the mullahs' efforts to establish that the Mojahedin are finished in Iran, everyday realities reveal that the organization has many supporters throughout the country. This has compelled the regime to acknowledge the Mojahedin's popularity, despite an official policy of not mentioning their name. In July 1994, officials announced that in one three-week period, the regime's news agency, IRNA, had published 300 anti-Mojahedin news reports and analyses. This number does not include the hundreds of articles and news reports Tehran's dailies publish domestically against the Mojahedin and Iranian Resistance.¹¹

The authors of the report have failed to explain how the regime's terrorism, bombardments, persistent mortar and Scud missile attacks on the Resistance's bases along the Iran-Iraq frontier are indicative of the Resistance's unpopularity. Why does the regime risk breaking international laws to get at a discredited force that is not a "viable alternative" in Iran? Rather than addressing any of these questions, the State Department grudgingly clings to a ridiculous reasoning, claiming that the regime's widespread propaganda against the Mojahedin is due to the organization's unpopularity.

Straight from the Horse's Mouth

A huge protest by 200,000 people erupted in the industrial city of Qazvin on August 3, 1994. The regime immediately identified the Mojahedin as the demonstration's organizers,¹² and the authorities and the media warned of the growing influence of Mojahedin sympathizers on events in Iran. Shortly thereafter, a similar demonstration rocked Qa'emsahr,¹³ northern Iran, in protest to the execution of a Mojahedin supporter.

In April 1992, the state-run newspaper *Ressalat* wrote that the

Mojahedin had organized the demonstration in Shiraz,¹⁴ which Agence France Presse described as the "largest demonstration of the last decade."¹⁵ In Spring 1992, Mashad (Iran's second largest city and home of the Holy Shrine of the eighth Shi'ite Imam) erupted. The public's rage was directed at government institutions. The city's mayor told the local press that the Mojahedin had participated in the protest in "an organized manner."¹⁶ A journalist for the British weekly *Economist* was among those detained and interrogated, for 10 hours. She wrote: "The questions concentrated on the People's Mujahideen... Before this incident it had made sense to be skeptical of the Mujahideen's claims that they were behind the disturbances in several Iranian cities in the past month. The army's sensitivity on the matter has now aroused a bit of doubt."¹⁷

In June 1992, Rafsanjani publicly reiterated the extensive presence of the opposition: "We do have enemies, both inside and outside the country... Our enemy is organized abroad, and the [two] are in contact with each other... They are spread out in the society, they are everywhere."¹⁸

Most Iran observers note that Mojahedin members and sympathizers are the main targets of Iran's internal security forces. State Department officials are, of course, well aware of this, and have acknowledged it in their annual human rights reports. When such a resistance not only survives, but manages to expand, does that not indicate extensive popular support it?

If, as the State Department contends, all the above indicators are not sufficient to confirm a broad base of popular support for the Resistance, then we must logically conclude that the Iranian people support their oppressors, one of the world's most criminal regimes. Perhaps this is precisely the conclusion intended by the authors of the report. It has been implied, rather than stated, because of the regime's disrepute. If this is not the case, then we challenge the Department to substantiate its unfounded claims. How has it managed to poll the Iranian people for their views? The Department has a very poor record in reading events in Iran. Remember that as the shah lurched on the brink, American foreign policy confidently - and notoriously - concluded that there was no serious opposition to the monarch, and that he would not be overthrown.¹⁹ All this good news came from trusted friends in the shah's SAVAK.

The October 1993 announcement of Mrs. Rajavi's arrival in Paris

sent the mullahs into hysterics. Retaliatory acts included terrorist attacks on the French embassy and Air France office in Tehran.²⁰ Still another indication of popular support for the Resistance was the campaign in Iran of national solidarity with President-elect Maryam Rajavi, and simultaneous demonstrations in 16 cities of the world in July 1994. Hundreds of thousands of brochures were distributed throughout Iran in support of Mrs. Rajavi and the National Council of Resistance. Abroad, 50,000 Iranians rallied for Mrs. Rajavi in meetings and demonstrations. These gatherings of 20,000 Iranians in Bonn, 3,000 in Washington, 3,000 in Los Angeles, 5,000 in Stockholm, and 6,000 in The Hague (half the Iranians residing in The Netherlands) are realities that cannot be ignored.²¹ Following the announcement of the proposed campaign in Iran and abroad, the regime's Foreign Minister twice summoned the diplomatic corps in Iran to warn them against permitting NCR activities in their countries. In an official plea to France, Tehran demanded that the Resistance's July 21 solidarity concert in Paris be banned,²² and asked the U.K. to revoke its permit for the London march.²³ The regime also vehemently protested a dissident radio program in Britain, and has repeatedly urged the British government to ban the broadcast.²⁴ In September-October 1994, the Resistance again launched a major campaign in Iran, a week of solidarity with Iranian school children.²⁵

When all is said and done, if the State Department really believes the Mojahedin lack popular support, then it should provide an explanation of the above facts.

International Support

Since 1981, the Mojahedin and National Council of Resistance have ceaselessly endeavored to raise public awareness of the Khomeini regime's crimes against the Iranian people, and provided information to parliaments and international organizations. They have argued with conviction that the medieval regime in Iran should not be supported. Early on, Resistance activists in countries throughout the world established ties with members of parliament, political dignitaries, intellectuals, labor unions, state representatives, mayors, etc., to inform them of the regime's crimes and introduce the National Council of Resistance. Soon, North American and European politicians extended valuable support to the Council. Scores of parliamentarians and political dignitaries met with Mr. Rajavi in

Paris, declaring their support for the Iranian Resistance. Ervand Abrahamian refers to Mr. Rajavi's meetings and the Council's diplomatic activities, writing that the Mojahedin "sent delegates to international human rights associations; to special hearings of the United Nations; and to the annual meetings of such varied political organizations as the Socialist International, the British Labour Party, the British Liberal Party, the German Christian Democratic Party, the Italian Communist Party, the Italian Christian Democratic Party..."²⁶ Mr. Rajavi accepted some of the invitations, where he met with party leaders and government officials.

Mr. Abrahamian also notes the many announcements of support for the Iranian Resistance, writing: "One petition against the 'blood-thirsty medieval regime', circulated in Europe and the United States in mid-1983, got the endorsement of some 1,700 politicians, labour organizers and university professors, including Maxime Rodinson, Eric Hobsbawm, and Charles Tilly. Another petition, circulated in fifty-seven different countries in early 1986, obtained the signatures of over 5,000 public figures, including 3,500 parliamentary deputies, many of them in Britain, France, Italy, Sweden, Holland, West Germany, and India."²⁷ This last petition was in support of the National Council of Resistance's peace policy - the same policy the State Department report assailed as unpopular with Iranians because of their opposition to peace and their perception of the Mojahedin as linked to Iraq. The petition attested to the global awareness of Khomeini's warmongering and the Iranian people's support for peace.

Support for the National Council of Resistance has picked up pace in recent years. Over 1,500 parliamentarians supported the Council as the only democratic alternative to the Khomeini regime in a worldwide initiative in 1992. The parliamentarians stressed in their statement: "Nearly three years after Khomeini's death, the myth of moderation has come to an end. The spread of acts of protest in Iran and the overwhelming boycott of the regime's election farce upon the call by the Iranian Resistance, demands greater international attention and support for the democratic alternative, the National Council of Resistance."²⁸

A U.S. House of Representatives majority declared: "Experience has shown that this resistance's profound popular and religious roots within Iran's people are the best impediment to the Iranian regime's abuse of popular religious sentiments. Hence, this resistance is the

solution to the phenomenon of fanatic fundamentalism. We are convinced that support for the National Council of Resistance will contribute to the achievement of peace and stability for all the countries of the region."²⁹

In October 1992, sixty-two U.S. Senators announced in a joint statement:

Resolutions by the U.N. Human Rights Subcommittee and the European Parliament deplored the continuing increase in terrorist activities against dissidents abroad, including the failed plot in December 1991 to assassinate Mr. Massoud Rajavi, President of the National Council of Resistance of Iran.

On April 5, 1992, the Rafsanjani government, alarmed at the spread of popular protests, crossed international borders in violation of international law to bombard an opposition base in another bid to kill the opposition's leaders... We are convinced that the time has come for the free world to join together against the human rights abuses of the Iranian regime. Recently, a majority of the members of the U.S. House of Representatives, and 1,300 parliamentarians from 19 other countries issued statements condemning the violations of human rights in Iran and supporting the Iranian people's Resistance.³⁰

These distinguished members of Congress certainly were not duped into issuing their statements. The State Department can attest to the extremes to which some Irangate holdouts in the Department went to dissuade members of Congress from endorsing the initiatives. Obviously, their efforts failed, despite seven years of negative statements from the Department about the Mojahedin. That says a lot about the credibility of the allegations against the Iranian Resistance among U.S. lawmakers, who see the State Department's policy on the Mojahedin as "inappropriate."

In spite of the State Department claims, today the National Council of Resistance is widely recognized in the world as the only viable democratic alternative to the Khomeini regime in Iran. Council members regularly meet with European government officials recognizing the Iranian Resistance, for an exchange of views on recent developments in Iran. These exchanges have contributed to mutual understanding.³¹ Simultaneously, the Council is in touch with governments in the Middle East and with other Islamic countries, among whom it has found considerable understanding of the Khomeini regime's terrorist and fundamentalist nature and the Resistance's goals. In reviewing the Council's international backing,

the State Department has once again distorted the facts, by not mentioning this broad support, specifically of the Congressional majority, and alleging that the Mojahedin are only supported by Iraq. Documents pertaining to the matter have always been available to the State Department. Perhaps there is a design to this pretense of ignorance. How else to misrepresent a movement with long-standing credibility only a few streets away on Capitol Hill, and in European and Middle Eastern capitals? How else to consciously court the mullahs?

What's at Issue?

Finally, we come to the real issue: What is the State Department's problem with the Mojahedin? If the Resistance truly lacks popular support, is "not a viable alternative," is "a mere shell," is "shunned by most Iranians," has been discredited among politicians and the Tehran regime is "aware of [its] unpopularity," what possible threat can it pose to anyone?

So why do the mullahs so desperately seek its destruction, domestically and internationally? In a convoluted twist, the State Department claims that the regime conducts its barrage of anti-Mojahedin propaganda not because they are popular, but because they are unpopular, suggesting that this provides the regime with a means of discrediting its opponents. Even if we accept this theory for Iran, then how to explain the regime's hysterical obsession with the Mojahedin and NCR internationally? The Mojahedin and National Council of Resistance are always on the agenda in any diplomatic contact by the regime. They are blasted in every speech in international bodies, and in all written communications with these organizations. If we believe the State Department's report, the Mojahedin and Council have no support internationally, other than Iraq. So what is all the fuss about?

Many diplomats have privately admitted that it is unprecedented for a regime to carry on so much propaganda against its opposition. Many have said that even if they did not know the Mojahedin personally, they could have realized their credibility from the regime's behavior. Why else was U.S. rejection of the Mojahedin a major condition in the Irangate dealings? Political norms dictate that a government's response to a political issue be appropriate to the issue's significance.

U.S. policy contradicts itself by portraying the Mojahedin and National Council of Resistance as shunned by Iranians and without international support, while at the same time attacking the movement in a bid to aid the regime and prevent democratic change in Iran, all in one breath. Perhaps it is possible to sit in Foggy Bottom and denounce the Iranian Resistance's forces in Iran and at the Iran-Iraq frontier, brand the movement as discredited, hope that nobody will have access to first-hand information and *abracadabra*, the desired political goals will be attained. More likely, however, the Resistance's extensive activities, especially abroad, simply neutralize the Department's shenanigans, as the American people see the truth for themselves.

Even the State Department is compelled to admit, however inconsistently, that the Mojahedin have "offices in Europe, North America, the Middle East, and Australia..." It is quite perplexing how an organization can have offices throughout the world, hold demonstrations, enjoy the cooperation of popular artists and musicians, supply the necessary personnel, information, budget, etc. for these activities and still lack a popular base among Iranians. The truth is that not one other group exists with one-tenth or even one hundredth of these activities abroad. The Mojahedin and the National Council of Resistance have representative offices in at least 170 cities throughout the world. If it is possible to sustain so extensive an organization without popular support, then why can the monarchists, who have pillaged billions of dollars of our nation's wealth, not do the same? Some of these people even admit to being on the U.S. government's payroll and in direct or indirect contact with the State Department. Why can they not maintain offices in even seven cities? Why have they not staged even one demonstration in the past 10 years, whose participants numbered at least 10 percent of those at the Resistance's demonstrations? If they were capable of such activities, the State Department would probably have promoted them as viable political organizations. Doubtless, the Department understands the mechanisms far better than we, and its admission of the Resistance's extensive organization and activities abroad is perhaps intended to avoid further embarrassment.

XII

Character Assassination

Character assassination, a particularly repugnant political tactic, has been employed extensively throughout history. A recent extreme case in contemporary American history, McCarthyism, has since been condemned by the public and political circles, both Democrat and Republican. Unfounded charges were leveled to discredit certain artists and public figures, in a hysteric atmosphere. Slander, distortion, fabrication and sophistry are the tools of the trade. Hitler's propaganda minister, Goebbels, believed that the bigger the lie, the more convincing. Machiavelli taught that the ends justify the means. Both "principles" are applied in character assassination.

The State Department report on the Mojahedin presents a classic case. In previous chapters, we have discussed at length the Department's allegations against the Mojahedin and the Iranian Resistance. The common theme throughout the report, however, is character assassination of Massoud Rajavi, the Leader of the Iranian Resistance. Few, if any, slurs are left unsaid: Mr. Rajavi has fostered a "personality cult"¹ around himself, is a "revered leader,"² has an "authoritarian,"³ "autocratic style,"⁴ has maintained "firm control of the Mojahedin, *de facto* by 1975,"⁵ "hand-picked a new leadership from among his prison colleagues,"⁶ "unilaterally dissolved the PMOI Central Committee and personally appointed a 500-person Central Council,"⁷ "unilaterally decid[ed] to tie the Council to Iraq,"⁸ and "reorganized the Mojahedin into compartmentalized cells of activity that responded to his orders or those of his appointees"⁹; "Today his *fiat* (sic.) appears to be similarly unchecked"¹⁰; "Under Rajavi's leadership, Mojahedin exerted total control over the NCR, determined who could join... who was worthy of being given... voting rights,"¹¹

"forcing couples and families to separate, arguing that people should devote their love only to Masud and Maryam Rajavi."¹² And the list goes on and on.

Here, we do not intend to defend the person of Massoud Rajavi, whose record of thirty years of struggle against the shah's dictatorship and mullahs' religious, terrorist regime stands on its own. As far as the allegations *per se* are concerned, we have replied to them in detail in previous chapters. Here, the aim is to clarify the truth and expose a total lack of scruples to obtain certain political objectives.

The onslaught is reminiscent of the clerical regime. Unable to deny the Mojahedin's popularity, the mullahs and their backers have for years described the organization's leaders as "treacherous lackeys" of "U.S. imperialism, Israel, Iraq and the Soviet Union" (while it was still viable), all in the same breath. The Mojahedin's "unaware" supporters are herded to the gallows like sheep, with no will of their own, and are "obedient only to their leaders."

Apparently, the authors of the report have the same basic outlook, i.e. all the forces and distinguished personalities who are NCR members, all officials and members of the Mojahedin, and the majority of the Iranian people, who cooperate with the Resistance or support its goals, are unaware individuals under Massoud Rajavi's spell. While they levied most of the allegations at Mr. Rajavi in his position as the President of the National Council of Resistance, the authors felt no compulsion to ask even a single question from the NCR's representatives or members. At the same time, even the most trivial facts and simple research by scholars of whom they approve, confirm that the supporters of the Mojahedin and Iranian Resistance are essentially from the educated elite of Iranian society. Their slander of the Resistance's leader is an insult to the Iranian people and to the generation that has spared no sacrifice for Iran's independence and democracy.

Historical Examples

Slander and character assassination have been used against the national leaders of many countries by enemies seeking to make headway. Abraham Lincoln, known today as one of the "most revered American presidents," came under attack from both sides of the American political spectrum during the Civil War. They called him dictatorial, insane, irresolute and unqualified to be President and

Commander-in-chief. In his book, *Don't know much about history*, Kenneth C. Davis wrote:

During the war he faced opposition from one side by so-called radical Republicans and abolitionists for his moderation toward slavery. More dangerous opposition came from the Peace Democrats, the remnants of the northern Democratic Party who were given the name "Copperheads" by newspapers because they were so poisonous. Sympathetic to the South, the Copperheads wanted to stop the war and considered Lincoln a dictator for his suspension of the Writ of habeas corpus, the draft acts, and even the emancipation proclamation.

Lincoln surmounted these challenges, winning the election that cost him his life. By the time of his assassination, Lincoln had moved from resolute commander-in-chief, prosecuting the war at horrendous costs, to healing unifier. While some called him a dictator, there is little doubt that a weaker President might have failed in the most basic test of Lincoln's presidency... preserving the Union from its dissolution.¹³

A more recent case is that of Martin Luther King, whose opponents hurled all sorts of allegations, trying in particular to make an issue of his personal life, to push him from the spotlight. He was kept under surveillance, without the Attorney General's permission, and his hotel rooms and telephones tapped. When these tactics turned up nothing of substance, his detractors were not deterred from churning out more allegations. In the years since his assassination, history has passed final judgment, and Martin Luther King is considered one of America's national heroes, even by those of a different political philosophy.

Franklin D. Roosevelt, one of America's five great presidents, was called a communist and anti-republican. Davis wrote that for many, Roosevelt's actions were synonymous with socialism and communism: "Even though things were getting better, obscene whispers and cruel jokes were common about the crippled Roosevelt and his wife, Eleanor... Some of these rumors were tinged with anti-Semitism, like the one that Roosevelt was descended from Dutch Jews who had changed their names."¹⁴

In the late 1940s and early '50s, America experienced McCarthyism. In his book, *A People's History of the United States*, Howard Zinn writes:

Speaking to a Republican Women's Club in Wheeling, West Virginia, in early

1950, [Sen. Joseph McCarthy] held up some papers and shouted: "I have here in my hand a list of 205—a list of names that were made known to the Secretary of State as being members of the Communist Party and who nevertheless are still working and shaping policy in the State Department." The next day, speaking in Salt Lake City, McCarthy claimed he had a list of fifty-seven (the number kept changing) such communists in the State Department. Shortly afterward, he appeared on the floor of the Senate with photostatic copies of about a hundred dossiers from State Department loyalty files. The dossiers were three years old, and most of the people were no longer with the State Department, but McCarthy read from them anyway, inventing, adding, and changing as he read. In one case, he changed the dossier's description of "liberal" to "communistically inclined," in another from "active fellow traveler" to "active communist," and so on.¹⁵

Mr. Zinn adds that under pressure from Sen. McCarthy's propaganda campaign, the State Department issued directives to remove books by authors suspected of being communists from its overseas libraries. One of those removed was *The Selected Works of Thomas Jefferson*, author of America's Declaration of Independence.¹⁶

In the late nineteenth century, France was caught up for a decade in a political scandal that became its most famous case of character assassination. In 1894, Alfred Dreyfus, a French army officer, was convicted of treason and passing secret documents to a German military attaché. Two years later, documents surfaced proving his innocence, but in an atmosphere abounding in propaganda, the court again voted to condemn him. Finally, a decade later, the supreme court acquitted him in 1906 and he was given the Legion d'honor, the highest medal in France.¹⁷

General Charles de Gaulle, France's most famous president and the leader of the Resistance during the Nazi occupation, was slandered so often that in 1958, when he ran for president, he said that although he had fought for France's liberty, some people accused him of being a dictator.

From Mossadeq to Rajavi

Cases of character assassination in contemporary Iranian history include that of Dr. Mohammad Mossadeq. During his premiership, "democracy flourished" for the first time, wrote Mohsen Milan,¹⁸ but those whose interests Dr. Mossadeq hindered took to character assassination. According to Milani, "... Britain resorted to every conceivable method to undermine and denigrate Mossadeq. The

British press, and to lesser extent the Western press, portrayed Mossadeq, Iran's national hero, as an old, stubborn, deceptive, and demagogic prime minister who would eventually hand over Iran to the communists.¹⁹

These allegations were not limited to Western media. Within Iran, those collaborating with the coup that restored the shah's dictatorship criticized "his policies and bid to monopolize power."²⁰ They labeled him "a devious, old vulture and a feeble leader," describing his government as the "murderer of the people."²¹ Dr. Mossadeq was accused of "extending the apparatus of terror and creating an atmosphere of repression."²² Ervand Abrahamian writes in *Khomeinism*: "The British, refusing to accept nationalization, did their best to discredit Mosaddeq, categorizing him as a 'wily oriental' who was not only 'crazy,' 'eccentric,' 'abnormal,' 'unbalanced,' and 'unreasonable,' but also 'demagogic,' 'slippery,' 'cunning,' 'unscrupulous,' 'single-mindedly obstinate,' and 'opium-addicted.'"²³

Abrahamian adds:

The British government planted articles with similar themes in the newspapers. For example, the *London Times* carried a biography of Mosaddeq describing him as "nervously unstable," "martyr-like," and "timid" unless "emotionally aroused." The *Observer* depicted him as an "incorruptible fanatic," a "Xenophobic Robes Pierre," a "tragic" Frankenstein "impervious to common sense," and with only "one political idea in his gigantic head." To encourage similar views across the Atlantic, the British fed the American press with a steady diet of - to use their own words - "poison too venomous for the BBC." Typical of such character assassinations was an article in the *Washington Post* written by the venerable Drew Pearson falsely accusing Hossayn Fatemi, Mosaddeq's right-hand man, of a host of criminal offenses, including embezzlement and gangsterism. "This man," Pearson warned, "will eventually decide whether the US has gas rationing or possibly, whether the American people go into World War III."²⁴

The allegations against Dr. Mossadeq were not confined to official comments. To portray them as impartial, many appeared in articles and even the scholarly works of some orientalists. One of the main coup plotters was an academic by the name of Robin Zaehner, sent to Iran at the time because of his knowledge of the country. Abrahamian writes:

The central figure in the British strategy to overthrow Mosaddeq was another academic, Robin Zaehner, who soon became professor of Eastern religions

and ethics at Oxford. As press attaché in Tehran during 1943-47, Zaehner had befriended numerous politicians, especially through opium-smoking parties. Dispatched back to Iran by MI6, Zaehner actively searched for a suitable general to carry out the planned coup. He also used diverse channels to undermine Mosaddeq: Sayyid Ziya and the pro-British politicians; newspaper editors up for sale; conservative aristocrats who in the past had sided with Russia and America; tribal chiefs, notably the Baktiyaris; army officers, shady businessmen, courtiers, and members of the royal family, many of whom outstripped the shah in their fear of Mosaddeq.

Helped in due course by the CIA, Zaehner also wooed away a number of Mosaddeq's associates, including Ayatollah Kashani, General Zahedi, Hosayn Makki, and Mozaffar Baqai. Baqai, a professor of ethics at Tehran University, soon became notorious as the man who abducted Mosaddeq's chief of police and tortured him to death. MI6, together with the CIA, also resorted to dirty tricks to undermine the government...²⁵

Still others accused Dr. Mossadeq of "institutionalizing repression," "intolerance," "dependence," etc., describing the coup as a "glorious victory of right over wrong" and "the sacred resurgence."²⁶ On the morning after, they wrote:

Yesterday Tehran was trembling under the resolute marching of the Army and anti-foreigner Muslims. Mossadeq, the bloody old beast, resigned under the annihilating blows of the Muslims. That traitor Hossein Fatemi, who escaped the bullets of our brothers, was mutilated. The revolutionary and legal prime minister [meaning General Zahedi who was appointed to the post after the coup] spoke to the nation. All government centers were captured by the Muslims and the Islamic army, and the spies, those selling out the country and operatives of Mossadeq's treacherous reign escaped to their filthy nests to avoid retribution.²⁷

Today, Massoud Rajavi is under attack by the Iranian adherents and foreign backers of the same policy objectives that brought about the 1953 coup. Posing as politicians, academics and lawyers, they are supported by the mullahs' regime, affiliates of the shah's SAVAK, and those who have raised the white flag in their resistance against the regime. Their slander against the National Council of Resistance and the person of Massoud Rajavi is played up in the regime's media. The exchange goes both ways: The State Department report cites several remarks against the Mojahedin by individuals who officially work with the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence.²⁸

Since 1979, the Khomeini regime has kept up a steady stream of allegations against the Mojahedin and Mr. Rajavi. In the early years,

Khomeini used the Islamic Republican Party as his mouthpiece, whose propaganda against the Mojahedin was intended to counter the organization's growing popularity. The Mojahedin were accused of being "dependent on Iraq," "puppets of American imperialism," "morally corrupt," and of torturing their own members. The common denominator of all the propaganda were attacks on Massoud Rajavi intended to create a split within the organization. Everyday, the regime's dailies ran articles about opposition to Massoud Rajavi within the Mojahedin. In March 1980, *Le Monde* wrote:

The daily *Jomhuri Islami* has devoted entire pages to writings against the Mojahedin and its leadership. On the eve of the election, hundreds of thousands of newsletters abounding in vituperations were distributed. In one, Mr. Rajavi is described as a SAVAK agent. Doubtless, the fundamentalist clergy consider these leftist Muslims a greater enemy than the Marxist organizations, easily discredited with the label of atheist. Mr. Rajavi says that the reactionary clergy are trying to create an atmosphere of McCarthyism.²⁹

When such ploys proved ineffective, and Rajavi's popularity grew among the public, Khomeini intervened and spoke out against him. Today, the State Department accuses Mr. Rajavi of collaborating with the "enemy of the people of Iran." Meanwhile, leftovers of the shah's SAVAK, such as the "Flag of Freedom" organization and "Iran's constitutionalists," are described as democratic. Those individuals and groups who, for whatever reason, switched sides and cooperated with the dictatorship (like Mozafar Baqa'i at the time of Dr. Mossadeq) are portrayed as democratic forces which left the National Council of Resistance due to its lack of democracy and Rajavi's "authoritarian style."³⁰

In referring to Rajavi's incarceration in the shah's prisons, the report's authors avoid mention of the persistent tortures he endured at the hands of SAVAK. Nor is there any comment on United States support of the shah and his hated secret police during those years. Instead, they describe Mr. Rajavi's efforts to resist against the opportunist Marxists who had shattered the Mojahedin organization, and to revive the organization in those difficult circumstances, as follows: "The Mojahedin's future leader, Masud Rajavi, utilized his time in Qasr prison (1972-79) to indoctrinate and establish his authority."³¹

Who is Massoud Rajavi?

Massoud Rajavi was born in 1948 in the city of Tabas in the northeastern province of Khorassan. The youngest of five brothers, he is a graduate of political law from Tehran University. His brothers completed their higher education in France, Switzerland, Britain and Belgium. The eldest, Professor Kazem Rajavi, was assassinated in April 1990 in Geneva. His only sister, Monireh, was executed in 1988 after enduring six years of imprisonment with her two small children. Asghar Nazemi, her husband, had been executed two years earlier. Mr. Rajavi's elderly parents were arrested and imprisoned by the mullahs in 1981. His first wife, Ashraf, was also a Mojahedin prisoner during the time of the shah. She married Mr. Rajavi in summer 1979, and was slain in Tehran in February 1982 when the *Pasdaran* attacked her residence.

In high school Mr. Rajavi was a sympathizer of Ayatollah Taleqani and Mehdi Bazargan's Freedom Movement. He became acquainted with the Mojahedin at the university and became a member in 1967. He was in direct contact with the organization's founder, Mohammad Hanifnejad, and later became a Central Committee member. Mr. Rajavi was arrested in 1971 and sentenced to death. His elder brother, Professor Kazem Rajavi, organized a worldwide campaign to save his life, and his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. SAVAK, unable to execute him because of international pressure, kept Rajavi under torture throughout his incarceration. Amnesty International, the International Committee of the Red Cross, as well as distinguished European personalities such as François Mitterrand, intervened to save his life many times. He was released among the last group of political prisoners in January 1979.

Despite the difficult conditions of prison, Mr. Rajavi had to fill the vacuum of the Mojahedin's executed leaders and revive the organization, shattered by Marxists in an internal coup. He spent thousands of hours, under extraordinarily restrictive conditions, formulating and teaching the Mojahedin's positions. All his activities had to be kept hidden from the eyes of the SAVAK and the prison guards. Endemic illness and systematic torture aggravated the difficulties of his task. Every time SAVAK got wind of efforts, he was returned to the torture chambers, but he relentlessly continued his discussions with his fellow cell-mates. Afterwards, the imprisoned

Mojahedin passed on these positions to those members still outside.

Mr. Rajavi described the Marxist current, which had shattered not only the Mojahedin organization, but also the unity and trust among opposition forces, as treacherous and deviant. He censured their misappropriation of the name "Mojahedin" stressing that the ideology of the Mojahedin was Islam, and their goal to overthrow the shah and establish an independent, popular government. These decisive positions forced the Marxists to stop using the Mojahedin's name in 1977. He warned that the blow to the Mojahedin would give rise to backward interpretations of the religion, and advised the Mojahedin to keep their distance from the reactionaries, whose ideologue he identified as Khomeini. From the roof of Qasr Prison on the last day of his captivity, he spoke as the representative of the last group of political prisoners to thousands of Tehran residents who had come to secure his freedom. He expressed the hope that the prisons would be closed forever, and political freedoms established in Iran.

Several days prior to Khomeini's arrival in Tehran, his son, Ahmad, called Mr. Rajavi from Paris, telling him, "You have a lot of support in Iran and if you form a political party, millions will join you." Several weeks later, in a meeting in Tehran, Ahmad Khomeini told Rajavi, "If you support the Imam and oppose his opponents, all doors will be open to you, and you will be given all that you need." Rajavi rejected Khomeini's proposal, saying that the Mojahedin sought a nationalist, democratic government. If Khomeini took that route, the Mojahedin would do their utmost for him, he replied.

A year later, in spring 1980, Mr. Rajavi met with Hashemi Rafsanjani, then a member of the Revolutionary Council and Minister of the Interior, to file a complaint on the multitude of cases of fraud and rigging by the regime's operatives during the parliamentary elections. Rafsanjani told him: "Forget about all this. You have an organization, a very good reputation and a lot of respect. If you had accepted the Imam and the velayat-e faqih, all doors would have been open to you. You have forced us to bring ministers and Majlis deputies from abroad." Mr. Rajavi replied: "You should not expect us to accept club-wielding and monopoly of power under the banner of Islam."

Soon after the revolution, the Mojahedin launched their own cultural, ideological campaign among intellectuals and the younger

generation to counter Khomeini's despotic and reactionary interpretation of Islam. In late 1979, Rajavi began a series of lectures in philosophy at Sharif University of Technology. Every week, 10,000 students took part in these classes, and more than 100,000 others watched the video recordings of them across Iran. The transcripts were published weekly by the hundreds of thousands, and distributed throughout Iran. After just 16 weeks, Khomeini shut down the universities, his regime's leaders stressing that the universities had become a base for the Mojahedin.

In his book, *The Iranian Mojahedin*, Ervand Abrahamian writes:

Rajavi's candidacy was not only endorsed by the Mojahedin-affiliated organizations...; but also by an impressive array of independent organizations including the Feda'iyān, the National Democratic Front, the Kurdish Democratic Party, the Kurdish Toilers Revolutionary Party (Komula), the Society of Iranian Socialists, the Society for the Cultural and Political Rights of the Turkomans, the Society of Young Assyrians, and the Joint Group of Armenian, Zoroastrian and Jewish Minorities. Rajavi also received the support of a large number of prominent figures: Taleqani's widow; Shaykh Ezeddin Hosayni, the spiritual leader of the Sunni Kurds in Mahabad; Hojjat al-Islam Jalal Ganjehi...; fifty well-known members of the Iranian Writers' Association, including the economist Naser Pakdaman, the essayist Manuchehr Hezarkhani and the secular historians Feraydun Adamiyyat and Homa Nateq; and, of course, many of the families of the early Mojahedin martyrs, notably the Hanif-nezhads, Rezais, Mohsens, Badizadegans, Asgarizadehs, Sadeqs, Meshkinfams, and Mihandusts. The Mojahedin had become the vanguards of the secular opposition to the Islamic Republic.³²

In a speech in June 1980 at Tehran's Amjadieh Stadium, Mr. Rajavi criticized the regime's leaders about the suppression of liberties. The gathering in tribute to the victims of club-wielding was itself attacked, creating a major political scandal for the regime. Twenty deputies from the newly convened parliament issued the body's first statement, condemning the attack. Even Ahmad Khomeini denounced the assault. Many observers described Massoud Rajavi as the leader of the anti-Khomeini opposition. Several days later, Khomeini made his strongest speech to date against the Mojahedin, candidly expressing his concern at Rajavi's popularity,³³ who had begun a campaign to unite the democratic dissident forces. The daily *Mojahed*, with a circulation of 500,000, had the largest audience in Iran at the time. It allocated a section, entitled *Showra* (Council), for

other opposition groups and personalities to state their views.

In early 1981, in a series of lengthy interviews, Rajavi explained the Mojahedin's viewpoints about Khomeini and other political trends at the time, and proposed the formation of a front against religious backwardness. The same year, when Khomeini dismissed the President, Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr, and state agents began to hunt him down, Rajavi invited Bani-Sadr to stay at his secret residence in Tehran. "Now that Bani-Sadr has taken a step against Khomeini," he said, "we have a duty to protect him." After forming the National Council of Resistance in Tehran shortly thereafter, Rajavi along with Bani-Sadr departed for France aboard an Iranian military jet.

A Historical Leader

Despite Mr. Rajavi's decisive role in the Mojahedin's history, all important decisions within the organization have been adopted collectively after long discussions. Through this process, new members assumed greater responsibilities. Most members of the Mojahedin's Leadership Council and more than 90 percent of the organization's current Central Council joined the Mojahedin after 1979.

Since 1989, Mr. Rajavi has had no executive responsibilities in the Mojahedin organization. His role in safeguarding the principles of the Mojahedin as a Muslim, democratic, nationalist and progressive organization in the 1970s, and more importantly against Khomeini's all-out assault to destroy the Mojahedin, has made him a historical and ideological leader for the Mojahedin.

Since the formation of the NCR, most of Mr. Rajavi's efforts have been devoted to the Council. His patient, democratic manner of managing the NCR's affairs has been instrumental in the Council's expansion and resilience, and has earned him the trust of the NCR's members. Mohammad Hossein Naqdi, an Iranian diplomat, joined the Council in 1982. He was assassinated by the regime's terrorists in 1993 in Rome. Mr. Naqdi said of Massoud Rajavi in a December 1992 interview, following the Council's expansion:

We in the Council are hesitant to highlight the role of individuals, but complements aside, I really think that in the world of politics, (Mr. Rajavi's) presence has, more than anything else, been the cause of the advances of the NCR and Iranian Resistance. If we theorize about what would have

happened if he had not been the NCR's President, I believe if the Iranian Resistance existed at all, it would certainly be far less than it is today.³⁴

In the same series of interviews, Dr. Manouchehr Hezarkhani, a distinguished Iranian writer and Chairman of the Council's Culture and Art Committee, commented on the procedures of NCR meetings:

When we arrive at the meetings, we do not share the same views... When we meet in session, sometimes we have serious arguments about certain matters, about political solutions. It is generally well understood that the point is to hold such meetings, where differences can be talked about and a consensus reached, but the individual capable of chairing such meetings and keeping the delicate balance of cooperation between different groups, none of whom are professional politicians, is gifted with the art of leadership... We have this leadership, and I think that to a large extent, it smoothes out the bumps.³⁵

Whenever the interests of the Iranian people and democracy have been at stake, political considerations or concerns about protecting his personal prestige have never prevented Mr. Rajavi from making sensitive decisions. Launching the campaign for peace in the Iran-Iraq war in 1983, when Khomeini's belligerent nature had not been fully exposed, generated venomous propaganda by the regime and its internal and external allies. It was one of many examples of risks that few are willing to take. The formation of the National Liberation Army of Iran, as the most precious achievement of Iran's history and best guarantee and lever to overthrow the mullahs' regime, is another.

Rajavi has always stressed that there is no insistence upon the NCR or Mojahedin. "If at any time, any group or alternative is found to be better equipped to overthrow the regime and guarantee Iran's independence, democracy and popular sovereignty, we will definitely and wholeheartedly support it, even if it is opposed to our way of thinking," he says.³⁶

At one of the most sensitive junctures of Iran's history, Khomeini sought to revive an Ottoman-like empire by taking advantage of special circumstances and usurping both temporal and spiritual power. Massoud Rajavi launched an all-out resistance against him. For this reason, he no longer belongs to a specific group; Massoud Rajavi is a national leader, following in the footsteps of previous Iranian leaders, from Sattar-Khan³⁷ to Mirza Kuchek-Khan³⁸ to Dr. Mossadeq.

Iran's political forces and people have learned from history, and are not intimidated by the State Department's unfounded allegations against Massoud Rajavi. Over the past 14 years, despite the conspiracies of the Khomeini regime and its domestic and international allies, the NCR has remained intact to become the longest-lasting political coalition in Iran's contemporary history. With its expansion, it is able to represent the majority of the Iranian people. Precisely for this reason, the authors of the report reveal their alarm at the progress of the Resistance and the growing chance for democracy in Iran, by hurling allegations at the Resistance's leader, much like the mullahs, the remnants of the shah and the politically bankrupt Marxist groups.

In its December 1994 declaration, unanimously signed, the NCR stressed:

The National Council of Resistance vehemently rejects and condemns the report's inaccurate portrayal of the NCR, its history, and past and present members, as well as the unfounded allegations against its President and the redundant charges of a lack of internal democracy. The terminology has been taken straight from the notorious lexicon of the former regime's supporters and the current regime's operatives. As previously stated on numerous occasions, the NCR emphasizes: Mr. Massoud Rajavi is the NCR's President and spokesman. As such, his statements and stances should be regarded as the outcome of the Council's deliberations and decisions. Contrary to the hollow allegations raised in the report, the NCR's *modus operandi* and decision-making process are conducted in accordance with democratic guidelines and regulations that have been formally announced. Throughout the 13 years since the NCR's foundation, its President has unfailingly adhered to these guidelines and regulations.³⁹

Notes

CHAPTER I

1. The Tower Commission Report, 1987, p. B-132.
2. U.S. State Department, *People's Mojahedin of Iran*, 28 October 1994, p. i.
3. Richard De Silvia, "Iranians Demonstrate for a Democratic Homeland," *The Washington Post*, 23 July 1994.
4. Associated Press, dispatch from Los Angeles, 23 July 1994.
5. Letter by an Iranian engineer to President Clinton, 18 October, 1994. She wrote in her letter to the President, "Having presented my thoughts and observations I found that Mr. Henzel remained unprepared to reconsider his initial views on the People's Mojahedin of Iran."
6. On different occasions, members of Congress forwarded to the State Department replies by the Mojahedin and NCR to the Department's allegations. In 1992, Rep. Lee Hamilton forwarded the NCR representative's response to the allegations with an accompanying letter. The letter was printed in the *Congressional Record*, Vol 138, No. 55, 28 April 1992.
7. *Appeasing Tehran's Mullahs* (Paris: NCR Foreign Affairs Committee, September 1994). The book consists of an introduction and eight chapters in 161 pages. It is a review of State Department allegations from 1985 and contains responses to allegations of "violence", "ties to Iraq", "lack of democracy in the NCR", "murder of American citizens", "support for the U.S. embassy occupation", etc. The book is well footnoted and contains dozens of documents.
8. Ervand Abrahamian, *The Iranian Mojahedin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989). Previous State Department reports have also referred to this book. Abrahamian's main source of information on the Mojahedin was Torab Haqshenas and his wife Pooran Bazargan. The two are former members of a now defunct ultra-left Marxist group that murdered several Mojahedin members and shattered the Mojahedin organization in the 1970s. Abrahamian calls himself a democratic socialist by political preference. For a discussion of the author's stance on issues regarding Iran see chapter IV.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 243.
10. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. ii.
11. Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, p. 247.
12. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. iii.
13. Abrahamian, interview in CNN, International Hour, 22 July 1994.
14. Edgar O'Ballance, *The Gulf War* (London: Brassey's, 1988), p. 24.
15. *Kayhan Havai*, Tehran, 5 May 1994. This weekly is associated with the Iranian regime's Ministry of Intelligence and published for Iranians living abroad.
16. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
17. Alireza Jafarzadeh, then Mojahedin press spokesman in Washington, letter to FBIS, 22 May 1992.

Notes

18. Shahin Gobadi, "Our Goal: Overthrow of the Dictator," *The Wall Street Journal*, 19 October 1994.
19. The Mojahedin response to the article was distributed on Capitol Hill as a "Dear Colleague" letter by Reps. Ronald V. Dellums, Helen D. Bentley and James A. Traficant in October 1994.
20. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 26 (n.21).
21. For more details see chapter VII.
22. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
24. Statement by the Office of the People's Mojahedin of Iran, Baghdad, 17 July 1992.
25. Agence France Presse, dispatch from Paris, 18 July 1992.
26. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
27. *Human Rights Betrayed: Galindo Pohl's Iran Report Under Scrutiny*, (Paris, NCR Secretariat: 1990) pp. 233-272.
28. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. i.
29. Wendy Sherman, Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, letter to Rep. Robert G. Torricelli, 26 July 1994. The letter was in reply to Rep. Torricelli's letter to Assistant Secretary of State, Robert Pelletreau, 21 June 1994.
30. Wendy Sherman, Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, letter to Rep. Edolphus Towns, 11 November 1994.
31. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
32. *Ibid.*
33. Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, p. 197; Shaul Bakhash, *Reign of the Ayatollahs* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), p. 90.
34. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
35. *Ibid.*
36. Reuters, dispatch from Damascus, 29 March 1991. Farzin Hashemi, then London spokesman for the Mojahedin, denied reports by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and told Reuters that "the Mojahedin are not engaged in any fighting with the Kurdish insurgents... the PUK allegations are totally false. We have no interest in getting involved in Iraq's internal affairs or in a war with anybody other than the Khomeini regime." Also, Jonathan C. Randal, "Army Offensive Repelled, Iraqi Opposition Says," *The Washington Post*, 19 March 1991. "Alireza Jafarzadeh, then the Mojahedin's press spokesman in Washington, also denied allegations by Kurdish sources in Damascus that Mojahedin guerrillas were fighting alongside Iraqi government troops against the Iraqi opposition. The Mojahedin 'has nothing to do with the internal situation in Iraq,' Jafarzadeh said." In a dispatch from Zakho, Iraq, on 26 March 1991, Associated Press reported the same denials.
37. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
38. Tehran radio, 12 April 1991. Hashemi-Rafsanjani acknowledged that the regime's forces had crossed the border, adding, "It is not our responsibility to safeguard our 1,300 km border with Iraq... it is possible that some people did go... to the other side, did some things and came back "
39. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. ii.

40. Associated Press, dispatch from Nicosia, 22 October 1993.
41. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. ii.
42. *Ibid.*
43. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
44. NCR Statement, 16 September 1993.
45. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 14.
46. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
48. *Mojahed*, special issue, fall 1991; *NLA Journal*, November 1991. *Mojahed* published the names of the Central Council members and offered explanation on the election process. *NLA Journal* published a report on the Central Council meeting in which Mrs. Rajavi, the Mojahedin Secretary-General at the time, said, "Another point to note is the manner in which the Central Council members are elected and the criteria used to determine their competence. Members of the Central Council were unanimously nominated for membership by the Mojahedin members working in their section." According to the report, Mrs. Fereshteh Yeganeh, the Mojahedin Organizational Supervisor, introduced the names of 54 candidates to the Central Council nominated by their colleagues in the various departments and sections. After extensive deliberations, their membership was put to the ballot.
49. *Mojahed*, No. 349, 4 July 1994.
50. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
51. *The Christian Science Monitor*, 3 July 1986.
52. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
55. *Showra*, monthly publication of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, Paris, April 1985.
56. KDP Politburo's letter to the Mojahedin, 13 March 1987. It reads, "Our dear homeland's precarious state requires as never before cooperation among all republican opposition organizations struggling for the regime's overthrow. Therefore, we propose a meeting at the leadership level between the two of us to discuss and exchange views on relations between the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran and the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran. We await your suggestion as to the time and place of the meeting." (For a copy of the original letter see Appendix B.)
57. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
58. Massoud Rajavi, *NCR President's Report on Bani-Sadr's Relations with the Council* (Paris: Taleqani Books, 1985), p. 350.
59. Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr, *My Turn to Speak*, (New York: Brassey's, 1989), p. 193.
60. *Engelab Islami*, No. 48, 1 April 1983, published by Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr. (See Appendix B.)
61. Rajavi, *op. cit.*, p. 379.
62. NCR Statement, *Mojahed*, No. 196, 29 March 1984.
63. NCR Statement, *Mojahed*, No. 198, 13 April 1984.

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64. Bani-Sadr's letter to Khomeini, *Mojahed*, No. 216, 17 August 1984. (See Appendix B.)
65. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
66. Statement of the Union of Iranian Communists, 23 March 1984.
67. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
68. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
69. *Ibid.*
70. A document entitled, "*The Assassinations of 28 August 1976: A Case Study*," is accompanied by a map of the location of the incident and a detailed analysis. There are three parts to the report: Part I - The Incident and Its Aftermath; Part II - Threat Analysis; Part III - Security Lessons.
71. See Appendix G.
72. *Ibid.*
73. *Ibid.*
74. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, Wendy Sherman's letter accompanying the report.

CHAPTER II

1. U.S. Congress, *Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995, Section 523*. In the course of the January 1994 Senate deliberations on the Foreign Relations Authorization Bill, Senator John McCain (R-AZ) introduced an amendment, containing baseless accusations against the Mojahedin. The action enjoyed the State Department's tacit approval. The Senate adopted the McCain amendment by unanimous consent, thereby avoiding a vote. The issue faced strong opposition in the Congress and eventually the conference committee eliminated all of the allegations. Members of Congress stressed that they want an objective report.
2. Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart, letter to Secretary of State Warren Christopher, 10 June 1994. (See Appendix C.)
3. Rep. William L. Clay, letter to Secretary of State Warren Christopher, 15 June 1994. (See Appendix C.)
4. Sen. John F. Kerry, letter to a constituent, 23 June 1994.
5. Rep. Robert G. Torricelli, letter to Assistant Secretary of State Robert H. Pelletreau, 21 June 1994.
6. Letter by 98 members of the U.S. House of Representatives to Secretary of State, 9 September 1994. Many members of the Foreign Affairs Committee, committee and subcommittee chairmen and a number of ranking Republicans in different committees endorsed the letter. It represented a broad spectrum of congressional viewpoint. (See Appendix C.)
7. Press conference by Reps. Robert Torricelli and Dan Burton on Capitol Hill, 21 September 1994.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*
11. Press release by Congressman Gary Ackerman, 21 September 1994. (See

Appendix C.)

12. Press release by Senator Durenberger, 21 September 1994. (See Appendix C.)
13. News release by Congressman Ed Towns, 21 September 1994. (See Appendix C.)
14. Hearing of the Europe and the Middle East Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, 4 October 1994.
15. "Listen to All Iranian Voices," *The New York Times*, editorial, 26 September 1994.
16. "Iranian Opposition," *The Washington Times*, 30 September 1994.
17. Arnold Beichman, "Iranian Policy on Too Soft A Course?," *The Washington Times*, 21 September 1994.
18. Peter W. Rodman, Director, Middle East Department, Center for Strategic and International Studies, "Mullah Moola," *National Review*, 7 November 1994.
19. *The Boston Globe*, "Irresolute on Iran," editorial, 6 September 1994.
20. *The Indianapolis Star*, "Khomeini's Ghost," editorial, 29 August 1994.
21. Stephen Green, "Let's Recognize Iran Resistance," *The Houston Post*, 28 September 1994.
22. Harry Summers, "Toadying to the Mullahs of Iran," *The Washington Times*, 20 October 1994.
23. John Hughes, former State Department spokesman, "Dealing with Iran," *Christian Science Monitor*, 20 October 1994.
24. Bruce Daniels, "Friend or Foe? Congress Pushes for Assessment," *Albuquerque Journal*, 16 October 1994.
25. *Ibid.*
26. David Kirschten, "Who's the Real Terrorist?," *National Journal*, 1 October 1994.
27. Dr. Joyce Starr, senior fellow, CSIS, "His [Clinton's] Damascus trip pushes Israel toward dangerous 'Syrian peace'," *The Miami Herald*, 30 October 1994.
28. National Public Radio, "All Things Considered," 28 October 1994.
29. Richard H. Curtiss, "Clinton, Christopher and Rafsanjani: Irangate Déjà Vu?," *The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, November/December 1994.
30. Charley Reese, "U.S. Can't Isolate Iran and Let Oil Companies Do Business There," *The Orlando Sentinel*, 10 October 1994.
31. Kasra Nejat, "U.S. Should Work for A New Iran," *The St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 26 September 1994.
32. Hamid R. Azimi, "U.S. Should Support Democracy in Iran," *The San Francisco Chronicle*, 26 August 1994.
33. Martin Schram, "Mixed Signals on Iran," *The Washington Times*, 13 October 1994.
34. Dr. Joyce Starr, National Press Building Briefing, 31 September 1994.
35. *Ibid.*
36. Dr. Khalid Duran, National Press Building Briefing, 31 September 1994.
37. Letter to President Clinton by British parliamentarians, 20 October 1994. Mr. Cynog Dafis, MP, sent the petition along with a letter to President Clinton on 27 October.
38. Lord Avebury, letter to President Clinton, 18 October 1994. (See Appendix C.)

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39. James Morrison, "British weigh in," *The Washington Times*, 28 October 1994.
40. Lennart Friden, conservative member of Swedish Parliament, letter to President Clinton, 26 October 1994.
41. Karl Heinz Koppe, Pax Christi, letter to U.S. Ambassador in Germany, 24 October 1994. Pax Christi is an international human rights organization with consultative status at the United Nations.
42. Letter by an Iranian-American to President Clinton, 18 October 1994.
43. Bahram Maher, "Iran: The Spoiler," *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, 22 September 1994.
44. "A Question of Fairness," Association of Iranian Scholars and Professionals in Washington, D.C., August 1994.

CHAPTER III

1. Steven Greenhouse, "Harsh Report on Iran Opposition Group Draws Ire in Congress," *The New York Times*, 1 November 1994.
2. Press Conference by Reps. Robert Torricelli and Dan Burton on Capitol Hill, 21 September 1994.
3. Wendy Sherman, Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, letter to Rep. Robert G. Torricelli, 26 July 1994.
4. News release by Rep. Robert G. Torricelli, 31 October 1994. (See Appendix C.)
5. Statement by Rep. Dan Burton, 31 October 1994. (See Appendix C.)
6. News release by Rep. Gary Ackerman, 31 October 1994. (See Appendix C.)
7. News release by Rep. Ed Towns, 31 October 1994. (See Appendix C.)
8. Statement by Senator Durenberger, 2 November 1994. (See Appendix C.)
9. Greenhouse, *op. cit.*
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*
12. Thomas W. Lippman, "State Dept. Report Denouncing Iranian Rebel Group is Criticized," *The Washington Post*, 1 November 1994.
13. Reuters, dispatch from Washington, 9 November 1994.
14. *The Indianapolis Star*, "Strange Iran Policy," editorial, 18 November 1994.
15. Greenhouse, *op. cit.*
16. Marvin Zonis, WBEZ Radio, Chicago, 15 November 1994. Dr. Zonis, Professor of International Political Economy, University of Chicago, is a leading Iran expert who has followed events in that country for the last 30 years. His name appears in the State Department report as a source of information.
17. *Ibid.*
18. News release by Rep. Ed Towns, 7 November 1994. (See Appendix C.)
19. News release by Rep. Robert Torricelli, 9 November 1994. (See Appendix C.)
20. Rep. James A. Traficant, Jr., letter to President Clinton, 8 November 1994. (See Appendix C.)
21. Stephen Green, "U.S. should back mujahideen fight," *The Houston Post*, 23 November 1994.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Charley Reese, "The Clinton administration foreign policy is muddled—take

- a look," *The Orlando Sentinel*, 29 November 1994.
24. Abbas Keshavarzi, "Iran Now Ripe for Democracy," *The San Antonio News*, 19 November 1994.
 25. Demonstrations were held in Washington, London, Ottawa, Bonn, Stockholm, The Hague, Oslo, Copenhagen, Geneva, Rome, Madrid, Brussels, Vienna, Sydney and Melbourne.
 26. Resolution of the 9 November worldwide demonstrations by Iranians abroad to protest the Khomeini regime's missile attack on a National Liberation Army base. Subsequently, copies were delivered to the White House and sent to other government officials.

CHAPTER IV

1. *Jomhuri Islami*, Tehran, 9 November 1994.
2. *The Tower Commission Report*, 1987, p. B-132.
3. Simultaneous with the Irangate affair in the U.S. in mid 1985, France, too, sought to free its hostages in Lebanon, held by the Khomeini sponsored *hezbollah*. In doing so, the French began to bring increasing pressure to bear on the NCR president who had taken up residence near Paris. In 1986, the NCR President left France. The mullahs had reached their goal and found a French soft spot. They demanded that France free one of their terrorists (Enis Naqash), imprisoned in France since 1980. To prove that it meant business, the Iranian regime sponsored a wave of bombings in Paris that killed 13 French citizens and injured many more. Vahid Gorji, an Iranian embassy translator and the mastermind of the terrorist operation, was sought by the police for the attacks. Gorji went into hiding in the Iranian embassy. In a political standoff, the French again backed off and Gorji left France without facing any trial.
4. Reuters, dispatch from Tehran, 22 June 1994; "Iran accused unnamed foreign countries on Wednesday of backing the Iraq-based opposition Mujahideen Khalq blamed by Tehran for a bomb that blew up on Monday in the golden-domed shrine of Imam Reza in the northeastern city of Mashad. Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati called the diplomatic corps to his ministry to deliver the charge... Velayati produced no evidence but said investigations and documents confirmed that the bombing was 'engineered and carried out by the Monafeqin terrorist grouplet [Mojahedin]...' He urged the diplomats to denounce the bombing and reiterated Iran's long-standing demand that they curb Mujahideen activities in their countries."
5. *Hansard*, The British Parliament Daily Bulletin, 26 July 1994. The government response to the parliamentary question raised by Lord Avebury on 20 July 1994.
6. Douglas Hogg, Britain's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, letter to Lord Avebury, 29 July 1994.
7. *The Tehran murder machine* (London: British Parliamentary Human Rights Group, 2 March 1994). This report is the result of a study on the terrorism of the Iranian regime against dissidents. It lists more than 100 cases of terrorist

attempts against dissidents abroad. The report's introduction says in part: "For centuries, it has been a principle of international law that political opponents of an autocratic state could seek and obtain protection from their oppressors abroad. In the twentieth century, the victims of Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini, Pinochet, Pol Pot, Suharto, Galtieri, Ceausescu, Stroessner and Ne Win, all found safety and asylum in other countries, where they were immune from persecution. Now for the first time, a dictatorship is reaching out its tentacles into the free world, to hunt down and kill its opponents living in exile." The report analyzes the roots of terrorism which emanates from the doctrine of velayat-e-faqih (guardianship of religious jurisprudent), on which the regime is based. It also elaborates on how the murder machine works. Politically, the report concludes, the indecisiveness of the West vis-a-vis the Iranian regime has encouraged it to believe it will suffer no real penalties for the export of terrorism. As examples, the report cites Europeans' greed for short term economic interests and U.S.'s involvement in the Irangate affair by agreeing to sell arms to the regime and to lash out at the democratic Mojahedin opposition.

- 8 Senator McCain's actions, against the Iranian Resistance dates back to late 1992, when he wrote a series of letters on the Mojahedin to government officials. He specifically pressured the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to release a report against the Mojahedin. He wrote a letter on 15 December 1992 to then FBI Director William Sessions and enclosed a series of unfounded allegations against the Mojahedin claiming that they were part of an FBI report dating back to 1987 and urged the FBI to update it. Not only did the FBI refuse to issue a new report, but John Collingwood, Inspector in Charge, from the Office of Public and Congressional Affairs, also replied: "A review of our files indicates that the enclosed report was not prepared by the FBI." (*Congressional Record*, Senate, 29 June 1993, pp. S8261-6.)

Subsequently, in his letter of 9 June 1993, Senator McCain harshly criticized the FBI Director. Whatever Senator McCain's motives, his enmity toward the Mojahedin and NCR can only be explained in the context of his views about the mullahs' regime. In 1984, as a House member, he wrote to NCR President Massoud Rajavi:

"I am writing to express support for the goals for which you are striving: a peaceful and democratic Iran. For almost five years, the people of Iran have suffered under the yoke of the Ayatollah Khomeini. Khomeini is responsible for the death of thousands of Iranians. His regime has systematically denied basic human rights to the Iranian people. The efforts of the National Council of Resistance to end the brutality in Iran are truly laudable, and I commend you and your compatriots for the courage shown in your endeavor. The hopes of all Americans for a better Iran are with you." (For a reprint of McCain's letter to Mr. Rajavi, see Appendix G.)

In 1993, McCain believes: "Iran does preserve some elements of democracy and the rule of law, and allowed its citizens more commercial freedom than Iraq." He adds: "There are some indicators that a policy of encouraging normal civilian trade and diplomatic relations could encourage these positive trends."

- (*Congressional Record*, Senate, 21 January 1993, p. S172.)
9. *Jomhuri Islami*, Tehran, 28 February 1994.
 10. *U.S.-Iran Review*, Vol. 2, No. 3, March 1993, Washington, D.C., Forum on American-Iranian Relations.
 11. Robert Pelletreau, hearing of the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, House Foreign Affairs Committee, 24 March 1994.
 12. *Jomhuri Islami*, Tehran, 3 March 1994.
 13. *Ibid.*
 14. Agence France Presse, dispatch from Tehran, 5 March 1994.
 15. *Kayhan Havai*, Tehran, 2 November 1994. (See Appendix E.)
 16. *Ibid.*
 17. *Salam*, Tehran, 23 October 1994.
 18. IRNA, dispatch from Tehran, 5 November 1994. (See Appendix E.)
 19. *Tehran Times*, editorial, 5 November 1994.
 20. IRNA, "State Dept. Report on MKO: Awakening for the West," 5 November, 1994.
 21. *Jomhuri Islami*, Tehran, "The Monafegin's Failure in Seeking U.S. Support," 3 November 1994. (See Appendix E.)
 22. IRNA, dispatch from Tehran, 5 November 1994.
 23. *Abrar*, Tehran, 2 November 1994.
 24. *Asharq Al-Awsat*, London, 2 November 1994.
 25. *Jomhuri Islami*, Tehran, 3 November 1994. (See Appendix E.)
 26. *Ettela'at*, Tehran, 31 May 1990, remarks by Mohammad Yazdi, head of the regime's judiciary.
 27. Gerald Butt, "Green light for Tehran," *Middle East International*, London, 18 November 1994.
 28. *Salam*, Tehran, 17 November 1994.
 29. *Jomhuri Islami*, Tehran, 10 November 1994.
 30. Associated Press, dispatch from Nicosia, 9 November 1994. The report emphasizes that "the base lies just within the no-fly zone."
 31. Hamid Assefi, the Khomeini regime's ambassador to France, letter to the Judge in the Bakhtiar murder trial, 28 November 1994.
 32. Statements by Press Office of the People's Mojahedin of Iran, Paris, 11 and 21 October 1994.
 33. Israeli Radio, Farsi Service, 5 December 1994.
 34. Mojahedin statements, *op. cit.*
 35. See Appendix F.
 36. Advertisements ran in *The Washington Post*, 28 July 1992; *The New York Times*, 28 August 1992.
 37. See Appendix F.
 38. Bijan Sepasy, letter to a concerned Iranian patriot, 1994. (See Appendix F.)
 39. *Ibid.*
 40. A former member of Bani-Sadr's office when he was still the President, Nasser Khajenouri is an agent of the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence. He has been very active in disseminating anti-Mojahedin propaganda in Washington's political circles.

Notes

41. Statement by the Press Office of the People's Mojahedin of Iran, Paris, 9 December 1994.
42. Shahin Gobadi, Mojahedin press spokesman in Washington, wrote a letter to the foreign editor of *The Wall Street Journal* on 1 October 1994. In his October 3 reply, the Journal's Foreign Editor confirmed receiving Gobadi's letter.
43. James Bill, "Iran: The prodigal return," *World Monitor*, March 1989.
44. Gary Sick, "How Iran is becoming The Gulf's Superpower," *The Washington Post*, 18 May 1986.
45. Gary Sick, "Iran's Quest for Superpower Status," *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1987.
46. Gary Sick, interview with the CBS morning news, CBS Television network, 10 June 1988.
47. Gary Sick, *The Los Angeles Times*, 28 June 1988.
48. Gary Sick, interview with "International Hour," CNN, 18 July 1988.
49. Gary Sick, interview with the NBC morning news, NBC Television network, 30 August 1988.
50. Gary Sick, "Iran Is Ripe for a Peaceful Overture," *The Los Angeles Times*, 17 November 1994.
51. *Ibid.*
52. *Ibid.*
53. James Bill, *op. cit.* pp. 67-68.
54. James Bill, "The United State and Iran: Mutual mythologies," *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1993, pp. 104-105.
55. Mehdi Noorbaksh, "The Middle East, Islam and the United States: The Special Case of Iran," *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1993, p. 95.
56. *Ibid.*
57. Ervand Abrahamian, *Khomeinism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p. 3.
58. *Ibid.*
59. Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, p. 138.
60. Patrick Clawson, *Iran's Challenge to the West: How, When, and Why*, *The Washington Institute Policy Papers*, No. 33, 1993, p. xi.
61. Clawson, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88.
62. Clawson, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-95.
63. Joshua Muravchik, "An Alternative to Islamic Fundamentalism?," *Congressional Record*, Vol. 139, No. 124, 21 September 1993, p. E2203.
64. *Ibid.*
65. *Ibid.*
66. Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-120.

CHAPTER V

- 1 "Developments in the Middle East," hearing before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, 99th Congress, First Session, 24 July 1985, p. 223.
- 2 *The Tower Commission Report*, 1987, p. B-132. (See Appendix D.)
- 3 Tapely Bennet, Jr., Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental

- Affairs, letter to Representative Lee H. Hamilton, 14 December 1984.
4. State Department, unclassified background report on the Mojahedin, December 1984.
5. Associated Press, dispatch from Washington, 20 June 1985.
6. *Ressalat*, Tehran, 20 July 1987. (See Appendix E.)
7. See Appendix D.
8. In an editorial, "Paying Khomeini's Price," *The Boston Globe*, 25 April 1987, wrote: "President Reagan's secret arms sales to the regime of Ayatollah Khomeini engendered not only a domestic crisis, altering the image of Reagan as a strong leader, but also a distortion of US foreign policy... As documented in appendix B of the Tower Commission report, the Reagan administration tried to placate Khomeini not only with missiles and battlefield-intelligence data, but also by taking measures against Khomeini's principal domestic opponent, the resistance organization known as the People's Mujahedeen." Also in their column, "The Real Iranian Terrorist," *The Washington Post*, 3 April 1987, Rowland Evans and Robert Novak noted: "While Israel and the United States were selling arms to Iran behind the backs of Congress and the world, the State Department was quietly trashing the first effective anti-Khomeini opposition in Iran, called the People's Mojahedin, as 'anti-democratic, anti-American' and using 'terrorism'." (See Appendix D.)
9. Congressman Mervyn M. Dymally, letter to Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy, 12 March 1987. (See Appendix D.)
10. Congressman Mervyn M. Dymally, "Dear Colleague" letter, 9 April 1987. (See Appendix D.)
11. Assistant Secretary of State Richard W. Murphy, hearing before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, 21 April 1987. (See Appendix D.)
12. David B. Ottaway, "U.S. Meets With Iran Opposition Group," *The Washington Post*, 22 April 1987. (See Appendix D.)
13. United Press International, dispatch from Washington, 20 April 1987.
14. Congressman Mervyn M. Dymally, letter to Secretary of State James Baker, 6 September 1989. Attached was a letter of 186 congressmen.
15. Janet G. Mullins, Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, letter to Rep. Dymally, 15 September 1989.
16. Assistant Secretary of State John Kelly, hearing before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, House Foreign Affairs Committee, 19 September 1989.
17. Congressman Mervyn M. Dymally, letter to Secretary of State James Baker, 3 October 1989. (See Appendix D.)
18. Mullins, letter to Rep. Dymally, 6 October 1989.
19. Statement on Iran, signed by 219 members of the House of Representatives, *The New York Times*, 29 July 1992.
20. Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), quoting Khomeini regime's news agency, IRNA, in English, 11:53 GMT, 11 July 1992.
21. Edward Djerejian, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, hearing of Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the House Foreign

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- Affairs Committee, 27 July 1993.
22. Geoffrey Kemp, *Forever Enemies?* (Washington: Carnegie, 1994), p.3.
 23. Rosenthal, "Here We Go Again," *The New York Times*, 16 July 1993.
 24. Agence France Presse, dispatch from Paris, 26 October 1994. Titled "Mr. Christopher's Call on U.S. Allies Has a Poor Chance of Being Heard," AFP described Christopher's demand for "a firm stance vis-a-vis Tehran" as "absurd" because the U.S. "is one of the few industrial countries whose trade with the Islamic Republic has increased in 1993."
 25. Stephen Green, "Double standard in dealing with Iran?" *The Washington Times*, 26 February 1995.

CHAPTER VI

1. Shariat-Razavi, Qandchi and Bozorgnia were three Tehran University students, shot dead in a peaceful demonstration on campus by the Shah's security forces on 7 December 1953. Vice President Nixon arrived in Tehran for an official visit the same day.
2. Mohsen M. Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988), p. 77.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 76.
4. Shaul Bakhash, *The Reign of the Ayatollahs* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), p. 10.
5. Milani, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-97.
6. Mohammad Hanifnejad, the founder of the People's Mojahedin of Iran, was an agricultural engineer and Muslim intellectual. Born in 1938 in Tabriz, capital of Eastern Azerbaijan Province, he was an activist in the anti-Shah struggle. Jailed in 1963, he met Ayatollah Seyyed Mahmoud Taleqani, an anti-Shah, anti-fundamentalist religious leader. Years later Ayatollah Taleqani said of him: "I taught him how to learn from the Quran, and he discovered its meaning."
7. *Chegouneh Quran Biamouzim?*, (*How to Study the Quran, the Mojahedin's guidelines on how to study and interpret the Quran*), People's Mojahedin of Iran: Tehran, spring 1979, Vol. I, p. 9: "For numerous reasons, our organization emphasized using the original Islamic texts in its ideological studies, particularly the Quran and *Nahj-ol Balagheh* (*The Road to Eloquence*, a compilation of sermons, letters, and sayings of Ali ibn Abi Talib, the first Shi'ite Imam). This approach was totally different from the traditional methods. At the same time, the organization felt it must have a realistic and scientific approach to such studies... Through the Mojahedin, Islam was presented in a different manner..."
8. *Mojahed*, No. 82, 7 June 1980, pp. 6-7, excerpts of a series of articles analyzing the shah's suppression of the 5 June 1963 demonstrations: "The bloody and brutal suppression of the June 5 demonstrations purged the wavering forces incapable of continuing the struggle at a higher level. Many of the 'leaders' backed off. Rationalizing that 'it is no use to continue the struggle,' or 'nothing can be done for now,' they succumbed to the shah, kept quiet and vacated the

scene. This defeat disappointed the nation, which lost trust in political leaders... On the other hand, there were selfless pioneers who built the foundations of future victories on the ruins of past defeats."

9. *Tahlil-e Amouzeshi-ye Bayaniye-e Apportunist-haye Chapnama (Educational Analyses of the Statement of the pseudo-Leftist Opportunists)*, (People's Mojahedin of Iran: spring 1979), pp. 170-246: "The opportunists designated certain persons to spy on those individuals whom they believed had not completely succumbed to their ideology or were resistant... In the case of Majid (Sharif Vagafi), they designated his wife. One of our most talented sisters, she had begun to waver under the pressure of the opportunists, and for this reason, had been forced, as punishment, to labor in a factory... Five days after she gave them a report, she and Majid went for a rendezvous [with the opportunist leaders]; it was Majid's last. First the opportunists separated her from Majid and sent her away. Then Majid was led to the slaughter, and his body subsequently burned."
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 237-239. "In the midst of ideological conflicts within the organization, circumstances in which all principled leaders make correct, realistic conduct a first priority, the opportunist leadership of the ideologically transformed organization launched several military operations (the assassinations of Col. Zandipour, the American colonels, etc.)..."

The survival of the organization as a single entity was in question, due to massive purges and a demoralized membership, but [the opportunist leadership] had the organization take on the burden of major military operations. These were undertaken in a bid to clamp a lid on the conflicts brewing within, and enabled the opportunists to challenge the genuine [Muslim] Mojahedin from a position of strength. Though the operations used the tactical and technical resources of the genuine Mojahedin and the experience of its members, they served the interests of the opportunist leaders, consolidating their base of power. By the same token, they were able to use the prestige of the military operations to muster credibility for their new opportunist positions. To this end, the leaflets they distributed on the assassination of Col. Zandipour carried the original emblem of the Mojahedin with a doctored Quranic verse, so that the public would be prepared for the announcement of the change of the organization's ideology to Marxism...

"Only a month or so following the assassination of Zandipour, the leaflets on the assassination of the American colonels were distributed with an emblem which lacked the Quranic verse. In this way, every one became aware of the changes within the Mojahedin. The opportunist leaders could more easily silence the resistant members of lower rank, and at the same time counter other forces from a position of strength and pave the way for their publicizing of the opportunist changes."

11. *How to Study the Quran*, op. cit., pp. 10-11: "The opportunist, treacherous blow to the Mojahedin Organization by the leftist opportunists did irreversible damage to our nation's liberation movement. The organization's ideology suffered the worst blow. On the one hand, it damaged the hope and trust of our people in the organization and on the other, created suitable grounds for

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- the emergence of a reactionary rightist current. Overall, it brought about and set in motion a 'rightist threat' within the movement."
12. For more information on Massoud Rajavi see chapter XII.
 13. *Educational Analyses of the Statement of the pseudo-Leftist Opportunists*, op. cit., p. 2. The Mojahedin's declaration of its positions on the leftist coup in their organization was first drafted in autumn 1976, and completed in the form of a 12-point statement in autumn 1977. Its publication, however, was postponed until spring 1979, due to developments in Iranian society and the participation of the Mojahedin's sympathizers in the general uprising against the Shah. Point 10 of the Mojahedin's declaration reads: "This leftist, opportunist current brought about the premature emergence of a reactionary rightist current, which at this stage is the prime threat to the forces struggling in the name of Islam. We are struggling against this current as well."
 14. "162 political prisoners freed," *Kayhan*, Tehran, 21 January 1979: "The prison courtyard was crowded and overwhelmed with excitement until midnight. The relatives and friends of prisoners, who had impatiently waited all day, chanted, 'hail to Fadai'i, hail to Mojahed,' and opened their arms to embrace 125 (sic.) of the nation's sincere and freedom-seeking children... To assure the crowd of the freedom of political prisoners, one of the prisoners talked to them directly. The choice was Massoud Rajavi. Facing the enthusiastic overflow of feelings of the public, he said, 'Are there any words with which one could really thank you? Indeed, we owe our freedom to you, and not to any other person or particular group.' "
 15. "Mojahedin's National Movement Announces Its Formation," *Kayhan*, Tehran, 25 January 1979, p. 4.
 16. "Massoud Rajavi, a Mojahedin leader: Coup d'etat cannot prevent nation's victory," *Kayhan*, Tehran, 25 January 1979, p. 4: "Massoud Rajavi, one of the leaders of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran, who was freed from prison only a few days ago, spoke at the Tehran University mosque: '... I have not come here to praise this spontaneous trend of events. We have not come to endorse the status quo. We must think about things that need to be accomplished... It should be plainly stated that struggle is the right of any person and any group. If man does not struggle, he is no longer human... Our Islam is not the type that restricts struggle to a special force or group. Did not our leader [Imam Hussein] say, if you do not believe in any religion, at least be free-minded? The sanctity of freedoms and the right to struggle must be safeguarded. The right to struggle is the natural, inherent right of every human being. So we must respect one another and prevent divisiveness. Division is nothing but a reflection of the enemy and its internal agents within our ranks." See also: *Political Positions of the People's Mojahedin of Iran on the Eve of the Revolution's Victory: Speeches of Massoud Rajavi*, Tehran, People's Mojahedin of Iran: October 1979.
 17. "People's Mojahedin: Parties, Press and Political Gatherings Must Be Free," *Kayhan*, Tehran, 20 March 1979, p. 8.
 18. *Mojahed*, Special Issue No. 5, 7 March 1980, p. 8.
 19. "Mojahedin centers attacked and disarmed," *Kayhan*, Tehran, 4 March 1979,

- p. 8. See also *Mojahed*, Special Issue No. 4, 31 January 1980, pp. 3&6. See also *Mojahed*, No. 15, 17 December 1979, p. 1, "Mojahedin's statement explaining the recent attacks of the Guards Corps on members and buildings of the Mojahedin."
20. "Monopolists take advantage of the phrase 'Imam's Line' to legitimize their monopoly," *Mojahed*, No. 91, 18 June 1980, p. 4. See also "Dissolution of the monopolist ruling party, the first fundamental step to save [the country]," *Mojahed*, No. 112, 5 March 1981, p. 1.
 21. "Documents on the conspiracy to bomb the residence of the Reza'is and assassinate Massoud Rajavi and Moussa Khiabani," *Mojahed*, No. 112, 5 March 1981, p.1. See also "Five Mojahedin murdered on the eve of spring by reactionary agents," *Mojahed*, No. 115, 9 April 1981, p. 1. On page 19 of the same issue there is a list of 929 imprisoned sympathizers of the Mojahedin arrested by the Revolutionary Guards Corps.
 22. Abrahamian, *The Iranian Mojahedin*, (London: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 198.
 23. "IRP's rigging and influencing of the presidential and parliamentary elections," *Mojahed*, No. 28, 20 March 1980, p. 5. See also *Mojahed* issues no. 83, 114, and the special issue no. 9 (17 March 1980) for the documents and positions of the Mojahedin on the election fraud.
 24. *Mojahed*, No. 127, Tehran, 23 June 1981.
 25. *Mojahed*, No. 128, Tehran, 25 June 1981, p. 1.
 26. *Nashriye Anjomanhaye Daneshjouyan-e Mosalman*, No. 10, Paris, 23 October 1981. This and subsequent issues published the names and letters of personalities and groups joining the NCR.
 27. "Mavad-e Missaq," *Nashriye Anjoman-e Daneshjouyan-e Mosalman-e Farancais*, No. 3, 28 August 1981, p. 1.
 28. "Program of the National Council of Resistance and the Provisional Government of the Democratic Islamic Republic of Iran," *Nashriye Anjomanhaye Daneshjouyan-e Mosalman*, Paris, 2 October 1981, p.1. In a cover letter dated September 29, 1981, Massoud Rajavi wrote: "I hereby present the program of the Provisional Government of the Democratic Islamic Republic of Iran. This program has been accepted by all members of the National Council of Resistance for the Independence and Freedom of the Democratic Islamic Republic of Iran; henceforth, acceptance of it qualifies one for membership in the NCR."
 29. *Global Support for the Peace Plan of the National Council of Resistance of Iran*, People's Mojahedin of Iran, International Relations Department, Paris: 1986.
 30. "Statement of the National Council of Resistance," *Parvaz-e Tarikhsaz-e Solh va Azadi (Historic Flight for Peace and Freedom)*, People's Mojahedin of Iran: 1986, p. 51. See also pp. 53-121 and page 155 for a report on the events and documents on the circumstances leading to the Iranian Resistance Leader's departure from France and on the regime's conspiracy to have him extradited.
 31. *National Liberation Army of Iran, Guarantor of Iranian people's victory over Khomeini's dictatorship*, Publications Department of the People's Mojahedin

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- Organization of Iran, (Paris: 1987). See also *NLA Quarterly*, spring 1988, "Crippling Khomeini's War Machine"; *Iran Liberation*, No. 72, 15 April 1988; *Iran Liberation*, No. 80, 4 July 1988; *Iran Liberation*, No. 81, 18 July 1988, and *Iran Liberation*, No. 82, 12 August 1988.
32. *NLA Journal*, November 1991. See also *Iran Liberation*, special issue, July 1992; *The Economist*, 13 June 1992; *Le Monde*, 14 June 1992.
 33. "Week of solidarity in Iran," *The Lion and Sun*, the Iranian Resistance's Journal, 13 August 1994, pp. 8-10. See also "Mullahs Besieged by Rising Protests," *NLA Journal*, November 1991, pp. 15-19.
 34. "National Council of Resistance Holds First Parliamentary Session: NCR expands to 235 members, half of whom are women," *Iran Liberation*, No. 120, October 1993, p. 1.
 35. U.S. State Department, *People's Mojahedin of Iran*, 28 October 1994, p. ii.
 36. *Ibid.*
 37. Ervand Abrahamian, *The Iranian Mojahedin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), pp. 206-208.
 38. *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 41, No. 2, Spring 1987: The *Journal* wrote that *Peykar* "denounced the Islamic orientation of the organization in favor of a Marxist Leninist line and expelled those members who did not adhere to it. The Marxist Leninist faction went so far as to use terrorist methods such as setting fire to Shareef Vaghefi, a leader of the Islamic faction, in order to gain control of the organization... Advocating armed urban guerrilla operations, in 1975, the Marxist Leninist Mujahedin carried out several terrorist actions, among them the assassination of Col. Turner, Col. Schaefer, and later Gen. Price."
 39. See Appendix E.
 40. *Mojahed*, Tehran, No. 107, 27 January 1981.
 41. Tehran Radio, 4 November 1984.
 42. *Mojahed*, No. 102, 23 December 1980, p. 2. Interview with Massoud Rajavi: "The hostage-taking was portrayed as the supreme form of struggle against imperialism. Under this pretext, they got rid of many of their opponents and monopolized the elections to the advantage of certain factions."
 43. "What have we gained and what have we learned so far...?", *Mojahed*, No. 12, 26 November 1980. The subtitle to this article read: "Success on the field of battle with the primary enemy is possible only when, parallel to it, the internal obstacles to the movement are also dealt with." In this way, the Mojahedin began alerting the public to the ruling clergy's motives behind the hostage taking, directing their attention to issues of far greater importance. See also *Mojahed*, No. 101, 16 December 1980. This and subsequent issues ran a series of articles called "Stories behind the scenes of the hostage-taking." In an editorial published in *Mojahed*, No. 106, 20 January 1981, the Mojahedin wrote: "The United States had correctly realized that the hostages have become a complex and difficult issue, more of a problem for Iran than for the U.S."
 44. Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, pp. 208-209.
 45. *Ibid.*, p. 211.
 46. Ayatollah Seyyed Mahmoud Taleqani was a veteran activist against the shah

- and a highly respected religious leader. His endeavors in defense of the people's fundamental rights began against the oppressive rule of the shah's father, Reza Shah, in the 1930s. He was a staunch supporter of Iran's nationalist leader, Dr. Mohammad Mossadeq. Between the coup that ousted Mossadeq in August 1953 and the 1979 revolution, Taleqani active in the anti-shah movement, and was arrested and tortured on several occasions by the SAVAK. Soon after the fall of the shah, relations between Taleqani and the ruling mullahs soured. He passed away on September 10, 1979, at the age of 69.
47. Ayatollah Taleqani, sixth Friday prayer sermon, 7 September 1979, *Friday Prayer Sermons of Father Taleqani*, People's Mojahedin of Iran: October 1979, p. 60. In this sermon, Ayatollah Taleqani speaks on the mission of the Prophet of Islam: "He came to break the chains... those laws and traditions which had broken the people's backs and shackled their minds and movements. The Prophet was sent to eliminate these restrictions and free the people. He had come to free the people... Sometimes these restrictions were imposed on the people under the name of religion, and these were the most dangerous of all, because what was not from God was being attributed to Him."
 48. "What is the purpose of attacks on revolutionary forces?" *Mojahed*, No. 5, 20 August 1979: "Everyone knows that the issue is not the building housing the Mojahedin. Those not daring to openly call for repression and restrictions on political freedoms, attack us and make an issue out of a building, claiming that it is public property and the Mojahedin must evacuate it."
 49. *Mojahed*, No. 87, 14 June 1980, p. 2.
 50. "Mojahedin centers attacked and disarmed," *Kayhan*, Tehran, 4 March 1979, p. 8.
 51. "Story of Ayatollah Taleqani's departure from Tehran" and "Ayatollah Taleqani's sons arrested," *Kayhan*, Tehran, 14 April 1979, p. 1.
 52. "People's Mojahedin put their military forces at Ayatollah Taleqani's disposal," *Kayhan*, Tehran, 16 April 1979, pp.1-2.
 53. *Mardom*, Tehran, March 1981.
 54. Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, p. 209.
 55. *Ibid.*, p. 215.

CHAPTER VII

1. Robert Pelletreau, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, hearing of the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, House Foreign Affairs Committee, 4 March 1994.
2. U.S. State Department, *People's Mojahedin of Iran*, 28 October 1994, p. 6.
3. The Khomeini Regime's representative to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, press statement by the "Islamic Republic of Iran," Geneva, February 1994.
4. *Kayhan*, Tehran, 4 March 1979, p. 8.
5. Ervand Abrahamian, *The Iranian Mojahedin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 198; Shaul Bakhash, *The Reign of the Ayatollahs* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), p. 90.

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6. Eric Roleau, a report from Tehran, *Le Monde*, 29 March 1980.
7. Eric Roleau, a report from Tehran, *Le Monde*, 14 June 1980.
8. Khomeini, Tehran radio, 25 June 1980.
9. *Mojahed*, No. 87, 14 June 1980.
10. *Mojahed*, No. 115, 9 April 1981.
11. *Mojahed*, Tehran, No. 103, 30 December 1980.
12. *Ettela'at*, Tehran, 30 May 1990.
13. Bakhash, *op. cit.*, p. 123.
14. Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, p. 194.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 195-196.
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*, p. 199.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 211-213; 216-217.
19. U.S. State Department, unclassified report on the Mojahedin, December 1984.
20. The so-called "Organization of Mojaheds of the Islamic Revolution" was a fascist religious group formed after the downfall of the shah to usurp the name of the Mojahedin, very popular in Iranian society. It was a paramilitary group that consisted of revolutionary guards corps members and generally viewed as a front organization for the *hezbollah*. They occasionally attacked Mojahedin meetings under the name of *hezbollah*. After the start of widespread suppression and political executions in Iran, this group became defunct and was officially dissolved. It failed to usurp the Mojahedin name and generated much disgust among the Iranian people.
21. Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, pp. 218-219.
22. Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, approved by the U.N. General Assembly, 10 December 1948.
23. Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, President of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, *L'Osservatore Romano*, Vatican publication, 5 April 1986.
24. Abraham Lincoln, First Inaugural Address, 4 March 1861.
25. Massoud Rajavi, interview in *L'Unita*, Rome, 1 January 1984.
26. *Ettela'at*, Tehran, 3 October 1981.
27. Mohammad Mohaddessin, letter to Congressman Lee H. Hamilton, 15 March 1994.
28. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. ii.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
30. *Ibid.*, p. iii.
31. Associated Press, dispatch from Nicosia, 20 August 1986.
32. "Car Bomb Explodes in Tehran; 20 Die, Scores Reported Hurt," *The Los Angeles Times*, 20 August 1986; see also "Car Bomb Kills 20 in Iran's Capital," *The New York Times*, 20 August 1986; and "Car Bomb Kills 20 People in Central Tehran," *The Washington Post*, 20 August 1986. The articles quote Mojahedin's statement: "By relating such acts of terrorism to the People's Mujaheddin, the regime seeks to pave the way for the execution of yet more political prisoners."
33. "Siege of Car Bombings Gripping Iran's Cities," *The Los Angeles Times*, 21 August 1986.
34. *Ibid.*

35. "Iranian Terrorism: A Postscript to the Tehran murder machine", British Parliamentary Human Rights Group, August 1994, referring to the regime's consistent attribution of its terrorist activities to the opposition, the report notes: "In Iran itself, the holiest shrine in the country, the mosque of Imam Reza, in the northeastern city of Mashad suffered a bomb blast on June 20, killing 26 people. Several other attempted bomb attacks were perpetrated on other mosques. It is more than a coincidence that those inside and outside Iran are occurring at locations of some religious sensitivity. These atrocities may be part of a larger campaign, which includes the recent murder of Christian priests. In all these cases, Tehran has blamed the victims or the People's Mojahedin, their favorite scapegoat at the moment."
36. U.N. Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Resolution E/CN.4/Sub.2/1994/L. 28, 19 August 1994.
37. Reynaldo Galindo Pohl, Special Representative of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, interim report on the situation of human rights in Iran submitted to the General Assembly, November 1994.
38. Tehran radio, 25 December 1994, Foreign Ministry statement, denouncing the U.N. General Assembly resolution on the regime's human rights violations.
39. Associated Press, dispatch from Nicosia, 11 October 1992.
40. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 11.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
42. *Ibid.*
43. Reuters, dispatch from Baghdad, 5 April 1992.
44. Amir Taheri, "Attack on People's Mojahedin carried out to test Iraq, Tehran informed Washington 24 hours prior to the attack," *Asharq Al-Awsat*, London, 8 April 1992.
45. Tehran radio, 5 April 1992.
46. Alireza Jafarzadeh, then Mojahedin press spokesman in Washington, letter to FBIS, 22 May 1992.
47. Mike Blanchfield, "Judge criticizes CSIS, Crown over siege trial," *Ottawa Citizen*, 10 September 1994.
48. *Ibid.*
49. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
50. Letter by an Iranian-American to President Clinton, 17 January 1995.
51. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
52. *Ibid.*
53. *Ibid.*
54. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
55. The United States Declaration of Independence, 1776.
56. *The Tehran murder machine*, London: British Parliamentary Human Rights Group, 2 March 1994.
57. Associated Press, dispatch from Vienna, 13 July 1989.
58. Reuters, dispatch from Geneva, 24 April 1990.
59. Agence France Presse, dispatch from Paris, 6 August 1991.
60. United Press International, dispatch from Ankara, 29 January 1993.
61. Stephen Kinzer, "Iran Kurdish Leaders Among 4 Killed in Berlin," *The New*

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- York Times*, 19 September 1992.
62. ANSA, dispatch from Rome, 16 March 1993.
 63. Reuters, dispatch from Nicosia, 6 June 1993.
 64. *Ressalat*, Tehran, 20 July 1987. Mohsen Rafiqdoost, the former Minister of the Pasdaran Corps, admitted that Iran had attacked the Marines' barracks in Beirut. He said, "The TNT and the ideology that sent 400 marines, officers and soldiers, in the marines' headquarters to hell was sent from Iran." (See Appendix E.)
 65. Statement on Iran, the United States House of Representatives, 8 July 1992.
 66. *Iran Liberation*, News Bulletin of the People's Mojahedin of Iran, No. 117, January 1993.
 67. *The New York Times*, 1 August 1990.
 68. Edward M. Kennedy, letter to Massoud Rajavi, NCR President, 27 June 1984.

CHAPTER VIII

1. Statement by the Press Office of the People's Mojahedin of Iran, Washington, D.C., 26 August 1994. See also Reuters, dispatch from Nicosia, 26 August 1994.
2. U.S. State Department, unclassified report on the Mojahedin, December 1984.
3. Hashemi-Rafsanjani Friday prayer sermon, Tehran radio, 9 August 1991.
4. Joint communiqué issued by the President of the National Council of Resistance of Iran and Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, Paris, 9 January 1983.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. Peace Plan of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, issued in Paris, 13 March 1983.
8. "Iraqi Official Welcomes Iranian Resistance Peace Initiative," *The Baghdad Observer*, 21 March 1983. (See Appendix A.)
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Le Monde*, 12 April 1986; *The Guardian*, 15 May 1986.
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Global Support for the Peace Plan of the National Council of Resistance of Iran*, Paris, 1986.
13. *Le Monde*, Paris, 14 December 1984.
14. Tehran radio, 23 July 1985.
15. Tehran radio, 25 August 1985.
16. Tehran radio, 31 March 1985.
17. *Mojahed*, No. 285, 11 April 1986.
18. Tehran radio, 22 May 1985.
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Kayhan*, Tehran, 16 February 1986.
21. *VSD*, Paris, 16 January 1986.
22. Agence France Presse, dispatch from Auvers-sur-Oise, 3 April 1986.
23. *La Gazette*, Val-d'Oise, France, 16 April 1986.
24. *Ibid.*

25. *Ettela'at*, Tehran, 15 April 1986.
26. *The New York Times*, 20 April 1986.
27. "Iranian Exile Leaves France Under Pressure," *The New York Times*, 8 June 1986; also "Iran, France Gain From Iranian Exile's Exit," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 10 June 1986, the article states: "French officials say Rajavi left voluntarily and was not expelled, but in recent weeks the French government had exerted quiet pressure and placed restraints on his activities... French editorials expressed the hope Monday that Iran would now press its Islamic fundamentalist supporters in Lebanon to free nine French hostages kidnapped in the past 20 months"; also "Opponents of Khomeini Said to Leave France for Iran-Iraq Border," *The New York Times*, 10 June 1986, wrote: "Mr. Rajavi's unexpected departure was seen here as part of an effort to restore normal ties between France and Iran and, ultimately, to help win the release of eight or nine Frenchmen being held hostage by pro-Iranian gunmen in Lebanon."
28. Marvin Zonis, interview with WBEZ, Chicago, 15 November 1994.
29. Reuters, dispatch from Baghdad, 8 June 1986.
30. "Foe of Khomeini Welcomed in Iraq After Pressured to Leave France," *The Atlanta Constitution*, 8 June 1986.
31. "President Hussein Welcomes Iranian Opposition Leader," *The Baghdad Observer*, 16 June 1986.
32. *Ibid.*
33. "Iranian Rebel Meets Iraqi Chief," *The New York Times*, 16 June 1986.
34. Reuters, dispatch from Baghdad, 15 June 1986.
35. *L'Unita*, Rome, 18 June 1986; also see statement by the People's Mojahedin of Iran, 15 June 1986.
36. BBC radio, Farsi Service, 16 June 1986.
37. U.S. State Department, People's Mojahedin of Iran, 28 October 1994, p. iii.
38. In an editorial in Iraq's *Al-Jumhuriya* newspaper, on 20 January 1992, Editor in Chief Saad Al-Bazzaz revealed that throughout the Persian Gulf Crisis, Rafsanjani had encouraged Baghdad to adopt a hard-line stance. Quoting a top Iranian official, he wrote: "I have much more than what you have asked for... We are on your side in the Kuwaiti affair. We request that you not take our official remarks as the only reflection of our stances. We stand beside Iraq and completely understand the circumstances and reasons for Iraq's position. Do not retreat from Kuwait. We will stand by you against America to the extent our strength allows and as much as we can." Muhammed Hamzah Az-Zubaidi, then the Iraqi prime minister, reiterated the same point during an interview with the Iraqi national television in January 1992. As the minister of transportation and communications, he was a member of an Iraqi delegation which visited Iran on several occasions during the Persian Gulf crisis.
39. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
40. *Ibid.*
41. Massoud Rajavi, letter to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iraq, 25 April 1983.
42. "Iraq Declares Two-Week Suspension of Air Raids on Iranian Cities," *The Washington Post*, 19 February 1987.

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43. *Mojahed*, No. 192, February 1984.
44. *The Baghdad Observer*, 19 February 1987.
45. Associated Press, dispatch from Mehran, 21 June 1988. Jeffrey Ulbricht, the AP correspondent, reported from the battle scene that the NLA captured 1,500 Iranian prisoners adding: "Not far away, scores of tanks, artillery pieces, anti-aircraft and anti-tank weapons, tons of small arms, machine guns and other equipment were being dumped in a huge holding area." Ulbricht was one of 40 foreign reporters who visited Mehran when the NLA captured the city.
46. Massoud Rajavi, statement by the NCR President, *Mojahed*, No. 262, 21 September 1985.
47. *Kayhan Havaï*, 17 April 1992. (See Appendix E.)
48. *Al-Jumhuriya*, Baghdad, 3 July 1988.
49. Ulbricht, *op. cit.*
50. Reuters, dispatch from Baghdad, 24 July 1994.
51. For obvious reasons, then and now, Iran's other neighbors were politically incapable of hosting the Iranian Resistance's military forces. The Resistance repeatedly asked the government of Turkey to provide bases and accommodations in Turkey's border provinces to the Resistance's combatants, to facilitate their comings and goings to Iran, but Ankara rejected this request. It is now common knowledge that the government of Turkey has impeded the movement of Iranian refugees and engaged in "intelligence and security" cooperation with the Khomeini regime, which seeks only to restrict Iranian refugees and activists. It has even extradited a number of political refugees.
52. Advertisements published in the U.S. papers by the regime's Washington lobby, FAIR: *The New York Times*, 28 August 1992; *The Washington Post*, 28 July 1992.
53. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. iii
54. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
55. "Speech by Massoud Rajavi in Auvers-sur-Oise," *Mojahed*, No. 204, 24 May 1984.
56. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 10
57. Jalal Talebani, letter to NCR President Massoud Rajavi, 3 March 1984. *Mojahed*, No. 196, 29 March 1984.
58. Statements by the Khomeini regime's officials on cooperation of the Talebani group against the Mojahedin, 11-12 October 1986. (See Appendix F.)
59. Attacks by Talebani's group on the Mojahedin in those years include:
 - * 22 July 1984: Houshang Abbassi was murdered in his tent while praying in the Kardoveh village;
 - * 3 April 1986: A Mojahedin team on a training mission near the Mojahedin's Mansouri base. Four Mojahedin were wounded;
 - * 14 July 1986: Four Mojahedin were attacked and killed on the Kirkuk highway;
 - * Winter 1986: The Mojahedin evacuated their bases in the villages of Talteh, Ghasheih, Suneh, Kanaro and Kordaveh. They were blown up to prevent the Khomeini regime from using them;
 - * 7 October 1986: Ten Mojahedin were murdered in the village of Posht Asham;

* 14-15 October 1986: Two Mojahedin bases near the border region in Mavet inside Iraqi territory were shelled with mortar rounds;

* In 1986, on 33 occasions, the Talebani forces stopped the Mojahedin from carrying out their activities. The Talebani group stole five Mojahedin vehicles and on 13 different occasions they robbed the organization's weaponry and equipment. The Mojahedin did not retaliate in any of the cases.

60. Reuters, dispatch from Damascus, 27 March 1991.
61. *NLA Journal*, August 1991; *Mojahed*, special issue, autumn 1991. (See Appendix F.)
62. *Ibid.*
63. *Ibid.*
64. Massoud Rajavi, addressing a gathering of thousands of NLA combatants on the occasion of *Id al-Fitr*, 16 April 1991.
65. The two, Samad Emam-qoli and Ja'far Manouchehri, were ambushed on 18 March 1991 and subsequently tortured and executed. (See the report by Mr. Reynaldo Galindo Pohl, Special Representative of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, 2 January 1992, P. 14, par. 62.
66. Statement by the Office of the People's Mojahedin of Iran, Paris, 26 March 1991. The statement said: "Yesterday, a 19-member unit of the NLA lost its way near Jalula and was ambushed by the forces of the regime and the Talebani group near the city of Kelar." In a second statement on 8 April 1991, the Mojahedin said that of the 19 who were lost, one was killed during the fighting and the rest were captured. All were tortured and executed. Local witnesses said the crime had been perpetrated by Talebani's forces. At the time, the group's radio confirmed the capture of the 19 combatants.
67. *Agence France Presse*, dispatch from Tehran, 13 April 1991.
68. In his 13 November 1992 interim report to the U.N. General Assembly, p. 9, par. 24, the Special Representative of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, wrote: "During the second half of April 1992, 45 people were allegedly executed in Tehran. Their bodies were taken to the Mesgarabad cemetery in south Tehran. The names of five of those executed were given as follows: ... Mr. Beshar Shabibi, who was handed over to the Iranian authorities by an Iraqi opposition group, the so-called Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). No reasons were officially given for their execution."
69. *Abrar*, Tehran, 18 March 1991.
70. *Kayhan*, Tehran, 6 April 1991.
71. *Jamhuri Islami*, 5 April 1991.
72. For documents concerning the Khomeini regime's plans to use local agents to destroy the Mojahedin see Appendix F.
73. *The New York Times*, "Iran Yields to Demands After Riots in Northern City," 5 August 1994.
74. Abdol Rahman Qassemloo, Secretary General of the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran, was murdered in Vienna in July 1989 while holding talks with the representatives of the regime. Sadeq Sharafkandi, his successor, was also killed by the Tehran regime's terrorists in September 1992 in Berlin.

CHAPTER IX

- 1 U.S. State Department, *People's Mojahedin of Iran*, 1994, p. 18.
- 2 *Tahlil-e Amouzeshti-e Bayani-yeh-e Opportunist-hay-e Chapnama*, (*Educational Analysis of the Statement of pseudo-Leftist Opportunists*) People's Mojahedin of Iran, Tehran: spring 1979, p. 247. The Mojahedin write, "Eventually and historically, it is only the people and the popular forces who judge the good or evil of different political and social positions. In this way, we are equipped with a righteous and genuine criterion which in a historical perspective is the channel for expression of God's will."
- 3 *Kayhan*, Tehran, 25 January 1979. Only a couple of days after being released from prison, Mr. Rajavi delivered his first public speech at Tehran University. He began in this way, "In the name of God and in the name of the heroic people of Iran. In the name of the martyrs, specially those of the university, the martyrs who granted us freedom. Freedom! Oh dear Freedom! Yes, I said freedom. This is the essence and spirit of human beings. This is what the martyrs sacrificed for, the prisoners were imprisoned for, the exiles immigrated for, and the heroic nation revolted for."
 This was the theme consistently underlined by the Mojahedin in every gathering and every publication, including in the very first issues of *Mojahed* which began publication in late September 1979. In its sixth issue, *Mojahed* published an article on the first page entitled, "The Sacred Meaning of Freedom: The Essential Content of Evolution Is None But Freedom and Emancipation."
 In yet another famous speech on 12 June, 1980, made on the eve of Khomeini's banning of Mojahedin's public activities, Rajavi emphasized, "Freedom is a divine gift to mankind! Nobody has granted it! We have gained it at the price of blood and we will not lose it at the cost of our lives! Anyone who seeks to abrogate the freedom of discussion and criticism, does not comprehend Islam. . . Anyone who seeks to limit democratic and Islamic freedoms, comprehends neither Islam nor humanity. Freedom is a necessary condition for the perpetuation of human beings in a human state; otherwise, there is nothing to distinguish human kind from the animals. Otherwise, humankind has no means by which it can comprehend duty and responsibility, and the human world can only decline into an animal state. . ." *Mojahed*, No. 88, 15 June 1980.
- 4 Massoud Rajavi, *Appraisal of One Year of Armed Resistance*, Publication of the Union of Moslem Iranian Students Societies Outside Iran: 1982.
- 5 *The Koran*, Translated with an introduction by Arthur J. Arberry (Oxford University Press: 1982), Sura XXXIX: *Zumar*, Verse 18, p. 473.
- 6 *Kharajites* (seceders) were among the first historical examples of dogmatism and fanaticism in the name of Islam. During the caliphate of Imam Ali, a group of Muslims rebelled, with the motto "*la hokmo illa lillah*" (these are no verdicts but God's), forming the anarchist sect of the Kharajites. They are noteworthy because they were the first to advocate a fundamentalist outlook of Islam.
- 7 *The Glorious Qur'an*, translation and commentary by A. Yusuf Ali (U.S.A.: American Trust Publications, 1987), Sura III: *Al-i-Imran*, Verse 7, p. 123.

8. *Kayhan*, Tehran, 28 April 1979.
9. *Le Monde*, Paris, 29 March 1980.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Kayhan*, Tehran, 17 March 1979.
12. *Viewpoints of the People's Mojahedin on the Constitution, Government of Imam Ali and the Constitution of an Islamic Government, speeches of Massoud Rajavi*, (People's Mojahedin of Iran: November 1979), p. 28.
13. *The Koran*, Translated with an introduction by Arthur J. Arberry (Oxford University Press: 1982), Sura II: *Baqara*, Verse 256, p. 37.
14. Massoud Rajavi interview, in *Nashriye Ettahadiye Anjomanhaye Daneshjuyane Mosalman Khareje Keshvar (Journal of the Union of Muslim Iranian Students Societies Outside Iran)*, Paris, 9 January 1982, p. 1. Here Rajavi is alluding to Imam Ali's reluctance to accept the leadership of the Muslim community until he was assured of the people's *bei'at* (oath of allegiance).
15. Maryam Rajavi, "Pulling the Nation Together: The President-elect underscores common aspirations, will to resist," *The Lion and the Sun*, 31 August 1994, p. 24. In a message to the 1994 demonstrations held in 16 cities on the occasion of July 21, to honor restoration of the nationalist premier Mohammad Mossadeq and declare solidarity with the Resistance's President-elect, Mrs. Rajavi said, "With deep faith in democracy and freedom, and despite the diversity of your political views, culture, beliefs, background and religion, you have come together to say that the sacred value you honor the most is the freedom of Iran and the liberation of Iranians from the disgraceful rule of Khomeini's mullahs... I invite you all of you to persist in this path, which in the words of the great Mossadeq, does not belong to a special group, but is shared by all the people of Iran."
16. *Mojahed*, No. 349, 4 July 1994. The voting sessions and final elections were publicly reported in detail and accompanied with photographs.
17. Statement of the Mojahedin's Central Council, Paris: 20 June 1985.
18. Statement of the Mojahedin's Central Council, *op. cit.*
19. *Mojahed*, No. 279, 7 February 1986.
20. *Mojahed*, No. 282, 28 February 1986.
21. March 1987 and March 1989.
22. This choice was broadcast from all of the Mojahedin's media to inform the Iranian general public.
23. Text of the Mandate officially appointing Maryam Rajavi as the Mojahedin's Secretary General, 18 October 1989.
24. *Mojahed*, special issue, autumn 1991.
25. *Ibid.* Mrs. Fahimeh Arvani, 33, from Tabriz, joined the Mojahedin in 1979. In 1982, while under surveillance, she left Iran and undertook various responsibilities in different sections of the organization outside Iran. In 1991, she was elected deputy secretary general for two years. In August 1993, following Mrs. Rajavi's resignation, she was elected Secretary General for two years.
26. The minutes of the meetings, opinion polls, the debates and final voting on the formation of a Leadership Council which took place in the presence of the

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- majority of Mojahedin officials and members was reported in *Mojahed*, broadcast on the Resistance's radio and television, and distributed on videotapes in Iran and abroad to inform the general public.
27. Full report of these sessions was publicized through the Mojahedin's publications, radio and television.
 28. *Mojahed*, 29 August 1994.
 29. U.S. State Department, *People's Mojahedin of Iran*, p. 19.
 30. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
 31. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
 32. *Ibid.*
 33. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
 34. *Ibid.*
 35. *Ibid.*
 36. *Ibid.*
 37. *Ibid.*
 38. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
 39. *Ibid.*, p.30, (75).
 40. *List of Names and Particulars of 14,028 Victims of the Khomeini Regime's Executions*, compiled by the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran, Paris: October 1987.
 41. Dr. Joyce Starr, speech at the National Press Building, Washington, D.C., 31 September 1994.
 42. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 30.(75).
 43. Kenneth Katzman, "Iran: The People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran," Congressional Research Service, Washington, D.C., 24 August 1994.
 44. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
 45. *Ibid.*
 46. *Ibid.*
 47. In addition to several air raids and missile attacks, some other of the regime's attacks include "assassination of two Mojahedin in Baghdad's As-Sha'ab district on 6 October one of whom was killed. Armed attack with Bazooka against the office of the Mojahedin in Baghdad on 19 August 1993, armed attack with Bazooka on a building belonging to the Mojahedin in the city of Baghdad, all of which were reported by the Mojahedin's press releases and to the UN Secretary General and permanent members of the Security Council.
 48. Mohammad Mohaddessin, *Nashriyeh-e Anjomanhay-e Daneshjouyan-e Mosalman-e Karej-e Keshvar* (News Bulletin of the Union of Muslim Iranian Students outside Iran).
 49. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
 50. International Committee of the Red Cross, letter to the Mojahedin, 8 May 1994. The letter signed by the ICRC official in Baghdad and the Mojahedin representative, Mr. Farid Soleimani, reads: "During the reiterated visits of the ICRC, the concerned three Iranian detainees had talks in private with ICRC delegates... These different talks took place between ICRC delegates and said three detainees without witness in adequate conditions according to the rule of regular ICRC visits.

51. Ibid.
52. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
53. Ibid.
54. As an example one can examine *Mojahed*, No. 358, 3 October 1994, and *Iran Zamin*, No. 21, 13 October 1994. See also *Iran Zamin*, No. 24, 3 November 1994.
55. Article 7 of the disciplinary rules of the National Liberation Army.
56. In the past years, many Iranians have crossed the border and joined the Mojahedin asking them for help to go to another country. There have also been people who joined the NLA and after some time, due to the difficult conditions of the war zone, etc. have asked to leave the ranks of the army and go to Europe. Despite the fact that all volunteers who join the National Liberation Army sign written forms in which they agree that in case they want to leave, the NLA does not accept any responsibility to resolve their problems, the NLA and the Mojahedin have spared no effort, spending large sums, and meeting with the UNHCR representatives in Geneva, Turkey and Iraq as well as with officials of other countries to get help for these people. For example, chairman of the NCR Foreign Affairs Committee has met several times in this regard with the UNHCR in Geneva. The Resistance's representatives have traveled to Turkey several times and cooperated with the office of the UNHCR to help many of these people. Officials of the majority of European governments can also testify about the efforts of the National Council of Resistance and the Mojahedin.
57. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
58. Ibid.
59. One of these cases is that of Hadi Shams Ha'eri, whom the State Department quotes in its report. He left the ranks of the National Liberation Army, voluntarily, years before the outbreak of the Persian Gulf war. After arriving in Europe, however, he began opposing the resistance and establishing contacts with the mullahs. The article the State Department cites from *Iran Times*, a Persian language weekly printed in the United States, had been already published in the regime's official weekly, *Kayhan Havai*. Subsequently, other newspapers published it in Iran. Ha'eri offered his information about the bases, cadres and conduct of the Mojahedin and the National Liberation Army to the regime. In addition, he revealed the locations of two of the National Liberation Army bases specifying the frequency and arrangements for the visits and residence of the Resistance's leadership in those bases.
60. Bakhtiar was murdered at his home in August 1991. Fereydown Boyer Ahmadi, a member of the Guards Corps and an infiltrator, managed to build close contact with Bakhtiar. On the day of the incident, he used this relationship to take to Bakhtiar's home two other Guards Corps members who had come from Tehran to murder him. The French security guards did not prevent the terrorists from entering because they knew Boyer Ahmadi. Bakhtiar and his aide were murdered and until 48 hours later no body knew of the incident. On 22 November, 1994, the French daily, *Liberation* wrote: "Boyer Ahmadi, 41, confidant of Bakhtiar, the shah's former prime minister who was murdered

- 61 on August 6, 1991, was an infiltrator who played the role of the Trojan Horse.”
Voice of America, Farsi service, 27 January 1995.

CHAPTER X

- 1 For documents of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, see Appendix A.
- 2 Ratification of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, February-March 1982.
- 3 Mrs. Nasrin Parsian, an NCR member, was killed in a car accident in the fall of 1993, reducing the total number of Council members to 234, until Summer 1994, when Marzieh, the legendary Iranian singer, joined the Council.
- 4 *Immediate Tasks of the Provisional Government, February-March 1982.*
- 5 Declaration of the National Council of Resistance on the Relations of the Provisional Government of the Democratic Islamic Republic of Iran with Religion and Denomination, Paris, 12 November 1985.
- 6 Plan of the National Council of Resistance of Iran on the Freedoms and Rights of Women, 17 April 1987.
- 7 Plan of the National Council of Resistance for Autonomy of Iranian Kurdistan, Paris, 8 November 1983.
- 8 Peace Plan of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, Paris, 13 March 1983.
- 9 Immediate Tasks of the Provisional Government, op. cit.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Program of the Provisional Government of the Democratic Islamic Republic of Iran, 29 September 1981. Also see Massoud Rajavi's speech, Mojahedin's perspectives on Constitution and the Government of Imam Ali, People's Mojahedin of Iran: Tehran, 1979, p. 28. Mr. Rajavi elaborates, "We are not only not opposed to national investment and capitalism at this juncture, but would like to see them strengthened."
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Constitution of the National Council of Resistance, ratified February-March 1982.
- 16 Principal tasks of the Transitional Period in the Program of the Provisional Government of the Democratic Islamic Republic of Iran.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 The combination of persons who head the 18 NCR committees formed in summer 1993, as the basis of the future provisional government, is a good indicator of the role and share of the various organizations and parties in the Council. Following is a brief on the committee chairs not affiliated with the Mojahedin:
Chairman of the Athletics Committee, Mr. Moslem Eskandar Filabi, 50, is among Iran's most renowned wrestling champions and a medal winner in international tournaments.
Chairman of the Culture and Arts Committee Dr. Manouchehr Hezarkhani,

M.D.; 60 and French educated, is the most renowned Iranian essayist. Chairman of the Denominations and Freedom of Religion Committee Ayatollah Jalal Ganje'i, 51. Educated in Qom and Najaf, Ayatollah Ganje'i was Khomeini's student in the 1960s. He is the founder of the Association to Defend Iran's Democracy and Independence (DAD).

Chairman of the Environment Committee, Dr. Karim Qassim, M.D., 48, was one of the leaders of the student movement abroad in the 1960s-70s. He is a surgeon and educated in Germany.

Chairman of the Ethnic Minorities Committee, Mr. Mohammad Reza Rowhani, 52, prominent jurist, member of the National Democratic Front of Iran. Mr. Rowhani was educated in France.

Chairman of the Health Committee, Dr. Saleh Rajavi, 58, a cardiologist and 40-year resident of France, first prize winner of application of electronics in medicine and technology. He headed the Blood Transfusion Center in Paris.

Chairman of the Industries Committee, Mr. Mehdi Samé, 49. A political activist under the shah, Mr. Samé was imprisoned in the final 10 years of the shah's rule. He is the leader of the People's Fedayeen Organization.

Chairman of the Judiciary and Human Rights Committee, Mr. Hedayat Matin-Daftari, 61, spokesman of the National Democratic Front of Iran, former Vice President of the Iranian Bar Association. Dr. Matin-Daftari received his education in American and British universities.

Chairman of the Science and Research Committee, Professor Hadi Mahabadi 48, an internationally acclaimed chemist and former dean of the school of chemistry in Sharif University of Technology. A graduate of Waterloo University, Professor Mahabadi has several patented inventions in the field of polymer chemistry. He is a member of the New York Academy of Sciences.

Chairman of the Universities and Higher Education Committee, Dr. Mohammad Ali Sheikhi, 49. Educated in Britain, he was among the senior professors at Tehran University's School of Technology.

Chairwoman of the Women's Rights Committee, Mrs. Maryam Matin-Daftari, 55 and British educated, from the National Democratic Front of Iran.

19. The first public announcement of this undertaking was made in October when all news agencies carried news of the event. Associated Press, 22 October 1993.
20. NCR article on the rights of the NCR President.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Statement by the Secretariat of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, Paris, 16 September 1993.
24. Mohammad Mohaddessin, letter to representatives Ron Dellums and Dan Burton, 13 September 1993.
25. Constitution of the National Council of Resistance, op. cit.
26. U.S. Department of State, *People's Mojahedin of Iran*, p. 19.
27. Ibid.
28. Minutes of the sessions and footage of some of the important decision-making meetings are available. At the same time, one can take part as an observer in one of the Council's sessions and examine the methods of discussion,

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- consultations and voting.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
 30. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
 31. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
 32. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
 33. Abdol Rahman Qassemou, "Message on the second founding anniversary of NCR," *Mojahed*, No. 161, 13 July 1983.
 34. Abdol Rahman Qassemou, "Letter to the Mojahedin," *Mojahed*, No. 172, 6 October 1983.
 35. Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran, Politburo statement, *Mojahed*, No. 173, 13 October 1983.
 36. Abdol Rahman Qassemou, "Message on the second founding anniversary of NCR," *Mojahed*, No. 161, 13 July 1983.
 37. "Interview with Qassemou," *Voice of Kurdistan*, 15 December 1983.
 38. Statement of the National Council of Resistance, *Mojahed*, No. 196, 29 March 1984.
 39. Statement of the National Council of Resistance, *Mojahed*, No. 222, 4 October 1984.
 40. Abdol Rahman Qassemou, "Message on the second founding anniversary of NCR," *Mojahed*, No. 161, 13 July 1983.
 41. Mojahedin statement, *Mojahed*, No. 227, 3 November 1984.
 42. "Meeting of the NCR and discussion of KDP's negotiations with the regime", *Mojahed* No. 236, 14 February 1985).
 43. See Appendix B.
 44. "Message of NCR President", *Mojahed*, No. 236, 14 February 1985.
 45. *Rozeqar-e No*, November 1984.
 46. Report of the President of the National Council of Resistance, May 1989.
 47. Document on the radio broadcasts for the KDP. (See Appendix B.)
 48. See second document on KDP in Appendix B. In another document, the Party's Arrarat Committee thanked the Mojahedin for its "tremendous, unprecedented work in treating and curing the ill and wounded, particularly in terms of paramedic training." Another, one of many of similar content, acknowledges receipt of some 10 million rials (\$150,000).
 49. *Kayhan*, Tehran, 25 January 1979.
 50. *Mojahed*, No. 246, 9 May 1985.
 51. The letters are available from the secretariat of the National Council of Resistance, but have not been published to safeguard the security of our Kurdish compatriots.
 52. U.S. Department of State, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
 53. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
 54. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
 55. *Ibid.*
 56. *Ettela'at*, Tehran, 24 November 1994; *Israeli radio*, Farsi service, 24 November 1994. The radio reported, "Ibrahim Yazdi, a prestigious member of Iran's Freedom Movement led by Mehdi Bazargan, called statements quoted by 24 Hours radio on his behalf, incorrect and said, 'He and his colleagues are opposed

to the overthrow of the Islamic rule.' In a letter signed by Ibrahim Yazdi and printed in tonight's issue of *Ettela'at*, he states that he does not view the overthrow of the present regime in Iran to be in the interests of the people and the country."

57. *Mojahed* No. 262, 10 October 1985.
58. Political Memoirs of Sanjanbi, p. 419.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 414.
60. For years, the State Department has called the Mojahedin and the Council "undemocratic" but refrained from naming other forces. Recently, however, in addition to the groups named in the report, Ms. Sherman has also named a few groups in her letter to Rep. Torricelli in July 1994. The groups named are Hassan Nazih's Union for Democracy and the United Front for Democracy. These groups too are absent from the Iranian political arena and it seems that only the State Department knows about them. The first group does not even have an address or telephone number. Nazih was the minister of oil in the first Khomeini government. Several years ago he issued a call for the establishment of the Union for Democracy and Progress but it did not materialize and nobody joined it. It was rather an absurd move that was ridiculed in the opposition. If anybody ventures to research into the history of such groups she or he will find that no Iranian actually knows about them and no independent source will confirm their existence.
61. Wendy Sherman, letter to Congressman Robert Torricelli, 26 July 1994.
62. *Radio Pejvak*, Farsi broadcast of the Swedish radio, 8 July 1994.

CHAPTER XI

1. U.S. Department of State, unclassified report on the Mojahedin, December 1984.
2. Ervand Abrahamian, *The Iranian Mojahedin*, (Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 1989), pp. 200-201.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 199.
4. Eric Roleau, a report from Tehran, *Le Monde*, 29 March 1980.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. Statement issued by Mehdi Bazargan, 6 May 1980.
8. "An official spokesman for the Foreign Ministry told the Iraqi News Agency: The Iranian regime launched a military act of aggression this morning against the Iraqi soil without any reason or excuse... All the world know that the People's Mojahedin and other forces opposed to the Iranian regime are basically in Iran, and their branches outside the country are present in many countries, including Iran's neighboring countries," Iraqi press, 7 November 1994.
9. Reuters, Dispatch from Washington, 9 November 1994.
10. Kenneth Katzman, "Iran: The People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran," Congressional Research Service, Washington, D.C., 24 August 1994.
11. IRIB, The Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting, 15 July 1994. It reported, "In the past three weeks, the Islamic Republic's News Agency dispatched more

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- than 300 news reports and features on the murder of Christian priests, the explosion at Imam Reza's shrine, and the Mojahedin's bombing efforts. Dozens of reports were broadcast on the radio and the television. Yet the Western mass media have in a coordinated fashion remained silence."
12. After two days of censoring the news of the uprising, the state media acknowledged for the first time the role of the Mojahedin and their supporters in organizing and directing the protest. The state television said on 5 July: "Once the Mojahedin tried to exploit the Majlis' rejection of the bill to make Qazvin a province, the city's residents poured into the streets to enforce law and order."
 13. Radio France International, Evening News Broadcast, Farsi Service, Paris, 25 August 1994.
 14. *Ressalat*, Tehran, 16 April 1992.
 15. Agence France Presse, dispatch from Tehran, 16 April 1992.
 16. Mashad radio, 31 May 1992.
 17. *The Economist*, London, 13 June 1992.
 18. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Tehran radio, 12 June 1992.
 19. In the last days of the shah's regime, American intelligence reports described the Iranian situation as "not being in the revolutionary nor pre-revolutionary stage." Iran under the shah was being described as "an Island of stability," they said.
 20. Alan Riding, "France Strikes Back at Islamic Militants," *International Herald Tribune*, Paris, 10 November, 1993. "Iran demands speedy deportation of Maryam Rajavi from France," *Ressalat*, Tehran, 8 November 1994; IRNA, 9 November 1993; "Iran strongly protests to France for refugee status to terrorist Monafeqin group member," *Kayhan*, Tehran, 10 November 1993; "France, Political Naiveté," *Jomhuri Islami*, Tehran, 10 November 1993; "France, clinging to what illusion," *Kayhan*, Tehran, 11 November 1993 and "Playing host to Mojahedin, enmity with Muslims," *Iran Times*, Washington, D.C., 14 November 1993.
 21. Reuters, dispatch from Bonn, 23 July 1994.
 22. Reuters, dispatch from Nicosia, 22 July 1994.
 23. IRNA, dispatch from Tehran, 29 June 1994.
 24. IRNA, dispatch from Tehran, 30 June 1994. The matter was extensively discussed in the Commons. MP Corbett asked the Foreign Secretary about government reply to Tehran's demand. Douglas Hogg, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs said: "We have replied that any organisation enjoys freedom of speech in the U.K. as long as it acts within the law."
 25. On the occasion of the traditional festivities of *Mehregan*, the Resistance's President-elect sent a message to the Iranian students and teachers, calling on them to voice their opposition to the ruling dictatorship and celebrate *Mehregan* in an act of protest to the regime's banning of all ancient Persian traditions. Resistance's supporters staged activities in 57 cities nationwide.
 26. Abrahamian, op. cit., p. 245.
 27. *Ibid.*
 28. In a press conference at the British House of Commons, Messrs. Anthony

Coombs and Win Griffiths, along with Mr. Mohammad Mohaddessin, the NCR Foreign Affairs Committee chairman, announced the joint support of 1,500 parliamentarians for the National Council of Resistance. Mr. Coombs said in the conference that the NCR is widely recognized as the regime's *de facto* alternative. *Iran Liberation*, No. 116, August 1992; BBC, Farsi service, 14 July 1992.

29. "House members urged the Bush administration yesterday to support the main exile opposition group that is seeking to overthrow Iran's Islamic fundamentalist government," wrote the *Washington Times*, 9 July 1992. A day earlier, Associated Press carried a report saying, "U.S. lawmakers see the National Council of Resistance 'as capable of establishing democracy in Iran.'"
30. *Iran Liberation*, News Bulletin of the People's Mojahedin of Iran, No. 117, January 1993. The weekly reprinted the text of the senators' October 28 declaration.
31. In their letter on 20 October 1994, sixty-three members of the British houses of Lords and Commons wrote to President Clinton and encouraged him to "take steps towards opening dialogue with representatives of the National Council of Resistance of Iran and the People's Mojahedin." They explained, "We, like our colleagues in the U.S. House and Senate, believe any practical and effective measure should be accompanied by an exchange of views with the Iranian Resistance and its representative. It is our own experience that meeting with them has always been a constructive move." (See Appendix C.)

CHAPTER XII

1. U.S. Department of State, *People's Mojahedin of Iran*, 28 October 1994, p. 20.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
13. Kenneth C. Davis, *Don't Know Much About History*, (Crown: New York, 1990), p. 181.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 282-283.
15. Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), p. 422.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Ali Akbar Dehkhoda, *An Encyclopedic Dictionary*, (Tehran University Press: 1974), Vol. 201, p. 584.
18. Mohsen Milani, *The making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to*

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- Islamic Republic*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988), p. 73.
19. *Ibid.*
 20. *Ibid.*
 21. *Rah-e Azadi*, Tehran, "Enmity toward Mossadeq with the help of caricature," No. 's 15 & 16, August and September 1986.
 22. *Chalanger*, Tehran, No. 109, 3 April 1952.
 23. Ervand Abrahamian, *Khomeinism*, (London: University of California Press), p. 118.
 24. *Ibid.*
 25. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
 26. Abdollah Karbaschian, Khomeini's confidant and publisher of the daily *Nabard-e Mellat*.
 27. *Nabard-e Mellat*, 20 August 1953.
 28. See chapter IX about one of these individuals, Hadi Shams Ha'eri. The State Department refers to him as a former member of the Mojahedin.
 29. *Le Monde*, Paris, 29 March 1980.
30. U.S. State Department, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
 31. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
 32. Abrahamian, *The Iranian Mojahedin*, (London: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 198.
 33. Tehran radio, 25 June 1980.
 34. *Bulletan-e Khabari-e Havadaran-e Sazeman-e Mojahedin-e Khalq-e Iran (News Bulletin of Supporters of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran)*, No. 234, 25 December 1992.
 35. *Ibid.*
 36. *Iran Zamin*, Paris, No. 39, 16 February 1995.
 37. Haji Hassan Qarajeh-Daghi, popularly known as Sattar-Khan, was a leader of the constitutional movement of 1906 against the Qajar Dynasty. From the northwestern city of Tabriz. Sattar-Khan defeated the siege of the Czarist and pro-monarchy forces in Azerbaijan province and later on attacked Tehran and toppled the government of the Qajar Monarch, Mohammad Ali Shah. After the victory of the Constitutional movement, leaders of the Old Guard usurped the leadership and conspired to disarm Sattar-Khan and his fighters, known as the Mojahedin. In the ensuing battles, Sattar-Khan was wounded. He passed away several years later in 1913. Mohammad Mo'in, *A Persian Dictionary*, (Tehran: Amir Kabir Publications), fourth ed., vol. 5, p. 733.
 38. Mirza Younis bin Mirza Bozorg, known as the Mirza Kuchek Khan Jangali, was originally a clergyman. He founded an association of the clergy, vowing to stop foreign domination over Iran. He played a very important role in the victory of the Constitutional movement and later on liberated the entire province of Gilan and declared a republic. After the coup in 1920 that brought Reza Shah to power, government forces attacked his bases in the jungles of Gilan. He eventually died in 1921 after getting caught in a snow storm. A government soldier, cut his throat and took his head to Reza Shah. Mohammad Mo'in, *A Persian Dictionary*, (Tehran: Amir Kabir Publications), fourth ed., vol. 6, p. 1619.
 39. Statement by the National Council of Resistance of Iran, December 1994.