

NEWS ON IRAN

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425 British Parliamentarians Declare Support for National Council of Resistance of Iran and Its President-elect, Call for Complete Trade Embargo of Tehran Mullahs

1,725 parliamentarians from 12 countries and the European Parliament issue similar statements in support of the Iranian Resistance

1,725 parliamentarians from around the globe, including 425 members of the British Parliament announced their support for "the democratic alternative," the National Council of Resistance of Iran and its President-elect, Mrs. Maryam Rajavi. The announcement was made on the morning of June 13 in a news conference at the House of Commons, by Lord Avebury (Lib), David Alton, MP (Lib Dem), Vivian Bendall, MP (Con), Robin Corbett, MP (Lab), Win Griffiths, MP (Lab), as well as members of other European parliaments, and Mr. Mohsen Rezaii, Senior Secretary of the National Council of Resistance of Iran. Text of the British statement on Iran follows:

Statement on Iran

In 16 years, the mullahs' inhuman dictatorship has executed 100,000 people and imprisoned and tortured many more for political reasons. The British Parliamentary Human Rights Group reported last year on over 300 dissidents killed or wounded in 100 terrorist operations by the Iranian regime abroad.

Khomeini's death six years ago prompted some Western countries to expand their relations with this inhuman regime hoping they could influence Rafsanjani's government toward moderation. Commercial ties with the regime were increased and extensive credits were extended by the West. This policy has clearly failed. Flagrant human right abuses continue. All opposition political activity is prohibited. Women, regarded as subhuman, are subjected to extreme suppression. The persecution of religious minorities has escalated; in 1994 three Christian leaders were assassinated.

Under Rafsanjani, the regime's involvement in international terrorism has expanded. With the systematic establishment of the necessary network many opponents were murdered abroad, and foreign nationals also targeted. The fatwa to murder Salman Rushdie has been reaffirmed and there are no signs that it will be rescinded. Tehran opposes the Middle East peace process and is vigorously pursuing its acquisition of nuclear arms. Scud-B missile attacks on a base of the National Liberation Army of Iran demonstrated the regime's total disregard of international covenants. Another of this regime's policies is to export religious fundamentalism by misappropriating Islam. Regrettably, the cost of this terrorism and weaponry is met by the extensive commercial deals between Western countries and the regime which exceed \$20 bn.

Internally, the regime is facing a tremendous economic crisis. Government corruption is rampant. Public discontent has grown. In 1994, the protest actions and demonstrations erupting in Tehran and other cities, were brutally suppressed. Despite intense repression, public opinion in Iran expresses itself in support of the democratic alternative of the National Council of Resistance and its President-elect, Mrs. Maryam Rajavi. The Council's election of a Muslim woman, and the leading role of women in the Mojahedin Organisation is a reply to the phenomenon of Islamic fundamentalism, the most distinctive feature of which is the suppression of women.

Like many other dictatorships, the Iranian regime tries to disseminate erroneous information about its opposition and to distort public perception of the Resistance movement. In so doing, it is attempting to cover up its own atrocities and present itself as a permanent regime with which the international community must come to terms.

We believe that appeasement, under whatever pretext, will have the opposite effect to that intended. The Iranian people, who demand the cleric's overthrow, can best be assisted through the imposition of military, economic, commercial, political and diplomatic sanctions and restrictions on the regime. Support for the National Council of Resistance and its President-elect, which widely reflects the aspirations of the Iranian people, will expedite the establishment of democracy in Iran and contribute to the restoration of stability in the region. It is vital that the United Nations Security Council instigate binding measures concerning the repeated violations of international standards of human rights and the widespread suppression of the Iranian people by the ruling regime.

The Leader of the Iranian Resistance, Mr. Massoud Rajavi, commended the parliamentarians' courageous initiative in defense of democracy and human rights in Iran. He called the move indicative of the aware conscience of humanity, which despite various nationalities, beliefs and religious preferences, does not remain silent in the face of the anti-human crimes of the mullahs' terrorist-religious dictatorship.

Mr. Rajavi pointed out that the daily expansion and rise of the resistance and popular uprisings in various cities throughout Iran have numbered the days of the mullahs in Iran and the prospects for democracy and human rights are more encouraging than ever before. The time has come that the Khomeini regime be driven from the international community and the Iranian Resistance and its elected President, Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, be recognized.

More Than 1,700 Lawmakers Call For Sweeping Iran Sanctions

London (AP), June 13 - Some Western governments may not back Clinton's embargo on Iran, but more than 1,700 lawmakers in Europe, Canada and the United States do.

They have called for measures against the Islamic republic before Clinton's expected appeal for sanctions at this week's G-7 economic summit.

"We want to see much more being done... In terms of imposing penalties on the regime in Iran for its violation of human rights and other international crimes," Lord Avebury, one of 421 members of the British parliament supporting sanctions, said Tuesday....

The statements also urge governments to support the National Council of Resistance, a coalition of exiled dissident groups trying to overthrow the Tehran government. Avebury said 246 members of Britain's House of Commons - about 38 percent of its membership - signed the statement, along with 175 members of the unelected House of Lords.

Last week, a letter signed by 202 members of the U.S. Congress - also about 38 percent of its total membership - was sent to the White House urging Clinton to urge the world to impose sanctions on Iran.

The National Council said similar statements have been signed by 317 Italian legislators, 185 Swedish lawmakers and members of Parliament and the European Parliament from Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Norway, Switzerland and San Marino.

Excerpts from letter to the Rt. Hon. John Major, June 13:

MPs Griffiths and Alton, submitted the statement by 425 of their colleagues to the British prime minister. In part of their letter, they wrote: "Unfortunately, the essence of the West's policies has been, regardless of whatever title given to them, based upon seeking out moderates within the Iranian regime. This policy has failed. "Economic engagement", "Carrot and Stick", and/or "Critical Dialogue", whose desperate advocates had untruthfully tried to call a control-lever against the mullahs' suppressive and terrorist policies and for

inducing moderation in the regime, could not even reduce the regime's leaders' emphasis on the Fatwa to murder Salman Rushdie. As we can now see, despite the European Community's call, the regime's leaders (Khamene'i and Rafsanjani) are not only even not prepared to officially pledge that they will not dispatch terrorist commandos to murder Rushdie, but they consistently stress on the necessity to implement the Fatwa inside the country. Only the regime's lower ranking officials, in order to deceive the public opinion in the West, occasionally express ambiguous remarks which amount to nothing more than a propagandist exercise....

Noting the rapid unfolding of developments in Iran's political situation and while the international community is demanding more condemnation and isolation of the seditious and crisis-creating regime, it was necessary that we, too, in the British Parliament embark upon an initiative in line with condemnation of the savage repression of the popular demonstrations and the severe violation of human rights in Iran and in support of Iranian people's demands for establishment of democracy in Iran and also in support of the democratic alternative to this religious dictatorship because of its continual and relentless struggle to achieve freedom, peace and stability in Iran and that sensitive and explosive region..."

A similar letter was sent to the Heads of the G7 States by Lord Avebury and MPs Alton, Bendall, Corbett and Griffiths.

International Solidarity Celebrated in London

June 13, London - In a luncheon at London's Royal Horse Guard Hotel, 100 parliamentarians and personalities from Britain and other European countries attended to express support for the NCR and Mrs. Maryam Rajavi. Mr. Hedayat Matin-Daftari, chairman of the Judicial and Human Rights Committee, Mrs. Maryam Matin-Daftari, chair of the women's committee, and Mr. Mohsen Rezai, Senior Secretary of the NCR also attended.

The luncheon was preceded by a press conference in which Lord Avebury, chair of the Parliamentary Human Rights Group and a sponsor of the initiative, said the statement on Iran had two themes: "One is that we want to see much more being done by our governments in Europe... in terms of imposing penalty on the regime in Iran for violation of human rights and other international crimes... Secondly is that we want our government to consider favourably entering into relationships with the NCR so that we can cooperate in trying to secure improvements not only in human rights in Iran but a restoration of full democracy in there so that the Iranian people can make their own decisions on their political future."

Mr. Vivian Bendall, MP (Con), proposed that the British Foreign Office "press and support" the U.S. at the forthcoming G-7 conference. "I believe that if we can bring this sort of pressure to bear upon the Iranian government, then somewhere something will have to start to give... and the Iranian people will start to have the correct democratic rights." Mr. Bendall added, "I think we have a very good cause and we should press hard now that the G-7 conference is on the way."

Mr. Robin Corbett, MP and a parliamentary spokesman for the Labour Party, called on the U.N. to

impose commercial and other sanctions on the Tehran regime and deal with the National Council of Resistance "as the best promise for the liberation of the people of Iran enabling them with their different traditions to take their proper place in the family of democratic nations."

Mr. David Alton, MP (Lib Dem) said, "I do not think that there should be any doubt... that the NCR is a democratic organisation and on that basis alone, is entitled to our support, not just in this country, but in democracies across the world. I think the day will shortly come when they will take their place as an elected government in Iran and ... in the UN as the true and proper representative of the Iranian people. And once again, Iran will be listened to with the respect to which it is entitled."

Mr. Ernesto Caccavale, vice president of the Human Rights Commission of the European Parliament, also addressed the conference and in response to a reporter said, "I think the time of hypocrisy is over. The Western democracies have to make a choice. If you want to defend the human rights principles, it is not time to have agreement, to have commercial trade with the regime which offends human rights."

Mr. Mohsen Rezai, the senior secretary of the NCR, said the call by 1,725 parliamentarians represented the views and inclinations of hundreds of millions of citizens around the world. Mr. Rezai called on European governments to respond positively to the call and join the embargo against the mullahs.