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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 Qassemloo, 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 Qassem lou. 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.

