

Anti-Iran Terrorist Group Mojahedin-e Khalq's Ties to Iraqi Army in 1980s

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Below is an interview with Mr. Yaghout Meraji, a former member of the anti-Iran terrorist group the Mojahedin-e Khalq MEK, conducted November 24 and 25, 2020.

Robert Fantina: The participation of the MEK in the joint operation with Saddam Hussein has been one of the most controversial disputes between the Mojahedin-e Khalq and their opponents. You claim that you participated in 1988 the Mojahedin-e Khalq military operation from France. Can you explain the facts of this war?

Yaghout Meraji: Our main reason of presence in Iraq was the total collaboration with Saddam's army against Iran during the war between the two neighbor countries.

Each MEK military action was completely dependent on the Iraqi army, including all authorization. Unfortunately, we betrayed our country by participating with the Iraqi army in the war against the Iranian regime and it's an unforgivable sin forever.

RF: The opponents of the Mojahedin claim that there are many strict requirements regarding the separation of men and women, brainwashing, etc. Is this true? What information do you have in this regard?

YM: When you are an MEK member you don't have any right to think of anything else; just the two leaders. Every other thought is strictly not allowed. You must obey as they order to do.

In fact, I can consider the MEK as a brainwashing factory.

RF: Do the security forces of the Mojahedin Khalq control the members and their behavior?

YM: I think have answered this in previous question; however, they control all.

RF: Some opponents of the Mojahedin Khalq claim that its leaders are violently opposed to other groups opposed to the Iranian government, especially the monarchists. Can you discuss this?

YM: Yes, it's true. In each big general meeting, Mr. Rajavi used to start his speech by attacking the other opponents for saying that MEK is a unique alternative to the Iranian regime; he couldn't ever support the other opposition groups.

RF: You say that you were present at the Zaerian residence. Do you know Mr. Amir

Saadouni, who is currently participating in the vandalism case in Villepinte? Who was in charge of him and what were the duties and missions assigned to Saadouni by the Mojahedin Khalq Organization?

YM: Yes, I've seen Mr. Saadouni two or three times in Zaerian, when MEK needed help; generally, several people came from different European countries and Amir Saadouni was one them. His stay lasted one or two weeks. He was in charge of driving and transporting the food and any other foodstuffs to different residences of MEK. He has a very good relationship with the official members, such as Mr Abrishamchi etc.

RF: Which of the officials and cadres of the Mojahedin Khalq have you been in contact with and what have been your main duties and responsibilities in this group?

YM: The official cadre who was directly in contact with me was Mohsen Jarari (Issa) and in Zaerian Hossein Pourheidari.

My duty was mainly that of a translator.

RF: Were you involved in the financial transactions of the Mojahedin Khalq in France? How much money were transferred to the accounts related to the group?

YM: This question is very difficult to respond to, but in Zaerian I saw two financial transfers two times monthly from England.

RF: Maryam Rajavi and some of the group's cadres have gone to Albania from France for nearly two years and have not returned to France. What is the reason for this non-return?

YM: After widespread transfer of the MEK from Iraq to Albania, all members of the group were living downtown with the population. In this case the new lifestyle has changed the vision of a large number of the MEK members and this action caused them to separate from and abandon the MEK. This situation was seriously hard, for which Maryam Rajavi understood that if she doesn't move to Albania immediately, MEK will be finished.

This program was very interesting for the French government and it was the wish of the French government that the MEK leave France definitely without any eventual return.

RF: Have you ever been with the group's delegations to the European Parliament? How are these programs coordinated, and what were the goals of the group during these meetings?

YM: Yes, each opportunity to speak with European countries is important just for showing that MEK and its political branch, NCRI, are alive. The MEK foreign relationship organized the meeting with EU and into two groups, one to support Mrs Maryam Rajavi; this group was present in the meeting room just to applaud her speech, and another group outside of EU parliament for lunch and slogans. Ultimately, it was useless as usual.

RF: Are the contents presented by the supporters of the Mojahedin Khalq on Twitter, Facebook, etc., based on personal analysis and political views of the members of the Mojahedin Khalq, or do the group officials order the posting of these articles by their supporters?

YM: When you are a member of a cult you don't have any one to talk you out of the MEK

goals so you become like a robot and have to execute everything they demand. This is exactly the same situation for the supporters who are very active in the social media.

RF: Did the Mojahedin-e Khalq also commit fraud against the French government and the French people? What were the details of these actions?

YM: Unfortunately yes, specially the members of NCRI. Those who received the wages monthly in cash didn't report to the tax authorities. That is the same situation for the foreign workers.

RF: As you know, the Mojahedin massacred more than 12,000 Iranians since the 1990s, and then assassinated people like Sayad Shirazi, nuclear scientists, etc. in Iran; however, the group was removed from the European and American terrorist lists. What do you think was the reason for these removals?

YM: Yes you're right, it's a political game to put them on terrorist list for pressing Iranian regime to come to the negotiation table and remove MEK from the same list trying to stop Iran's nuclear program.

RF: Until a few years ago, the organization had more than 500 members at its headquarters in France, and if we assume that it spends € 500 per month per member, more than € 250,000 would be the monthly cost of the headquarters of Auvers-sur-Oise. Were the incomes of the organization enough for these costs and were taxes paid to the French government?

YM: MEK had obtained sufficient financial means from Saddam during the time he was in power. Because of that abundant financial aid, the MEK is able to continue. In 2003, French security forces during a search discovered more than € 8 million cash in their office.

RF: Do you have any information about the arrest of Mrs. Rajavi by the French police on charges of money laundering in France?

YM: Early in the morning, MEK members called me to tell the news about this and asked to go to the front of security French forces office in 15th district near the Eiffel tower. A few minutes after gathering in this place, I saw a man burning in the flames.

RF: According to the US State Department in 2011, the MEK has no social base inside Iran, but abroad they declare themselves as an alternative to the Iranian government. Is the organization unaware of this or does it just intend to deceive the thoughts of European and American political elites?

YM: That is right. Since 1981 MEK hasn't had any legitimate prestige in Iran for a simple reason, collaboration with Iraqi invading army. For the Iranian people that is unforgivable forever and for this reason was forced to link its existence to foreign forces.

RF: One of the methods of assassination the organization used was suicide operations, such as the method used in the assassination of Martyr Madani, who was assassinated by a member of the Mojahedin with an explosion. How does the organization convince its members to carry out such operations?

YM: Yes correct, this terrorist action has never existed before, MEK is founder of this kind of terrorism in the world.

RF: Saadouni, a member of the Mojahedin and close to Abrishamchi, was arrested in Belgium for carrying explosives and falsely stated during interrogation that he had received the bomb from an Iranian diplomat. Is this part of the organization's new suicide operation, established with the intention of damaging the international image of Iran?

YM: As you know, survival of the MEK is absolutely essential in these circumstances, so sacrificing the other members as Saadouni or anyone else is very simple and crucial. And it may be mainly to attract the attention of the media as was done in the beginning of this year regarding the rumor of Maryam Rajavi's death.

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