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July 7, 2011 – Massacre at Camp Ashraf: Implications for US Policy?

**Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations
House Committee of Foreign Affairs**

In this report, I consolidate my experience and knowledge of Camp Ashraf, the Peoples Mojahedin of Iran (PMOI), and the history of Iraq from a variety of sources, to include as the Antiterrorism/Force Protection Officer for all coalition forces in Iraq, as J-3 (Operations Officer) for Task Force 134 (Detention Operations), as the first colonel to command Forward Operating Base Iraq, from Iraqi citizens, and from my own research. Provided as additional material is the article titled, "Trapped by Politics" which I completed prior to the April 8th, 2011 attacks. No part of my briefing is extracted from classified or sensitive U.S. Government reports.

In 2003, as the United States finalized its invasion plans, the Iranian government set to work on how to quietly take over as much of Iraq as possible. Today, the Iranian influence has expanded itself through the southern provinces, over most of Baghdad, and into Diyala province where Camp Ashraf, home of the People's Mojahedin of Iran (PMOI) is located. Iran's growing influence throughout the region is in keeping with Ayatollah Khomeini's statement, "The road to Jerusalem is through Karbala."

As the Maliki and Ahmadinejad governments become closer, the situation of the PMOI becomes more critical, as evidenced in the film footage of July, 2009 and April, 2011. In these videos, we observe Maliki's forces using U.S.-supplied vehicles and equipment to run down and shoot defenseless people. We also witness the courage of the residents of Ashraf. Despite knowing they may be the next to die, they rush to the rescue of their fallen comrades. Courage under fire is an admirable character trait. Killing unarmed people is murder. Yet, the U.S. State Department has done nothing of substance to address these attacks or the entire Ashraf situation.

As for the State Department, the action officer provided to handle Camp Ashraf issues during my tenure was a never-ending story of embarrassment and prejudice. Her visits were disasters. Her continual rumors and misinformation resulted in my frequent unannounced and unfounded inspections into PMOI compounds. Despite warnings to all of us from the Commanding General of Task Force 134 not to provide the untrustworthy Iraqi National Security Advisor Rubaie information, she continued to do so. In turn, Rubaie would pass it on to the Iranian government. Within a couple of weeks, I would then receive the information from the PMOI.

Upon my return to the Pentagon, I assisted State Department officials addressing the PMOI issue. This included providing a translated letter from Hoshyer Zebari, head of Kurdistan Democratic Party International Relations, stating the PMOI did not attack the Kurds. Mr. Zebari subsequently confirmed the letter to be true. Yet, several months later when the annual report on terrorism was released by the State Department, the accusation for attacking the Kurds remained. Upon my questioning those same State Department officials about this, I was informed they don't communicate with the people who put out the annual report.

One perpetual rumor worthy of specific address concerns members of the PMOI being held against their will. I was able to validate through specific occurrences anyone wishing to leave has that choice. Here the words of the Prophet's grandson, Husain, are applied. The night before the fatal Battle of Karbala in 680 A.D., he informed his followers, "We will put out the lights" – to allow willful departure.

The real benefactor to the fall of the Mojahedin will be Ahmadinejad and the ruling religious fundamentalists. Their determination to keep themselves in power by deceit and brutality was well-proven following the 2009 Iranian presidential election. The fundamentalist Iranian government has always wanted the PMOI to be turned over to them. If it happens, executions will be conducted to remind Iranian citizens what happens to people who oppose the government, to break the spirit of anyone considering resistance, and to show the world what happens to those who trust their lives to the United States.

The PMOI surrendered to the United States military without firing a shot, turned over all their weapons, accepted consolidation at Camp Ashraf, renounced terrorism, accepted protected person status under the 4th Geneva Convention, provided the free world with critical intelligence to include Iran's development of a nuclear weapons program, and fulfilled every limitation and requirement placed on them. Yet, when the United States could no longer figure out what to do with the PMOI, the protected-person status was revoked and the organization was turned over to the Iraqi government. There are protocols and expectations to surrender. The PMOI has fulfilled their end. The United States comes up very short. The price of that imbalance is now being paid by the residents of Ashraf.

The PMOI was founded on the philosophies of equality between those in power and those not, between men and women, and among various religions and races. Their belief that the clergy should not have total control over interpretation of the Quran, nor should the clerics have total control over their congregations, is very similar to what led to the religious reformation in Europe. Yet, the western world cannot figure out how to protect these people. The terror and torment that is being cast upon the PMOI and Camp Ashraf needs to stop. I know from experience, the PMOI is not a terrorist organization. My recommendation in this effort is for the People's Mojahedin to be immediately removed from the State Department terrorist list. Concurrent with this is the creation of a secure environment for the PMOI until they can be removed completely from Iraq – to some place other than Iran. They do need protection of U.S. military forces. There is very little doubt that so long as the current Iraqi government continues to do the bidding of Tehran, the members of the PMOI will not be safe.

United States House of Representatives
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Wesley (Wes) Martin	myself
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