



# IRAN LIBERATION

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## Landmark U.S. House Hearing on Camp Ashraf

Probes Massacre at Ashraf and U.S. Responsibility for Ashraf Protection  
Urges U.S. to de-list PMOI



Rep. Dana Rohrabacher



Rep. Ted Poe



Rep. Russ Carnahan



Rep. Jackson Lee



Rep. Bob Filner



Rep. Brad Sherman

**Rep. Dana Rohrabacher**, *Chair of House Foreign Affairs Sub-committee on Oversight and Investigations:*

*We would have liked to have asked State Department officials questions, but we were told no one was available to testify today. This stonewalling can only go so far before it becomes a cover up. U.S. appeasement of this crime is part of the story.*

Page 2

**Rep. Ted Poe**, *Member of House Foreign Affairs Committee:*

*To date, the administration has done nothing to hold Iraq accountable for the attack.*

Page 4

**Rep. Bob Filner**, *Member of Congress, Co-Chair of Iran Human Rights and Democracy Caucus:*

*There is a potentially much greater humanitarian disaster awaiting at Ashraf. I think the United States has both the legal and the moral obligation to try to prevent that.*

Page 5

**Rep. Russ Carnahan**, *Ranking member of Sub-Committee on Oversight and Investigations:*

*A full, fair and independent investigation will provide the best means of finding a final determination of what happened in Ashraf and will allow anyone found responsible to be brought to justice and help prevent future attacks.*

Page 4

### Testimonies:

**Michael Mukasey**, *Former U.S. Attorney General:*

*"The State Department has kept the MEK on foreign terrorist organizations list and thereby legitimized the behavior of both Iraq and Iran."*

Page 7

**Colonel Wes Martin**, *Former Base Commander of Ashraf:*

*"The PMOI has fulfilled their end. The United States comes up very short."*

Page 8

**Col. Gary Morsch, M.D.** *Former chief medical liaison between Ashraf and U.S. military:*

*"The people of Ashraf have more than upheld their side of this agreement. We have not."*

Page 8

**The U.S. Department of State did not send an official to testify.**

**However, Ray Takeyh, a former advisor to the Department and a longtime staunch defender of policy of appeasement towards the Iranian regime testified in the hearing.**

Page 6

## Landmark U.S. Congress Hearing on Ashraf

On Thursday July 7, 2011, a landmark hearing, entitled "Massacre at Camp Ashraf: Implications for U.S. Policy," was held by the Oversight and Investigation Sub-Committee of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Among those who provided testimony in the hearing were: Ms. Neda Zanjapour, a survivor of the massacre at Camp Ashraf; Michael Mukasey, former Attorney General of the United States; Col. Gary Morsch, M.D., Chief medical liaison between Camp Ashraf and the U.S. military, Colonel Wes Martin (Ret.), Former Base Commander of Camp Ashraf, and Ray Takeyh, a former advisor to the U.S. Department of State. The hearing was chaired by Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA).

In addition to the Ranking Member Russ Carnahan (D-MO), the Subcommittee members Ted Poe (R-TX) and David Rivera (R-FL), Representatives Bob Filner (D-CA), Co-Chair of Iran Human Rights and Democracy Caucus, Brad Sherman (D-CA), and Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX) also took part in the hearing. Relatives of the residents also attended the hearing.

A brief video clip showed scenes of the April 8th massacre at Ashraf by the Iraqi Army operating under the direct order of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki. It was followed by a briefing in which Ms. Zanjapour, responded, via a live video link from Ashraf medical clinic, to questions by Members.

A Canadian citizen who studied at York University, Zanjapour went to Ashraf in 1999 at the age of 20. She testified that she had been wounded "when an Iraqi soldier threw a grenade at me, which exploded between my legs."

"The day before the attack, the U.S. embassy in Baghdad told us that the Iraqi forces were going to launch an operation. Despite our pleas to the commander of U.S. forces - which had been at Ashraf since April 3rd - to stay, his unit was ordered out of the Camp at 9:20 p.m. on April 7th. That left us completely defenseless in the face of a massive assault by the Iraqi forces."

She said Ambassador James Jeffrey's comments that the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK) should be relocated inside Iraq amounts to "asking Ashraf residents to submit to the demands of the Iranian regime... We will never surrender to the Iranian regime by going to concentration camps in Iraq where we could be murdered away from international spotlight."

Neda Zanjapour, a survivor of the massacre at Camp Ashraf, was among those who provided testimony in the hearing.

Zanjapour, responded, via a live video link from Ashraf medical clinic, to questions by Members of U.S. Congress.

She testified that she had been wounded "when an Iraqi soldier threw a grenade at me, which exploded between my legs."

**"The day before the attack, the U.S. embassy in Baghdad told us that the Iraqi forces were going to launch an operation. Despite our pleas to the commander of U.S. forces - which had been at Ashraf since April 3rd - to stay, his unit was ordered out of the Camp at 9:20 p.m. on April 7th. That left us completely defenseless in the face of a massive assault by the Iraqi forces."**



## Dana Rohrabacher

Chair, Oversight and Investigation  
Sub-Committee of the Foreign Affairs  
Committee

Camp Ashraf has, for more than 20 years, been the home of 3,400 members of the Mujahideen-e-Khalq (MEK) a key opposition group working against the radical Islamic Iranian dictatorship.

The 3,400 members or residents of Camp Ashraf are declared enemies of the mullahs' dictatorship in Iran, which is a very significant fact to keep in mind when trying to figure out what is going on.

Camp Ashraf residents were promised protection under the Fourth Geneva Convention by senior U.S. commanders in the aftermath of the liberation of Iraq.

When our congressional delegation discussed the situation at Ashraf with Iraq's Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki in Baghdad last month, his authority to govern and the sovereignty of the people of Iraq over their territory was not an issue. We in no way quarreled with that.

How the Iraqi government exercises its authority, however, is a matter of grave concern. The use of excessive force, murder, massacres and other such tactics, is an illegitimate use on the face of it. What happened on April 8th was an excessive use of force. It was an illegitimate use of power on its face.

### Questions from State Department

But what about before the attack? Was the U.S. embassy or the commander of U.S. forces in Iraq notified of the Iraqi military buildup outside the camp, or of their intentions? Was the Iraqi government contacted? Did they contact us? If so, what was the response? What response did we give them? And what was the Iraqi response if we questioned them? Why was a United States unit, deployed at Camp Ashraf, ordered away just hours before the attack?

We would like to ask the State Department these questions. We would have liked them to have had a witness here, an official that could have talked to us about this and been on the record in answering these important questions. But we were told that no one was available to testify today at this hearing. How convenient.

This stonewalling can only go so far before it becomes a cover up. And, yes, illegalities, not just of the Iraqi military, who murdered civilians, who committed a massacre, but of the acquiescences by the United States and the United States officials in this crime is part of the story. Covering up wrongdoing is itself illegal.

“How the Iraqi government exercises its authority, is a matter of grave concern.”

“What happened on April 8th was an excessive use of force. It was an illegitimate use of power on its face.”

**Is there a larger problem?**

Is the Camp Ashraf massacre a signal of even a larger problem? Is this something that has resulted in the fact that we are seeing a willingness on the part of the government of Iraq, of Prime Minister Maliki and his majority, to do the bidding of the mullah dictatorship next door?

Well, if something like that is happening and this is the reason why Iraqi military forces felt compelled to go into Camp Ashraf and massacre its residents, maybe this calls into question the entire purpose of America’s involvement in Iraq to begin with. Has America spent its blood and treasure only to allow a government to come to power in Baghdad that is a puppet of the Iranian mullah dictatorship?

**The PMOI listing**

In 1997, Iran and the State Department persuaded the Clinton administration to put the MEK on the foreign terrorist organization list. This naive gesture was supposed to improve relations. But we know that relations did not improve with Tehran because Tehran continued to support violence and terrorism across the region and crush dissidents at home and develop nuclear weapons.

So, certainly putting the people of Camp Ashraf on the terrorist list certainly didn’t do any good, even if it was dishonest in its intent to begin with. The MEK, however, remains on the terrorist list, even though it is clear the mullahs did not start coming around and becoming more, I’d say, acceptable in their behavior.

The United Kingdom and the European Union have removed the MEK from terrorist lists.

So we should quit playing games and also remove the MEK from terrorist lists before it results in another massacre, which is one thing that needs to be answered. Did the fact that the United States government maintains the MEK on a terrorist list in any



way contribute to the string of decisions that led to the massacre of 34 innocent people, as well as the wounding of hundreds more?

Now, we have much to learn today, what really happened on April 8th.

Can we continue to protect Camp Ashraf? What is the solution? Should the residents be relocated to safe areas outside of Iraq? What is the solution? That’s an interesting question for us to talk about today as well. I would be interested in hearing suggestions from the panel that we are about to happen.

And one last point. I believe I read in the paper that 34 people were killed just a day or two ago from bombs that went off in Iraq. And it is very easy to think that when those 34 people are killed and people are still being killed, why are we concerned about Camp Ashraf when you have other people being killed in these terrorist attacks?

Well, let me note: It is not equal. When a terrorist plants a bomb and kills innocent people, it is not equal to when a government, exercising its sovereign authority, decides in a willful way to massacre people and kill them, even though the numbers are the same. A government is expected to be responsible and to act legally and lawfully. A terrorist group, you will expect them to be the dregs of society and of the earth.

Let us hope that the Maliki government understands that there is a difference between terrorist activities, which are unacceptable, and the activities of his government, which are totally inconsistent with law and civilization. So for government troops to be openly killing people, as we just saw, is unacceptable anywhere in the civilized world, and that is a lot different than a terrorist attack. Therefore, we have a moral obligation today as people to call people to task and to find out exactly what happened.

“We should quit playing games and remove the PMOI from terrorist lists before it results in another massacre.”



Witnesses and spectators at a 7 July 2011 hearing in U.S. Congress, entitled “Massacre at Camp Ashraf: Implications for U.S. Policy.”



**Ted Poe**  
Member of Congress  
House Foreign Affairs Committee

**“I have seen and been in all the classified briefings that I know of regarding the PMOI, and I am not convinced that they should remain on the list.”**

I was with Chairman Rohrabacher and the ranking member on our trip to Iraq on June 11, 2011. We did visit with Maliki, and discussed many issues with him. One of those issues was that we wanted to go to Camp Ashraf and get the residents’ side of what happened to them and the camp in April. After almost two hours of talking and a lot of talk -- as the statement has sometimes been said, when all is said and done, more is said than done -- we were not allowed to go to Camp Ashraf. He was adamant about that, and we respected his decision since he was in charge of the nation.

**What did Maliki have to hide?**

But my question then and now is still the same: Why not? What did Maliki have to hide? If he was right about his position -- and he articulated his position, I thought, quite well -- why couldn’t he be open-minded enough to let us get the viewpoint from the residents that lived in Camp Ashraf? And he denied us that access to those people, so it seems to me -- he had plenty to hide is the reason we weren’t allowed to go to Camp Ashraf and hear from the residents.

When the Iraqi soldiers stormed Camp Ashraf on April 8, fired at the residents and ran them over with American Humvees, 36 were killed, including women and children. It was a human rights atrocity, and the U.S., with thousands of troops still fighting for peace in Iraq, has done more than -- little more than issue just a statement, has not conducted its own investigation, hasn’t asked the U.N. to investigate. And there is no point in the Iraqi government investigating the attack, because they are the ones who ordered the attack. They certainly are going to find no fault with the action of their own military.

**Displacement of Ashraf, a misguided plan**

A week after the attack, I with 18 members of the House sent a letter to Secretary Clinton and Secretary Gates, asking them

to shed some light on this violent attack. It is now July. To date, there is blissful silence from the administration and have given us no answer for this inhumane attack of Iraq on the people of Iraq.

Instead, the administration has proposed a new relocation plan for the camp. They want to move the camp to some other location within Iraq. This is the same plan the Iranians themselves proposed years ago. We have heard how dangerous this would be to the residents of the camp.

In May, I sent a letter to Secretary Clinton opposing this misguided plan. Camp Ashraf is recognized around the world as a refugee camp for those who oppose the Iranian regime. And if we move it within Iraq, they will lose that public recognition, while leaving residents under the same control of the army.

**Take PMOI off the list**

There’s something directly under our control that we can do, and that is, we can take the MEK off the foreign terrorist organization list. One of the obstacles in moving Camp Ashraf to a peaceful third country is that they are still designated as terrorists by the

United States. I’ve introduced a bipartisan legislation, H. Res. 60, that urges the secretary of state to take the MEK off the foreign terrorist organization list.

I have seen and been in all the classified briefings that I know of regarding the MEK, and I am not convinced that they should remain on the list. The State Department has not made their case to keep them on the list. Therefore, they should be removed.

The MEK should not be used as a political tool to appease any dictators in the world. 83 of my colleagues agree with me. As a nation, we’ve promised to protect these Iranian individuals.

We have given Iraq a democracy and freedom. It’s time they start acting like they deserve it and provide safety for Camp Ashraf residents and the MEK.



**Russ Carnahan**  
Ranking member,  
Oversight and  
Investigation  
Sub-Committee of  
the Foreign Affairs  
Committee

I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this hearing today and for shining a bright light on this issue, also for leading our delegation recently to Iraq to meet with Prime Minister Maliki and officials there, as well as our own U.S. government officials, to really help get to the bottom of this issue.

During our trip to Iraq last month, we met with numerous people regarding the slaughter at Camp Ashraf on April 8. Not surprisingly, we heard a lot of different and conflicting stories. What is not in dispute is that over 30 Camp Ashraf residents were killed, over 300 wounded, by Iraqi security forces. These killings have been widely condemned, and I concur.

In the week following the killings, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights called for, quote, “a full independent and transparent inquiry” and further added, quote, “any person found responsible for” the “use of excessive force should be prosecuted.” Again, I concur in full. A full, fair and independent investigation will provide for the best means of finding a final determination of what happened and will allow anyone found responsible to be brought to justice and help prevent future attacks.

I look forward to hearing the insights of the witnesses here today regarding the human rights abuses but also how we protect from future abuses. In 2003, the residents of Camp Ashraf had protected status under the Geneva Convention, and pursuant to the Status of Forces Agreement between the U.S. and Iraqi governments, jurisdiction of the camp has been under Iraqi jurisdiction since 2009.

With the drawdown of U.S. forces in Iraq, I believe that the U.N. or other independent body be given access to the camp to assess the humanitarian situation there. I would also like to have the panel address the issues with regard to relocation of the residents, and also to look at the broader implications to U.S. policy as we shift from a military to a State Department-led effort focusing on diplomacy and development.



**Bob Filner**

*Member of US Congress*

*Co-Chair of Iran Human Rights and Democracy Caucus*

**“There is a potentially much greater humanitarian disaster awaiting at Ashraf. I think the United States has both the legal and the moral obligation to try to prevent that.”**

**T**hank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your courage and activism on this issue also.

You know, I was reading the testimony, Mr. Chairman, of our panelists in advance, just to be prepared. And I noticed one of the panelists spends his whole time discrediting or trying to discredit the MEK. It is almost as if to justify the massacre that occurred at Camp Ashraf. I wish he had spent as much time undermining the regime of Iran. We'd be better off.

There is a potentially much greater humanitarian disaster awaiting at Ashraf. I think the United States has both the legal and the moral obligation to try to prevent that, and I thank you for holding this to put the spotlight. Too few Americans know what is going on there, and we thank Ashraf for testifying this morning.

I think, Mr. Chairman, in this room, the secretary of state, a few months ago, promised to protect the health and safety of the people in Camp Ashraf. And, apparently, that did not occur. And I think this Congress, with your leadership, needs to say more about that.

The MEK and its leader has come up with, it seems to me, the

one legitimate policy that is best for us as Americans. They call it the third way. That means we do not invade Iran, but we do not appease the existing mullahs. We get out of the way and let the resistance do what it can and should and wants to.

The listing of the MEK as a terrorist organization is getting in the way, so we ought to de-list. And there's lots of reasons, as you pointed out, why we should.

I was recently at a conference or at a rally in Paris where the first homeland security secretary unequivocally said that MEK is not a terrorist organization. I mean, nothing crossed his desk as the secretary of homeland security that indicated that in the years that he was in that position.

After all our treasure of money and men and women who have died and been injured there, do we want the Iranians to take over? And yet that is a potential.

Ashraf is a symbol of what we need to prevent. After all this intervention in Iraq in a decade, the Iranians come in.

The MEK favors a non-nuclear, democratic, secular regime. I think that's something we can all agree to.

**Sheila Jackson Lee**

*Member of Foreign Affairs Committee*

**N**owhere should we tolerate the heinousness of the attack on the residents of Camp Ashraf. And no matter how deep the friendship is or the recovering history of Iraq, it should not be tolerated. And, as well, we should not allow Iran to dominate and to violently infuse into the response to Camp Ashraf actions that they would carry out themselves. And if the actions were carried out by the military in Iraq, they are as culpable as those who have either instructed or created the atmosphere.

So I hope, as we find a solution, that it will be a solution where we demand from the head of government of Iraq to cease and desist and to collaborate and cooperate with safe passage for those in the camp in need of medical care. And the extreme violation of human rights, civil rights, should be completely denounced.

But more importantly, the world organizations, including the United Nations, should immediately denounce this behavior. And Iraq should pay a penalty in the world forum for the treatment not only of those in Camp Ashraf, but many citizens of their own

**“If the ambassador of Iraq can hear my voice, he needs to come to Congress. He owes this Congress an apology.**

**He owes both an apology to the people in Camp Ashraf, to the people of Iraq.”**



who are from diverse backgrounds.

It is frustrating to come back time after time with continuous violence and no response by Iraq. And I hope if the ambassador of Iraq can hear my voice, he needs to come to Congress. He owes this Congress an apology.

He owes this country an explanation as to why he is violating the civil rights of a minority group in his country when we fought and shed blood so that Iraqis might live free.

He owes both an apology to the people in Camp Ashraf, to the people of Iraq who will suffer as well because they are diverse, and he owes an apology and explanation to the world family, and particularly the United States of America, for the treasure that we lost attempting to provide democracy there.

**The U.S. Department of State did not send an official to testify in the hearing. However, Mr. Ray Takeyh, a former advisor to the Department who tirelessly has advocates a friendly policy toward the Iranian regime testified.**

**To divert the attention from the main topic of the hearing, the massacre in Ashraf, only 170 words of his 840 words testimony were about Ashraf, the rest were an attempt to discredit the PMOI.**

**Excerpts from his testimony and the responses by members of Congress and other witnesses follow:**



### **Ray Takeyh**

MEK, was founded in early 1960s in Iran at the time of proliferation of various opposition groups against the shah.

It distinguished itself by the discursive nature of ideology that sought to mix a number of

incompatible dogmas.

They opposed the shah's regime partly because of his close association with the United States.

Violence has been a hallmark of MEK's strategy for assuming power. Although MEK victims have been mostly Iranians, there have been Americans and American installations also victims of MEK violence. The first attack came in May 1972, on the occasion of President Richard Nixon's visit to Iran. That same year the party attempted to assassinate General Harold Price, the chief of U.S. military mission in Iran.

Throughout the 1970s the MEK did have support within Iran, particularly among the intelligentsia and the working class. Its message of resistance and its record of resisting the shah did attract substantial support.

The turning point for MEK's internal fortunes in Iran seems to have been 1981 when the Islamic regime engaged in one of the most brutal acts of repression, executing a vast number of opposition members, including many MEK cadre. It is at that time that the organization's political infrastructure in Iran was largely subdued.

As MEK went into exile, its willingness to side with Saddam's Iraq against Iran in the Iran-Iraq War disturbed its already diminishing cadre.

They were employed by him in the repression of the Shiite uprising in 1991. Given that fact, MEK is having -- given that the Shiite community is having a leading role in Iraq, that is indeed a disturbing legacy.

The question then becomes what to do with MEK members in Camp Ashraf. It would be wrong, it would be immoral to forcefully repatriate inhabitants of the camp back to Iran. The MEK cadre cannot be repatriated back to Iran. They cannot be returned to Iran. And they seem to have a difficulty staying in Iraq.

It becomes a question for the international community and the United Nations to find a safe haven for the remaining members of the MEK currently in Camp Ashraf.

### **Bob Filner, Member of US Congress:**

Do you think there should have been a massacre given this horrible ideology of the MEK? Because you don't say that anywhere. The last terrorist thing you indicate in your written thing is 1972. That's 39 years ago. I do not see anything that you have since then that would substantiate your claim of a terrorist organization.

I don't know what group could have gathered 100,000 people in one place to hear a former attorney general speak to them, a former secretary of homeland security, former chief of staff of President Bush, a couple Congress people.

It strikes me that if our view of the world is that Iran is one of the most troubling and they are heading toward an atomic bomb, and maybe a takeover of Iraq, at least in political terms.

We should be doing everything we can to stop that, barring the use right now of American forces, and yet you want to discredit one of the resistance groups.

You tell how unimportant they are. Well, if they are so unimportant, why worry about them?

We should be helping everybody, it seems to me, and MEK has shown, with its leadership, with its very structured program for the United States, it is in our interest to adopt that program, and with its ability to organize vast demonstrations and I think these gentlemen here would concur that they gave us very important intelligence on the Iranian nuclear capabilities and progress. These are our friends. We should be getting out of their way, and delist them and just let them do what they can if they are so unimportant and they are so lacking in support, so? That will be proved in history. But why are we helping the Iranian regime by not helping the MEK?

### **Ted Poe, Member of Foreign Affairs Committee:**

I want to follow up on Mr. Filner's comments about Iran. They are the problem. Iran is the problem. They are the world problem. And we have got a group of Iranian citizens that are in Camp Ashraf that the Iranian government does not like, wants them to go away, disappear from the earth, if they had their way.

Why is that? Probably because they oppose the regime in Iran. And I actually agree with you, Mr. Filner, that we should encourage groups that oppose the Iranian regime. Because the best hope for the world is a peaceful regime change in Iran. And the Iranians have to do it, wherever they are in the world.

So I just don't know why our State Department is so hard-headed about delisting them from the MEK, but they are. So we need to intervene and get them off the MEK list.

### **Colonel Wes Martin (Ret.), Former Base Commander of Ashraf:**

The MEK are not terrorists. In May of 1972, the MEK leadership was rolled up. Rajavi and many others ended up in prison just prior to that. And then there was a split within the MEK to a Marxist mujaheddin and what we see now as the MEK. And it stayed that way.

The killings of Colonel Shaffer, Colonel Turner and Lieutenant Colonel Hawkins were accomplished in June and July of 1975, and the Shah's own police interrogated the killers and they said they were part of the Marxist MEK. When Rajavi was released from prison, he was able to bring the MEK back together outside of the prisons. And that is the organization you see today. It is not the MEK that was doing those executions.

### **Brad Sherman, Member of Foreign Affairs Committee:**

The MEK was designated in 1997, but every act of terrorism that you've described in your statements were a long time before then. Were they designated in 1997 because that was part of an olive branch to Tehran or because the State Department finally got around to looking at the actions taken in the 1980s and 1970s?

What I have been told is again and again that the MEK's on that list as an olive branch to Tehran. It is not working out real well. So we twisted our semi-judicial or administrative determination for political reasons, and in this case for the wrong political reasons.

## Ray Takeyh and Best Time to Deal With Mullahs

### 2000: (Khatami's presidency)

*"We get a better deal on all issues of concern, the holy trinity – weapons, terrorism, and Israel – from the reformers, who are more pragmatists than the hard-liners."*

R. Takeyh  
Middle East Policy Council  
Dec. 12, 2000

### 2002:

*"This time, with public opinion in favor of reaching out to Washington, Iranian political groups of all complexion are loath to let the opportunity pass."*

R. Takeyh  
Financial Times. Nov. 4, 2002

### 2004:

*"The recent demise of the reform movement has facilitated the ascendance of pragmatic conservatives willing to have a far-reaching dialogue with the United States. At a time when the challenge of Iran seems most acute, the prospect of Tehran accommodating Washington has never been greater."*

R. Takeyh  
The International Herald Tribune  
Aug. 24, 2004

### 2004:

*"For the first time in more than 20 years, the United States has the opportunity to deal with rational, pragmatic interlocutors who, by virtue of their standing in the government, are in a position to negotiate. It is an opportunity that should not be squandered."*

R. Takeyh  
The Washington Quarterly  
Autumn 2004

### 2005:

**(Ahmadinejd becomes president)**  
*"Despite the election of a hard-line government in Iran, the time surprisingly might be ripe for a deal."*

Feinstein, L. and R. Takeyh,  
The Baltimore Sun  
Sept. 26, 2005

### 2007:

*"In Iran today the idea of negotiating with the United States as late as 1999, 2001, was a contentious issue. Now there is a consensus in Iran, across political spectrum, blessed by the supreme leader, that Iran is willing to negotiate with the United States."*

Speech by R. Takeyh  
Feb. 22, 2007

## Michael Mukasey, Former U.S. Attorney General:

I have submitted seven pages of written testimony, making several recommendations of what I would hope this committee would do and could do to try to determine how this massacre came to be and what can be done to prevent conditions at Ashraf from deteriorating even further, and I thank the sub-committee for making those a part of the record.

I want to focus my oral testimony today on what the United States has done in the past, some of which has helped but some of which has hurt, and what we can do in the future to prevent people from being murdered. Because, make no mistake about it, what we are talking about here literally is a matter of life and death.

Back in 2003 when the multinational force went into Iraq, the residents of Ashraf surrendered the weapons they could have used to defend themselves and put themselves in the hands of the multinational force and principally the

hands of American forces. They received a written guarantee from an American general, that I attached to my written testimony, that they would be treated as protected persons under the Fourth Geneva Convention.

In 2009, General Petraeus signed off on the Iraqi government's assumption of control over the entirety of the country, including the vicinity of Ashraf, only after he got written and oral assurances that the people living in Ashraf would be protected by Iraqi forces. And as we know, those assurances have been violated repeatedly, with the results that we've seen here today.

I should mention that at both times -- both in July of 2009 and April of 2011 -- when these attacks took place, our secretary of defense was in country. It would be hard to imagine a more calculated slap at this country than that, and when you think about the terrible price that we've paid to liberate Iraq -- the lengths to which we've gone to oppose the Iranian government -- when you think of the opposition to the Iranian government in the Gulf and elsewhere and the strategic defeat that Iran suffered when it overreached in Bahrain, what has -- you wonder what has made Iran and Iraq so bold as to act in this way.

Well, I would suggest to you that what enables them and what emboldens them is, as the chairman suggested, that the United States and in particular the State Department have kept the MEK on a list of foreign terrorist organizations, something the European Union and the U.K. have long since stopped doing, and thereby legitimized the behavior of both Iraq and Iran.

The State Department seems infected with the idea that it must not do anything that might



displease the Iranians, even when doing so in fact would give the United States more leverage against the Iranians, not less. And so we have the spectacle last week of the United States diplomat, our ambassador to Iraq, saying in one breath that Iran is in fact sending IEDs into Iraq that are used to kill Americans but saying in the next breath that

MEK members should agree to disband in order to facilitate resettlement of the residents of Ashraf.

In other words, he is saying that a principal organized group that defines itself in large measure by opposition to the tyrannical regime in Iran should cease to be a group and should give up its identity in the ridiculous hope that when the Iranians and the Iraqis can pick them off one at a time,

that they will somehow be safer and not less safe when that happens.

The MEK, as many of you know, went to court to get this unjustified designation removed. The D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals told the State Department that they had not presented evidence that MEK has committed violence in the last 10 years or has the ability or the inclination to do so now, and it directed the State Department in September 2010 to review and to reconsider that designation.

Well, that was almost a year ago and all the State Department has done in that time is to come forward with documents that do not deal with any issue relevant to the designation and to ask MEK questions which it has answered that are not relevant to the designation. It is long since time for the State Department to stop this policy of delay which simply emboldens murderers. I urge the committee to hold a hearing at which the State Department is required to justify its policy or to change it, and at which this committee enquires also into what our government is doing to enforce the Leahy amendment that bars both military and civilian aid from this country to military units like the Iraqi units that murdered Ashraf residents. If you ask the tough questions, perhaps we'll get answers that we and the residents of Ashraf can live with.

**"What enables Iraqis and what emboldens them is that the United States and in particular the State Department have kept the MEK on a list of foreign terrorist organizations and thereby legitimized the behavior of both Iraq and Iran."**

## Colonel Wes Martin (Ret.), Former Base Commander of Ashraf:



**A**s the base commander of Camp Ashraf, I'd like to make one point up front. The MEK is not a terrorist organization.

In 2003, as the United States finalized its invasion plans, the Iranian government set to work how to quietly take over as much of Iraq as possible.

Today, the Iranian influence expanded itself over the southern provinces, throughout Baghdad and

into Diyala Province where Camp Ashraf and the MEK is now located.

As the Maliki and Ahmadinejad governments grow closer, the situation of the MEK becomes more critical, as evidenced in the film footage of July 2009 and April 2011. In these videos, we observed Maliki's forces using U.S.-supplied vehicles and equipment to run down and shoot defenseless people. We witnessed the courage of the residents of

Ashraf. Despite knowing they may be the next to die, they rushed to the rescue of their fallen comrades. Courage under fire is an admirable trait. Killing unarmed people is murder.

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 neverending story of embarrassment and prejudice. Her visits were disasters. Her continual rumors and misinformation resulted in my frequent unannounced and unfounded inspections into MEK compounds.

**“The PMOI has fulfilled their end. The United States comes up very short. The price of that is now being paid by the residents of Camp Ashraf.”**

I assisted State Department officials addressing the MEK issue. This included providing the translated letter from Mr. Zebari, head of the Kurdistan Democrat Party International Relations, stating MEK 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 attack on the Kurds remained. Upon my questioning the same State Department officials about this, I was informed they don't communicate with people who put out the annual report.

One perpetual rumor worthy of specific address concerns members of the MEK being held against their will. I was able to validate

through specific occurrences anyone wishing to leave has that choice. The real benefactor of the fall of the MEK will be Ahmadinejad and the ruling religious fundamentalists. The fundamentalists -- the Iranian government has always wanted the MEK to be turned over to them.

The MEK without firing a shot, turned over all their weapons except the consolidation at Camp Ashraf, renounced terrorism, accepted

protected-person status under the Fourth Geneva Convention, provided the free world with crucial 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 MEK, the protected-person status was revoked and the organization was turned over to the Iraqi government.

The MEK has fulfilled their end. The United States comes up very short. The price of that is now being paid by the residents of Camp Ashraf.

## Col. Gary Morsch, M.D. Former chief medical liaison between Ashraf and U.S. military:



**I** have submitted a fairly extensive prepared statement that outlines my observations. These observations are based on my direct role as the lead position assigned to Camp Ashraf in early 2004, where I lived and worked with the residents of Ashraf on a 24-7 basis. I arrived

in Iraq knowing nothing about the MEK and left Ashraf with a great knowledge and insight into

the organization, as great a knowledge or insight, I believe, as any other American, or more so. Let me just say, I know the MEK.

Based on my observations I would like to express three simple conclusions, which I believe are indisputable. Number one, the MEK and Ashraf are not terrorists.

The European Union does not consider them terrorists. The French don't. The United Kingdom don't. The U.S. is the only significant country that keeps them on the terrorist list. This must change, and change immediately.

Number two, when our military forces entered Iraq in 2003,

**U.S. forces have stood by, sometimes literally filming the assaults as they were happening without intervening.**

meetings were held between the MEK and U.S. officials. In return for their giving up their weapons of self-defense, the U.S. promised to protect them. In fact, following an extensive investigation into all aspects of the MEK, including lengthy interviews of every resident of Ashraf, each resident of Ashraf was given a signed document guaranteeing their safety as protected persons under the Fourth Geneva Convention, with the United States promising to ensure that protection.

The people of Ashraf have more than upheld their side of this agreement. We have not. U.S. forces have stood by, sometimes literally filming the assaults as they were happening without intervening. Today 47 members of Ashraf have been killed, along with hundreds more wounded. Today the city of Ashraf is a city under siege, and unless something is done quickly and dramatically, Ashraf will fall and thousands more

will be killed in a great genocide.

Number three, finally, I have a specific recommendation on what the U.S. should do to keep its word and carry out the terms of the agreement that we made. Someone must take responsibility for protecting Ashraf, and must take this responsibility away from the Iraqis. Under the obvious influence of Iran, Iran and Iraq intend to exterminate the MEK. The status quo is not acceptable. We must intervene.