

**The People's Mojahedin**  
**1965 – present**  
**18 years of struggle**  
**against the Shah's**  
**dictatorship**  
**and Khomeini's tyranny**



**18<sup>th</sup>**

Anniversary of the Founding of the

***P.M.O.I.***

## 1965 – 1971: beginning of a new era!

In the history of the Iranian people's resistance against despotism and foreign domination, June 5, 1963, bears a profoundly special importance, for it reflects a turning point in this resistance. On that day, millions of unarmed Iranians poured into the streets expressing their indignation toward the Shah's repressive policies. The brutal suppression of this peaceful demonstration, however, made it clear that the old methods of struggle are no longer effective against the Shah's military apparatus. It, therefore, marked the end of an era: the era of peaceful political struggle. The resistance had run against an implacable barrier; only new methods of struggle could break through this new obstacle.

As with all other aware and responsible elements in society, the founders of the People's Mojahedin, Mohammad Hanif-Nezhad, Sa'id Mohsen and Ali Asghar Badi'zadegan, followed up their active role in the political struggles of 1960-1963 with a thorough re-examination of the causes of the movement's past failures and set-backs. With the round up of political activists in January of 1963, they joined others in prison, where they had the opportunity to give a full appraisal of the struggles of the past and the formulation of guidelines for future action. Passionate as they were for the freedom of their homeland, Mohammad, Sa'id and Asghar were confronted with a disturbing question: How is it that despite the great many sacrifices by the people of Iran to achieve freedom and independence, Iran was still captive in the hands of dictators. To find an answer, they set about looking into the history of Iran beginning with the constitutional movement of 1906.

The founders of the Mojahedin concluded that only through armed resistance do they stand a chance against the Shah's military and intelligence machine. After all, by shooting in cold blood 15,000 unarmed protestors, the Shah had declared, once and for all, his intentions to suppress any form of protest.



Ali Asghar Badi'zadegan,  
martyred co-founder



Mohammad Hanif-Nezhad,  
martyred co-founder



Sa'id Mohsen,  
martyred co-founder

When released from prison, Mohammad, Sa'id and Asghar founded the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran on September 6, 1965. They adopted urban guerrilla warfare as the strategy for the struggle and Islam as their guiding ideology. Learning from the mistakes of the past movements, they particularly emphasized the significance of ideology in

any struggle aimed at liberating the people from the yoke of dictatorship and foreign domination.

## 1971 – 1979: armed resistance against the Shah!

By 1971, the Mojahedin felt prepared to begin their armed resistance against the Shah. However, the regime had started on a massive anti-guerrilla campaign in order to prevent any attempt at disrupting the so-called celebration of 2500 years of Imperial rule in Iran. In a series of raids to the Mojahedin's hide-outs, the SAVAK arrested more than 90% of their members including the entire leadership cadre.

The setback of August of 1971, severe as it was, however, did not destroy the Mojahedin. On the contrary, by virtue of their strong organizational infra-structure, the Mojahedin reorganized and continued the struggle. In the Spring of 1972, the regime tried and sentenced



**Mr. Massoud Rajavi,  
the leading member  
of the  
People's Mojahedin  
and the Chairman  
of the  
N.C.R.**

### Massoud Rajavi

Massoud Rajavi is a member of the leadership cadre of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran and the chairman of the National Council of Resistance for the independence and freedom of the Democratic Islamic Republic of Iran.

He was born into a religious family in Tabas in 1948. He completed elementary and secondary education in Mashad and attended Tehran University where he received a Bachelor degree in political law. Rajavi joined the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran in 1966 at the age of 19 and is the only surviving member of the twelve-man leadership cadre of the People's Mojahedin in the years before 1971.

Since his arrival in Paris, on July 28, 1981, as the chairman of the National Council of Resistance, Mr. Rajavi has undertaken efforts to expose Khomeini's atrocities. He has also introduced the Council to freedom-loving and progressive countries and personalities and has enlisted their support for the popular resistance against Khomeini's regime.

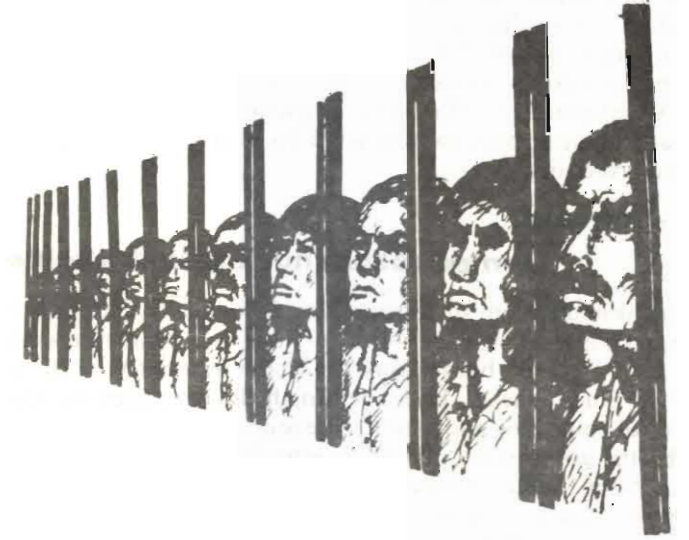
to death the entire leadership of the People's Mojahedin. All but one of the Mojahedin leaders were executed. The current leader of the Mojahedin, Mr. Massoud Rajavi, was the only one spared and this because of extreme pressure put on the Shah by human rights organizations and internationally respected personalities.

## 1979 – 1981:

**from a clandestine urban guerrilla group  
to a broadly based political party!**

Following the revolution of 1979, the Mojahedin were faced with a

very complicated situation. Khomeini and the clergy who had, for many years, refrained from taking any serious action against the Shah and in some cases cooperated with it, exploited the religious sentiments of the



Iranian people and usurped the leadership of the revolution. To make matters worse, millions of people had submerged in an absolute trust in the new regime. Indeed, they had so much faith in Khomeini that they would not tolerate the slightest criticism about his regime. Precisely for this reason, the Mojahedin despite their knowledge of Khomeini's nature and viewpoints, decided to support Khomeini in his struggle against the dictatorial regime of the Shah. Henceforth, while maintaining their particular viewpoints and positions, they took up fortitude and benevolence. In other words, the Mojahedin refrained from jumping at the regime from the very beginning. For in their view, exposing Khomeini's true intentions required a great deal of patience as well as organized collective work among the people.

Above all this, the Mojahedin had to adapt to the new post-revolutionary environment; they had to change from a clandestine urban guerrilla organization to a broadly based political party with public offices all over the country. Indeed, they were quite successful in this endeavor. In a relatively short period, they emerged as the largest and most popular organization in Iran. Their daily newspaper, MOJAHED, enjoyed a circulation of over 500,000 copies. Their presidential candidate, Mr. Massoud Rajavi, was supported by most of Iran's democratic forces and individuals and especially the national minorities; he was so popular indeed, that Khomeini declared him ineligible on the eve of the elections. The Mojahedin also participated in the parliamentary elections and, despite flagrant and widespread fraud and stuffing of the ballot boxes by the ruling Islamic Republican Party, 17% of the Iranians voted for them compared to the IRP's 26%. In addition, they held hundreds of rallies, demonstrations, and political and educational lectures throughout the country. For example, 15,000 students attended the weekly lectures on Islam taught by Mr. Rajavi in Tehran's Sharif university.

In response to growing opposition and particularly the widespread political organizing by the Mojahedin, Khomeini, in the process of

establishing his autocratic, medieval government disguised in religion, set in motion plans to remove the President from office. The Mojahedin, on the other hand, perceived of the president as the last barrier to the imposition of absolute reign of terror and dictatorship by Khomeini. Thus, a few days before the ouster of Mr. Bani Sadr, they organized the peaceful demonstration of June 20, 1981, in Tehran. More than 500,000 people participated in this demonstration. The massive show of support for the Mojahedin and the President, frightened the regime to such an extent that Khomeini personally ordered his guards to open fire on the unarmed protestors.

### 1981 - present:

#### armed resistance against Khomeini!

The absolute reign of terror which followed — the execution of 20,000 and imprisonment and torture of more than 50,000 innocent people so far — proved beyond any doubt the legitimacy of the armed resistance. Since June 20, 1981, the Mojahedin have been engaged in a decisive, all-embracing and nation-wide resistance. According to a statement by the government, the Mojahedin have eliminated more than 2,000 of its top ranking administrative leaders and members of the guard corps throughout the country.

The overwhelming majority of the Iranian people support this just resistance. In fact, if it were not for their moral and material support, the regime could have easily destroyed the Mojahedin. Support for this popular resistance extends to the armed forces as well. Based on the figures compiled by the government, 40% of the armed forces' personnel actively supports the Mojahedin. This is manifested in the disarming of several major garrisons and the elimination of officers loyal to Khomeini. For example, the military personnel supporting the people's Mojahedin, revolted in Lavizan barracks, one of the largest in Tehran; they eliminated scores of high ranking officers and commanders, and confiscated a large arsenal of ammunitions and weaponry. The recent widespread strikes in such important factories as the Iran National Auto Assembly Plant, Pars Electric, Shiraz Cement, etc., in support of the Mojahedin underscore the legitimacy and popularity of the armed resistance among the Iranian workers.

### National Council of Resistance:

#### the only viable alternative!

Khomeini's overthrow, however, necessitated the unity and political alliance of all the democratic and popular forces in Iran. The armed resistance, therefore, was complimented by the formation of the National Council of Resistance (NCR). Initiated by the People's Mojahedin on July, 1981, the NCR has been enthusiastically received by all classes and strata in the society. The presence in the Council of the Mojahedin as a pivotal force and the affiliation of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan as well as other prominent personalities such as Mr. Bani Sadr have made it the only viable alternative to Khomeini's inhumane regime.

Despite one of the most violent repressions in the contemporary history of the world, the resistance is alive and well, and will continue until the downfall of Khomeini's regime and the establishment of a free, independent and democratic society.

**The gross violations of human rights in Iran and Khomeini's onslaught on the life and liberties of the Iranian people demand the coordinated efforts of all those who respect human values. Just as your moral support for the Iranian people has helped decrease the level of repression in Iran, your material support can also be of great importance in helping the just movement of the Iranian people against Khomeini, this enemy of humanity.**

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