



The Need to Support the International Front Against Islamic Fundamentalism

by Hedayat Mostowfi
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Parliamentarians from several Western countries, including Britain, Belgium, Norway, Luxembourg, Italy and Australia, have announced their support for the Mujahedeen-E Khalq and urged its removal from the US and EU's watch lists.



Sovereignty was handed over to the Iraqi caretaker government two days ahead of the June 30th deadline. However, the interim government has a very difficult task ahead: uprooting terrorism backed by Islamic fundamentalism. Today, Iraq has become the international front in the war against Islamic fundamentalism and terrorist murderers who can behead people without any hesitation. The world now understands that peace and security in the region, and democracy in Iraq, is impossible unless this evil foe is uprooted.

The war in Iraq has developed into what can be viewed as a battle between the free world and Islamic fundamentalism. The insurgents hope to destroy the hopes of the Iraqi people for freedom and democracy by wreaking havoc in Iraq and eventually erecting an Islamic fundamentalist government.

But the international community has only itself to blame for much of what is happening in Iraq today. The European Union's all carrot and no stick policy emboldened Tehran to keep up its intransigence at home and abroad. Iranians and Iraqis have paid a heavy price for this expedient approach.

That Islamic fundamentalism poses the most dangerous threat to the civilized world was first stated in 1994 by Maryam Rajavi, the president-elect of the Iranian Resistance. A Muslim woman, Maryam Rajavi proposed to form an international front against Islamic fundamentalism.

The Europeans did not take heed. Instead, they engaged in what they termed to be human rights dialogue with Tehran, proclaiming that they sought to cultivate "reformers" in Iran. The bureaucrats at

Foggy Bottom hitched their wagon to the Europeans. Hence, the U.S. and the EU blacklisted Iran's main opposition movement, the anti-fundamentalist Mujahedeen-E Khalq (MEK). At the behest of Tehran, the Coalition forces bombed MEK's camps in Iraq, despite the group steering clear of the conflict.

While the Europeans and Americans ignored the idea of an anti-fundamentalist front, the Iraqis embraced it. Some 500,000 Iraqis signed a petition, supporting the presence of the MEK in Iraq. On June 18, 50,000 Iraqis attended a rally in MEK's Camp Ashraf, denouncing the Iranian mullahs' brand of fundamentalist Islam.

Parliamentarians from several Western countries, including Britain, Belgium, Norway, Luxembourg, Italy and Australia, have announced their support for the Mujahedeen and urged its removal from the US and EU's watch lists. Many in the U.S. Congress share this sentiment. During a Congressional hearing last week, Representatives Tom Tancredo (R-CO) and Brad Sherman (D-CA) underscored that the terror tag on the Mujahedeen was part of an attempt to curry favor to Tehran. "This is an organization that is on the terrorist watch list for one reason... Because the Iranians wanted us to keep it there. They are afraid of the MEK, of the political power they may wield even inside Iran," reiterated Representative Tancredo. Congressman Brad Sherman added, "... We decided to kowtow to Tehran by closing down the offices of those who even voiced support for the MEK, one of Tehran's more dangerous adversaries, an entity with a checkered past to be sure. But it was the one concession we had not made to Tehran already and we had to make it."

As we approach the anniversary of the July 1999 uprising by hundreds of thousands of Iranians in Tehran and other cities, it is imperative that European and the United States encourage the democracy movement in Iran by abandoning appeasement and taking a firm stance vis-à-vis the Iranian regime.

There is a clear road map to democracy in Iran and Iraq. The West must support the call by millions of Iranians for a United Nations supervised referendum on regime change. It should also remove the terror tag on the Mujahedeen-E Khalq and embrace its call for the formation of anti-fundamentalist front against Tehran. The sooner, the better.

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