

MKO Influence in U.S. Politics

"We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or no rest. And we will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime."

President George W. Bush [September 20, 2001 Address to Joint Session of Congress](#)

"... MEK hold fundraising events, where like-minded individuals are invited to contribute funds ultimately meant for terrorist activities."

Assistant Secretary Juan C. Zarate, Terrorist Financing, Department of the Treasury [February 1, 2005 Harper's Bazaar/International AntiCounterfeiting Coalition Summit](#)

Who are the Mojahedin and what are they up to?

Following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, the President of the United States issued [Executive Order 13224](#). This order ostensibly blocked the assets of terrorist organizations and individuals associated with terrorism. The Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization (aka MKO, MEK, National Council of Resistance of Iran, NCRI, People's Mojahedin of Iran, PMOI, et al.) is one such [listed terrorist organization](#). Several years before, however, Congress passed the 1996 Antiterrorism Act which directed the State Department to draw up a list of foreign terrorist organizations. Such a list was produced by then Secretary Albright in [1997](#) and has been updated each two years or as required ([1999 info](#)). Additional information on the terrorist list is found in [The "FTO" List and Congress](#). It is a common assertion of the MKO that they were listed during the Clinton administration as a "gesture" to Iran. As evidence of this, an article in the 09 October 1997 issue of the L.A. Times is cited which paraphrases an un-named Clinton administration official as stating that the listing was intended as a goodwill gesture. Whether or not there were persons in the Clinton Administration who held this view, it was made clear to me in my conversations with the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism at the State Department that no such political considerations were made in drawing up the list. The fact is that the MKO were included in the very first list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations under the 1996 Antiterrorism Act and this determination was consistent with prior assessments by the State Department that the MKO was [an organization involved in terrorism](#) and this view was [expressed even during the first Bush Administration](#). Indeed, in its [decision on docket No. 01-1465](#) the United States Court of Appeals found:

.... Petitioner argues that there is not adequate record support for the Secretary's determination that it is a foreign terrorist organization under the statute. However, on this element, even the unclassified record taken alone is quite adequate to support the Secretary's determination. Indeed, as to this element-that is, that the organization engages in

terrorist activities-the People's Mojahedin has effectively admitted not only the adequacy of the unclassified record, but the truth of the allegation.

Perhaps surprisingly, however, the MKO has some supporters in Congress and this is evidently the result of a long lobbying effort. The effect of this lobbying effort is primarily seen in the repeated claims that some large number of members of Congress have signed on to some statement endorsing the MKO. The statements never have been published in the Congressional Record and the [identities of the alleged co-signers are closely guarded](#) by the handful of sponsors that are apparently well paid for their efforts (as you will see). The investment of the MKO has not always been well-placed, however. Two of their champions and targets of much money were Congressman (and then Senator) Robert Torricelli and Congressman James Traficant, both of whom were driven from office over corruption and influence peddling charges. Traficant was convicted and sent to prison. Gary Ackerman has also been the recipient of substantial contributions but these seem to have dried up since he told the Village Voice, in response to questions about his support of the MKO, ["I don't give a shit if they are undemocratic"](#)... "OK, so the [MKO] is a terrorist organization".

For some introductory information on the MKO and their friends in Congress, it is suggested that you read the following articles:

["A Very, Very Bad Bunch"](#)

[Don't Confuse This Group with Freedom Fighters](#)

[Iran "terrorist" group finds support on Hill](#)

[Rep. Ros-Lehtinen defends Iranian group labeled terrorist front for Saddam Hussein](#)

[U.S. bombs Mujahedin; backers hide](#)

[Terrorists plan D.C. fundraiser](#)

[Richard Perle Supports Terrorism. He spoke at a terrorist fundraiser](#)

[In The Money: Congressman James Traficant And His Campaign Contributors](#)

[Opponents Hit Torricelli On National Security](#)

Data on political contributions

In an effort to discover some of the MKO lobbying activity in the U.S. I have compiled some data from public sources and posted it here. The Federal Election Commission keeps records of donations made to political candidates and to political committees. There are a number of sites that provide search tools and resources to research this information on line. Two suggested sources are:

[FEC Campaign Finance Reports and Data](#)

[Campaign Contribution Search at Newsmeat](#)

An [Excel File of Political Contributions](#) can be viewed (if you have Excel) by clicking on the highlighted link. This file contains data arranged in tabs according to year in which the contributions were made. Readers are cautioned that the list is almost certainly incomplete and inclusion of a contribution does not necessarily imply a link to the MKO. The file includes data that was collected according to one or more of the following criteria:

- 1) the contribution was made to a candidate who has promoted the MKO/NCRI or attended their conferences or other events.
- 2) the contribution appeared to be part of a concerted contribution to a candidate or committee, i.e. one of several contributions made on the same day or same time period, often of the same magnitude and to the same target.
- 3) the contribution was made by someone known to be associated with the MKO.

Where there is an asterisk placed after the name of a contributor in the Excel file, this indicates a known association with the MKO/NCRI and specific information of such affiliations can be reviewed in the list of [reference data](#).

OK, so what does this mean?

Well, let's look at one example and see how the facts tie together. On one day this year (May 11, 2004) the Ros-Lehtinen for Congress committee (Ileana Ros-Lehtinen is a Representative from the 18th Congressional District in Florida) reported contributions totalling \$8,500 from 9 residents of California:

Mr. Ali Kashani	1367 Camino Robles Way	San Jose, California 95120	
Shahid-Chamran University	\$500		
Mr. Shahnaz Kiani	1077 Gray Fox Circle	Pleasanton, California 94566	
Valley Care Med.	\$1,000		
Mr. Behnam Mirabdal	* 1920 Francisco Street 301	Berkeley, California 94709	Copy
Express	\$500		
Mr. Ahmad Moeinimanesh	* 3327 Parkgate Court	Richmond, California 94806	
Fujitsu	\$2,000		
Ms Marzieh Nikouei	1012 Cornhill Way	Folsom, California 95630	
Capitol Bowl	\$500		
Mr. Farideh Sedighi	* 721 San Luis Road	Berkeley, California 94707	
Cisco Systems	\$2,000		
Mr. Ensieh Yazdanpanah	* 4831 Meadowbrook Drive	El Sobrante, California 94803	
Albany School District	\$500		
Ms Moigan Fahima	* 1935 Marin Avenue	Berkeley, California 94707	
Self-Employed	\$1,000		
Mr. Parvis Ghaffaripour	13765 Heritage Creek Court	Saratoga, California 95070	Maxim Integrated

OK, well enough. It is possible that Ileana Ros-Lehtinen came to California to raise money for her campaign. It is possible that all these people just happened to want to donate to her campaign in a

different state, all on the same day. There may be other explanations. It just seems odd. So let's look at things more closely.

According to the FEC records, Mr. Mirabdal is affiliated with Copy Express. There is a Copy Express at 1164 Solano Avenue in Albany, CA. This business not only sells copying services and greeting cards but also rents post boxes. In this store was found a stack of business cards printed:

Copy Express
Mojgan Fahima
1164 Solano Ave.
Albany, CA 94706
T:510-524-0235 / F:510-524-2590



So now we have established a business relationship between two of the contributors in the list. What else? Well, with the help of some additional information we realize that two of the post boxes rented at that store are being used as registration addresses for web sites used by the MKO:

WWW.IRANNTV.COM

Registrant:

Linear Communications

Nasrin Saifi

1164 Solano Ave. #120

Albanay, CA 94706

US

Phone: 510-528-0605

Fax...: 510-528-0605

Email: nasrins@earthlink.net

www.iran-solidarity.org

Registrant:

Azimi, Hamid

1164 Solano Ave, No. 117

Albany, CA 94706
US

Administrative Contact:
Azimi, Hamid hamid@azimi.net
1164 Solano Ave, No. 117
Albany, CA 94706
US
510-528-0605 fax: 510-751-5332

WWW.IRANNTV.COM is the web site of MKO television, Sima-yeh Azadi, and the registrant of that site, Nasrin Saifi, is found to have been a contributor in coordinated donations in past years to pro-MKO candidates Robert Torricelli and Gary Ackerman. WWW.IRAN-SOLIDARITY.ORG is the web site that was used by the MKO to announce their [fundraiser](#) in Washington DC earlier this year (see introductory articles). Hamid Azimi was registrant for other MKO web sites including www.iran-e-azad.org and used his contact information in one of the registrations of the site www.mojahedin.org.

Now we have established a business relationship between four persons, two in the above list, two with clear MKO links and one a prior contributor. But there is more. The names of two more persons in the above contributor list, Farideh Sedighi and Ensieh Yazdanpanah, appeared on a [MKO letter to Jacques Chirac](#) in response to the arrest of the MKO leader, Maryam Rajavi, in France. And one must truly wonder what a person listing their affiliation as "Shahid-Chamran University" (Ali Kashani) is doing making political contributions in the U.S.

Recent Events

On October 14 2004 a web site was registered with the domain CFDIRAN.COM. A check of the registration shows an address which matches that reported on the receipt for Mr. Ensieh Yazdanpanah's donation to Ileana Ros-Lehtinen as noted above:

Registrant:
cfdiran.com

4831 meadowbrook Richmond CA 94803 US

The purpose of this web site seems to have been to announce the protest event which took place in Washington DC on 19 November 2004. The [Washington Post reports](#) that the event was organized by "the Council for Freedom and Democracy in Iran and the Global Coalition Against Fundamentalism". This "group", the Council for Freedom and Democracy in Iran, had hitherto been unknown and seems to have been created solely for the purpose of obfuscation and to give the appearance of broad support for the MKO. Its creation just prior to an important MKO event is similar to the sudden appearance of the site WWW.IRAN-SOLIDARITY.ORG weeks before the MKO fundraiser in January of this year. Looking into the other reported organizer, Global Coalition Against Fundamentalism, shows that it has a web site, too:

WWW.GCAF-USA.ORG

Registrant:
Shirin Nariman
1409 Beulah Rd
Vienna, VA 22182

Phone:+1.7038562565
FAX:+1.7038562565
shirin-nariman@yahoo.com

The registrant, Shirin Nariman, is reported to have been an organizer also of the fundraiser. But she [denies any link to the MKO](#), said that there [were no MKO members at the event](#) but admitted that there [might have been "supporters" there](#). Interestingly, in other circumstances, defending the MKO, [she proudly proclaimed that she had been an MKO supporter for over 24 years](#). Some of those who witnessed the 19 November event had [interesting comments not reported in the media](#) and it was observed that the protest was [unusually orchestrated and appeared to have participants flown in from overseas](#). This may well be, the Washington Times reported 30 November 2004 that [a delegation of Iraqis came to Washington for the event](#) and to press for the removal of the MKO from the terrorist list. But we should not forget that in [making its case for going to war in Iraq](#) the White House put the MKO at the head of its list of terrorist groups receiving support from Saddam Hussein in violation of UNSCR 687, viz.:

Iraq shelters terrorist groups including the Mujahedin-e-Khalq Organization (MKO), which has used terrorist violence against Iran and in the 1970s was responsible for killing several U.S. military personnel and U.S. civilians.

[NOTE (20 Jan 2005): According to a [Homeland Security report obtained by Cryptome](#) the Secret Service reported an Iranian from Germany suspiciously videotaping near the White House on 18 November 2004. The man claimed to be in Washington DC for the demonstration. Also, it was reported that on 19 November 2004, 25 Mujahedin e-Khalq linked persons were denied entry at the Alexandria Bay Port of Entry from Canada. The 25 were planning to attend the rally.]

The group isn't quite so benign in its operations in the U.S. since the 1970s, though. While the focus of the organization is no longer generally against American targets since their falling out with Khomeini, the fanaticism of the MKO remains and this from time to time comes through in extreme acts such as the self-immolations in Europe in 2003 (example reference articles [1](#) and [2](#)). The last major act of violence committed by the MKO in the U.S. known to this author was the seizure and hostage taking at the Iranian mission to the United Nations in New York in April 1992 (reported in the New York Times, 06 April 1992). This was part of a concerted terrorist operation on a global scale. In its report on the threat of terrorism to Canada, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service [writes](#):

On 5 April, 1992, the Iranian Air Force conducted a bombing raid on an MEK base in Iraq. Hours later, forty MEK supporters wielding sticks, crowbars and mallets attacked the Iranian embassy in Ottawa, wounding several people. Near-simultaneous attacks were carried out on Iranian Embassies in thirteen other countries around the world

More Coincidences

The web site of the Council for Freedom and Democracy in Iran, which one reporter stated was ["Virginia based"](#), lists a mailing address at:

Council for Freedom and Democracy in Iran (CFDI)
5765-F Burk Center Pkwy #360

Burk, VA 22015

which is evidently a typo, as there is, rather, a Burke, VA and a 5765-F Burke Center Pkwy. The address is that of a mailbox facility and not a business office. Several names in the FEC database immediately come to attention in reviewing those from the 22015 Zip code. One is Shirin Nariman, the organizer of the January 2004 fundraiser. Another is that of Hossein Panah. In 1996 Hossein Panah made a contribution to Ed Towns, listing his address as "6338 Draco St., Burke, VA 22015". Interestingly, Shirin Nariman also used this address once in [an on-line posting](#).

And last but not least, it appears that Bob Filner, who spoke at the 19 November event, was the recipient of an infusion of donations just weeks before, from an interesting group of Californians all residing outside his district:

10/25/2004	Alavi, Parvinalsadat	12468 Whispering Tree Ln	Poway, CA 92064	American Int. University/Accountant	\$400	FILNER, BOB (D)
10/25/2004	Kohani, Kambiz D.D.S.	7920 Grado Al Tupelo	Carlsbad, CA 92009	Costa Verde Dentistry & Ortho	\$300	FILNER, BOB (D)
10/25/2004	Mokhtari, Parvaneh	15 Malibu	Laguna Niguel, CA 92677	Home Couture Design Group/Interior	\$600	FILNER, BOB (D)
10/25/2004	Parsay, Farhad *	P.O. Box 92603	Long Beach, CA 90809	Solar Turbines/Engineer	\$300	FILNER, BOB (D)
10/25/2004	Taheri, Massood	13488 Turlock Court	San Diego, CA 92129	Banyan Associates/Business Owner	\$1,000	FILNER, BOB (D)
10/25/2004	Tasooji, Matthew	851 Cocos Drive	San Marcos, CA 92078	Nokia Inc./Senior System Engineer	\$500	FILNER, BOB (D)

Several of these names (Farhad Parsay, Massood Taheri and Matthew Tasooji) repeat throughout the [FEC records](#). Farhad Parsay's name was on the [2003 MKO letter to Jacques Chirac](#).

The Foreign Agents

The U.S. Department of Justice list four persons under [the Foreign Agents Registration Act](#) as [registered foreign agents](#) of the National Council of Resistance of Iran:

Filabi, Mahin
Jafarzadeh, Alireza
Mostowfi, Hedayatollah
Samsami, Soona

Of this group, Mahin Filabi and Hedayatollah (aka "Hedayat") Mostowfi have recorded political contributions with the FEC. Recently, Mr. Mostowfi is shown to have made donations to the FED Political Action Committee on 8/20/2004 and on the same day (7/20/2004) with Mr. Mehdi Ghaemi, donations were made to the Republican Party of Virginia. He lists his address and affiliation as:

2721 South Adams St. #203

Arlington, Virginia 22206
CSRI/Executive Director

The CSRI is the "Committee in Support of Referendum in Iran" (www.referendum-iran.org) whose board lists Hedayat Mostowfi as Executive Director. All the other names on the list will be recognizable from the FEC files cited above (Mr. Sharifi's name appears under a number of permutations, most often as "Nassersharifi"):

Board of Directors:

Masoud Dolati, PE
CSRI President and Director of Media Relations
dolati@referendum-iran.org

Mansour Panah, MD
CSRI Vice President
panah@referendum-iran.org

Ali Parsa, Ph.D
CSRI Secretary and Director of Research and Policy Analysis
parsa@referendum-iran.org

Homayoun Sharifi
CSRI Treasurer and Director of Public Relations
sharifi@referendum-iran.org

Hedayat Mostowfi
Executive Director
mostowfi@referendum-iran.org

The domain registry for the website of this group shows that it was created 26-Nov-2003. At about this same time several other persons who have served as officials or spokespersons of the MKO/NCRI set up web sites and/or corporations with an assortment of names. For example, the "National Coalition of Pro-Democracy Advocates" (www.ncpda.com) was domain registered 06-oct-2003 by Haydar Akbari. Nasser Rashidi is identified as the group's Executive Director. Nasser Rashidi has registered an additional web site on Aug 18 2003, www.prusa.us, for a corporation offering lobbying services and giving an address in Virginia. However, no such corporation appears in searching the Virginia State Corporation Commission records:

PR-USA Inc.
850 N. Randolph St.
Suite 103-A150
Arlington, VA 22203
Tel: 202 487-6989
Fax: 202 318-8331

The web site domain registry, however, lists a different address and it is exactly the same address as used by Hedayat Mostowfi in the FEC records of his donations this year:

2721 S. Adams St Apt 203

Arlington, VA 22206

1.2024876989

nasser_rashidi2003@yahoo.com

And then there is the case of Ali Safavi, who was known to have been outside the country in the middle of last year. He is cited as the NCRI [London spokesman in a CNN interview aired June 17, 2003](#). Prior to that he had served in various other locations including Paris, Dubai and Baghdad according to news reports in which he is quoted. Although U.S. law bars entry of non-citizen members of terrorist organizations, barring the possibility of a failure by Homeland Security, Mr. Safavi must have entered the U.S. some time toward the end of 2003 with a U.S. passport. We know this because the Virginia State Corporation Commission records that he established on 11/05/03 a corporation:

Near East Policy Research Inc. (NEPR Inc.)

4625 SOUTHLAND AVE APT 302

ALEXANDRIA, VA 22312

[Note: one [report](#) states that Ali Safavi has political assylum in the United States. He also travelled to London again in Dec. 2004 to speak on behalf of the Mojahedin.]

Similarly, Alireza Jafarzadeh, who we will remember from the list of NCRI foreign agents above, set up a corporation with web site (www.spconsulting.us) giving an address:

Strategic Policy Consulting, Inc.

1101 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.

Suite 600

Washington, D.C. 20004

Tel: 202-756-2288

Fax: 202-318-8382

The Virginia state records list the corporation as being effective 10/07/2003 and with the following address information:

2101 CRYSTAL OLAZA ARCADE #164

ARLINGTON, VA 22202 4600

This is probably a typo, however, as there IS a 2101 CRYSTAL PLAZA ARCADE in Arlington, VA. Actually, it is the address of a mailbox rental firm; Plaza Mailboxes (phone: 703-415-0400). Searching the address "2101 Crystal Plaza Arcade, Arlington, VA" turns up dozens of different organizations. Similarly for "1101 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W. Suite 600". Presumably that also is a mailbox rental facility.

Mr. Mohamad Alafchi is a prominent contributor in the FEC records. On 6/28/2004 it is recorded that he made a \$1000 contribution to the Committee to Re-elect Ed Towns. Mr. Alafchi is cited on the ncpda.com web site as the [President of American Iranian Association- New York](#). This organization,

along with others which you will recognize, cosponsored a [Conference at UN Plaza, December 17, 2003](#). The list of sponsors included:

sponsors:

Honorable Congressman Ed Towns (D-New York)
Association of Iranian-American in New York (AIA-NY)
The National Coalition of Pro-Democracy Advocates (NCPDA)
The Public Relations USA, Inc. (PRUSA)
Near East Policy Research, Inc, (NEPR)

If one did not know better, it might appear that this had been a broadly organized event!

Soona Samsami, who has long served as a spokeswoman of the Mojahedin's NCRI and was appointed in 1998 as their U.S. Representative, is now identified as "President" of the Women's Freedom Forum (www.womenfreedomforum.org) and makes appearances as their "[Spokeswoman](#)". Another spokeswoman of the Women's Freedom Forum, Zolal Habibi, [participated in the 19 November 2004 rally](#) (link is to CFDI site that includes Washington Times coverage) in Washington DC.

The National Coalition of Pro-Democracy Advocates, Women's Freedom Forum and Women's Forum Against Fundamentalism in Iran all share common U.S. hosts and Australian Registrars for their web sites:

National Coalition of Pro-Democracy Advocates

Domain Name: NCPDA.COM

Creation Date: 06-oct-2003

IP Address: 66.218.79.170 (Yahoo!)

IP Location: US(UNITED STATES)-CALIFORNIA-SUNNYVALE

Current Registrar: MELBOURNE IT, LTD. D/B/A INTERNET NAMES WORLDWIDE

Women's Freedom Forum

Domain Name: WOMENFREEDOMFORUM.ORG

Created On:23-Mar-2004

IP Address: 66.218.79.157 (Yahoo!)

IP Location: US(UNITED STATES)-CALIFORNIA-SUNNYVALE

Sponsoring Registrar: Melbourne IT, Ltd. dba Internet Names Worldwide

Women's Forum Against Fundamentalism in Iran (Radio Voice of Women)

Domain Name:WFAFI.ORG

Created On:26-May-2004

IP Address: 66.218.79.164 (Yahoo!)

IP Location: US(UNITED STATES)-CALIFORNIA-SUNNYVALE

Sponsoring Registrar:Melbourne IT, Ltd. dba Internet Names Worldwide

There are certainly more manifestations that I have failed to list.

2004 [Brad](#) <--- write me with any feedback, corrections or missing data and info