

Mojahedin Elect Leadership Council

24 women to form the organization's highest decision-making body
2,600 elected to the new Central Council



Mrs. Maryam Rajavi (center) and the Mojahedin's Leadership Council, after the elections, at one of the organization's bases

In a gathering on August 10 of thousands of Mojahedin members, Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, Secretary General of the People's Mojahedin Organization and Deputy Commander in Chief of the National Liberation Army of Iran, announced the formation of the organization's Leadership Council. Twelve women were nominated as members and 12 as candidate members of the council.

Mrs. Massoud Rajavi, Leader of the Iranian Resistance and Commander in Chief of the National Liberation Army of Iran, addressed the meeting.

The Resistance's Leader congratulated the Mojahedin on the formation of the Leadership Council, stressing that the election heralds a democratic Iran after the overthrow of the mullahs' terrorist-religious dictatorship, where the Iranian people will enjoy the opportunity to elect their representatives free of any discrimination based

on gender, race or religion.

Officials and representatives from all the departments and directorates of the organization at the Iran-Iraq borderstrip, inside Iran, and in foreign countries participated in the 12-hour meeting at one of the Mojahedin's bases. The gathering followed several Central Council sessions in the preceding two months, during which the formation of the Leadership Council as the organization's supreme decision-making body had been proposed.

In the August 10 gathering, Mrs. Rajavi conducted an election during which the Mojahedin's members voted in favor of each woman nominated by the Central Council for a two-year term.

Fahimeh Arvani, Shahrzad Sadr, Ozra Alavi-Taleqani, Mahvash Sephiri, Hamideh Shahrokhi, Mahboubeh Jamshidi, Mahnaz Meymanat, Batool Rajaii, Shohreh Ainolyaqin, Sepideh Ibrahim, Badri Pour-

Tabbakh and Zahra Bakhshai are members, and Zohreh Shafaii, Zohreh Akhyani, Maryam Akharzadegan, Nassrin Parsyan, Heshmat Sariri, Sarvnaz Chitsaz, Sorayya Shahri, Soheyla Sadeq, Zohreh Banijamali, Zahra Rajabi, Kobra Tahmasbi, and Nikou Kha'efi candidate members of the Leadership Council.

Commenting on the council's formation, Mrs. Rajavi emphasized: Women's extensive participation in the Iranian Resistance and their rise to the leadership of the Mojahedin demonstrated that the movement is diametrically opposed to the mullahs' views on the question of women. It shows the Mojahedin have reached a high stage of maturity, cohesiveness and versatility, thrusting them another major stride forward in their quest to overthrow the Khomeini regime by the National Liberation Army and establish peace and democracy in their homeland. □

The Secretary General writing the final vote on each Council member on the board...



Maryam Rajavi: New Election Guarantees Victory

Thousands of Mojahedin members elected their Leadership Council in a gathering on August 10. Mrs. Maryam Rajavi spoke briefly and then conducted the election. Excerpts from her opening speech follow:

This gathering coincides with the anniversary of the Iranian Constitutional Revolution of 1906. Eighty-seven years ago, the people of Iran finally wrested their freedom from the despotic court. Unfortunately, the question of the leadership of the revolution had not been resolved and there was no organized force to guide the movement. Therefore, the Constitutional Revolution failed after a few years and once again the alliance of the shah and the mullahs took complete control.

This same bitter failure was repeated in 1953 despite all the efforts and sacrifices of Dr. Mohammad Mossadeq, the leader of the Iranian people's nationalist movement, and again in our anti-monarchic revolution in 1979...

Today, after 87 years, we see that fortunately these problems have been fundamentally resolved in the Iranian people's just Resistance against Khomeini's anti-human regime. To that extent, the victory of our people over the mullahs is guaranteed.

Since July 25, the anniversary of our Eternal Light operation, we have held consecutive sessions of the Central Council during which the proposal for the formation of

the Leadership Council was enthusiastically received. In these sessions, 12 of our Mojahedin women, our most competent officials who had held posts at the top of the organization for the past three to four years, with whom you have worked closely, were nominated for membership in the Leadership Council. Another 12 were nominated as candidate members. [The 24 head the Mojahedin's departments and directorates.]

Over the past 10-12 years, despite the compelling circumstances and restrictions, we have always made time and devoted energy every two years to our meetings to elect members of the Central Council and top officials. This year, in the course of examining the proposals of various departments and directorates, however, we reached the conclusion that our organizational structure no longer suited the extent and progress of our activities. The division of work and administration of affairs demanded that we elect 2,600 members to serve at the Central Council level (three times the number in

October 1991). As some of our officials said, it seemed as if our organization and its leadership body had to multiply. Of special significance was the startling performance of our women in taking charge of various tasks in the past four years. In any case, the discussions which had begun on electing officers in charge of various levels of work led to the question of a leadership body for our organization. So, for the past month, the major portion of our time and energy has been devoted to this matter. Finally, we reached the following conclusions:

Firstly, the formation of a leadership council and nominating and electing competent members and candidate members are essential. Secondly, in the same period, nearly 1,600 officials were nominated and elected as directors and deputy directors of directorates and departments, and their elections conducted.

But today, in this session, I want to conduct an election among you, who have participated along the width and breadth of the organization. I would like to take a direct vote from you on the need to form this leadership council, and on each and every one of the nominees for membership in it. If you have any comments or objections, please feel free to bring them up without any reservations. If a considerable number of persons oppose the measure, or even if only one person has a significant point to raise, I will use my authority as Secretary General and take up the matter for reevaluation. Obviously, you are free to nominate other officials, whom you believe are more qualified, so that the matter could be examined and evaluated. □

... as the Mojahedin vote for each nominee



Added Impetus to Women's Unique Role in Resistance

Massoud Rajavi speaks on the impact of the Mojahedin's new leadership

At the conclusion of the voting and Mrs. Rajavi's remarks, Mr. Massoud Rajavi, Leader of the Iranian Resistance and Commander in Chief of the National Liberation Army of Iran, addressed the gathering of thousands of Mojahedin members. Excerpts:

Sometimes certain tasks and actions, once accomplished, have more significance than any major military victory; indeed, they open the way for such victories. It has been four years since Maryam was elected as Secretary General of the Mojahedin in 1989. Is the underlying philosophy for that election clearer today? Yes, I can clearly see in your faces and in the faces of these [24] women that it will become even more clear the day we get to Tehran.

As far as we are concerned, we have to prepare as best as we can - individually and as a whole - for that final victory. On July 21, your commanders reported to me that, four years after Maryam laid the foundations of a basic and efficient training program for you, the NLA has now fortunately passed a major turning point, and is completely ready...

I was happy to hear this, because in the past four years, I always wondered what if we do not get to finish this training. Military experts all concur that transforming an infantry army into a fully mechanized army, takes at least 10 to 15 years. Therefore, this news was very gratifying. In the past four years, since the opening of the Eternal Light Military Academy, I do not know exactly how many years, but of at least 10 to 12 years work, has been accomplished there. I suppose because you worked hard, and you were highly motivated.

Also, from April to June, in little more than two months, four series of resistance operations were carried out inside Iran. In terms of the extent and also the number of casualties inflicted on the enemy, each of these operations was a heavy blow to the regime.

Within society, we have the organized



protests and demonstrations and we see their harmony with [the strategy and objectives of] the democratic alternative. We also witnessed the regime's scandalous failure in the elections we boycotted and the public followed our lead... Of course, each one of these subjects merits a lengthy discussion...

And, yes, your tanks and artillery are very powerful. You demonstrated that in your parade [October 18, 1991]. Now, you have passed a turning point and are more prepared than you were two years ago. You have a more extensive, more complex and better prepared system than you did then.

Yet beyond your military power, I seek the roots and source of your strength in your fine-tuned character and your steadfastness in the struggle for your country. This is especially important in the present circumstances, when you are not on your own soil and, therefore, the element of quality takes precedence over other things. If it were up to us, we want to go to Iran without bloodshed, but in reality, in our final battle, each one of your units must be prepared to knock out 10 battalions of the enemy's *Pasdaran* [Revolutionary Guards].

Today, all of you unanimously turned a page in history. Your election of the Leadership Council has set a giant new ideological engine in motion, in diametric opposition to the mullahs' evil mentality, releasing the enormous potential of our country's

women for the Resistance and struggle against the anti-human Khomeini regime.

You are also waging war in the political and military arenas... and you are involved in a psychological warfare. The enemy wants to pretend that you have been routed and annihilated... Just turn the pages of the regime's newspapers to find out how many foolish lies they fabricate every day about you. For example, one day they say the people of Iraq killed seven members of the Mojahedin, the next day they increase the number to 17. The mullahs wage this disinformation campaign because they need to boost the morale of their forces. Another time they said the Mojahedin had been wiped out! Last year, one of their agents said on television that he had seen with his own eyes that Maryam Rajavi and Fahimeh Arvani [Deputy Secretary General] had been wounded in the regime's bombardment of our basecamp, and that 1,500 of us had been killed. The next day, of course, they had to more or less take back their words.

Indeed, what is the basis of your war with "Khomeini" and the mullahs? Were you politically motivated in your initial uprising? Were you after power and government? No! In those very first days, we told Khomeini that he and his clique are backward and anti-democratic, that they tarnish the images of Iran and Islam... Khomeini said, "Islamic revolution!"; we said, "democratic Islam." He jeered and screamed anti-imperialist slogans, but the Mojahedin demanded "freedom," "freedom for the nation!" Khomeini said, "I promote Islam."; we said, "No, you are the prime enemy of Islam." He called his war-mongering "sacred defense"; we called it an "anti-patriotic war." And finally we are saying that we want to destroy the roots of the Khomeini regime and its evil ideology of suppression and dual oppression of women.

We are waging an all-out war against Khomeini. Therefore, we must wage an unrelenting war on the source, not only against Khomeini's organs and instruments of suppression, but on the world of ignorance and bondage, on the world of oppression and suppression, on the history of deception, demagoguery, and slavery, which are all crystallized in and symbolized by Khomeini's regime. We are deeply involved in an all-out war to uproot Khomeini, as a person, as a regime, as a

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WOMEN UNDER KHOMEINI REGIME

Bearing Brunt of Oppression

One of the hallmarks of the regime ruling Iran is black clad women, and rightly so. Although no sector of Iranian society is immune to the mullahs' inhuman oppression, the most repulsive of their conduct is directed at women. Discrimination, degrading treatment and numerous political and social restrictions and barriers for women as the embodiments of "sin" form the cornerstone of the mullahs' "religious" dictatorship, and are key to its survival.

In the enforcement of the compulsory *hejab* (dress code), systematic crackdowns on "*bad-hejabi*," and the flogging and stoning of women in public, the mullahs seek to impose their dominance over all social relationships. It is only under such brutal conditions that they can enchain an entire nation and cover up their crimes and treachery.

In the political prisons, again the most horrifying crimes are committed against Mojahedin women. Pregnant women, elderly mothers and teenage girls are tortured and executed. Children are tortured in front of their mothers. Mutilation, burning alive and rape are but a few examples of the ferocious practices of Iran's rulers.

The mullahs have only to open their mouths and say something about women to expose their backward nature. "Equality does not take justice into account... Justice does not mean that all laws should be the same for women and men," said Rafsanjani, the mullahs' president. "The differences in height, sturdiness, voice, growth, muscle quality and body strength in men and women show that men are stronger and more capable in all these fields... Men's brains are larger... Men incline toward reasoning and rationalism while women basically tend to be emotional."

The head of the Supreme Court, Mullah Morteza Moqtada'i, has enumerated the rights of women: "Ladies may appear in public for shopping or on business provided they observe the restrictions on dress, social contact and conversation. This means that they must be covered and not speak provocatively in conversations with men."

Khomeini was even more straightforward: "It is enough for women to step into a government office to paralyze the system... If women are included in any system, they create disorder."

This mentality, once in power, obviously brings about an assortment of social restrictions for women, as it did in Iran. In March 1979 - less than a month after the victory of a revolution whose goals included democracy and freedom from torture and imprisonment for one's beliefs - the order for compulsory veiling was formally issued with the humiliating motto of "either the veil or a hit on the head!" Subsequently women who appeared in public without the prescribed dress were punished with 74 lashes of the whip.

In April 1979, the Khomeini regime refused diplomas to female graduates of law who had finished their on-the-job training; women were thus officially deprived of their right to rule or serve as judges. In October that year, the cabinet ratified a bill according to which women needed their husbands' permission for employment. In later years, the same restrictions were applied to women's right to pursue higher education abroad. On August 1 of this year, the mullahs' parliament prohibited travel to the

More than a decade after Khomeini's regime took power, the female population has grown by 14 million, but women's employment has dropped from 1.2 million in 1977 to 975,000 (i.e. 6% of the female population) in

1987. In the past six years, unemployment and poverty have spread at a delirious rate, and restrictive laws and various other pressures have confined more and more women to their homes.

Official orders authorize government agents to openly and secretly keep tabs on women's manner of dress, contacts, physical gestures, and conversations in all government and private offices. According to law, "It is a violation of administrative laws for female employees or the wives of government employees to appear in public improperly veiled." Peep holes in the doors of private and foreign companies are also banned because they would thwart agents making surprise raids to arrest mal-veiled women.

This June, Rafsanjani issued a circular which read in part: "The apparel of all employees and clients must comply with the Islamic code. Officials responsible for enforcing this order should use great care... taking decisive measures against violators in accordance with the law on administra-

In the systematic crackdowns on "bad-hejabi", and the flogging and stoning of women in public, the mullahs seek to enchain the entire nation under brutal conditions

West by unmarried female medical students seeking to specialize in their fields.

Inside the country, women are banned from 91 fields of college studies, including electrical engineering, transportation, soil engineering, metallurgy, dentistry, and economics.

As for employment, men have priority over women. When the order for compulsory veiling was initially issued and women's employment became conditional on their compliance, at least 100,000 women were expelled from their jobs. Another 40,000 female teachers at boys schools were dismissed as "*persona non grata*". On April 20 of this year, Majlis deputies introduced a bill proposing a reduction in women's working hours, entitling them to only part-time employment. According to statistics published by the United Nations, Iran ranks 108th in women's employment among 110 countries studied.

tive violations. The ministers are directly responsible for the enforcement of this order. To check on the exact implementation of this circular, inspectors from the ministry of interior will be dispatched to all executive organs."

So much for education and employment. The only places left for women are the stores and public areas where they shop. But there too, women are under constant surveillance lest the "veil" of repression slide back a little bit!

As a general rule, shops, taxis, stores, government offices, and all other centers are forbidden to serve "*bad-hejab*" women. Businesses that breach the rules are closed down.

The mullahs' regime has systematically launched one crackdown after another on women, arresting and torturing thousands on the pretext of combating bad-veiling, crusading against

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Excerpts from Mrs. Rajavi's brief remarks after the election of the Mojahedin's Leadership Council:

Let me say how jubilant, proud, and honored I feel today. The Mojahedin have turned a page in history, in a historic achievement... I can clearly see that this line of women at the forefront, and you men and women (members of the Mojahedin) with them, bringing the message of progress, prosperity and liberty to the people of Iran.

After 15 years of struggle, hardship and suffering, the generation that Massoud Rajavi led to an all-out confrontation with Khomeini's medieval ideology has now reached maturity. Never in the past have the ranks of this Resistance been so resolute, so replete with energy, and so iron-willed.

To you and your growing number belongs the future. The day is not far when your ranks will extend to Tehran. We can and must shatter the world of ignorance and oppression, the chains and bondage of Khomeini's mullahs, and deliver the world from their shameful presence.

Yes, we can and we must!



The Women Who Lead the Mojahedin

Born in 1960, **Shahrazad Sadr** finished her secondary education at Tehran's Jeanne d'Arc high school and went to France to continue her studies. As the anti-monarchic revolution reached its climax, she returned to Iran to join the Mojahedin.

After the shah's overthrow, Mrs. Sadr was initially active in the foreign relations section of the Mojahedin. With the beginning of the Iranian people's just Resistance against the mullahs' regime on June 20, 1981, Mrs. Sadr shouldered heavy responsibilities as an official of the organization.

Following her transfer abroad in 1983, Mrs. Sadr resumed her activities in the Mojahedin's international relations department in Paris, working to expose the Khomeini regime's crimes and enlist support for the Resistance. She met with many political dignitaries and party officials in Europe and headed the Mojahedin's delegation to the Assembly of Western European Union in 1984.

In 1985, she became a member of the organization's Executive Committee and was appointed Mrs. Rajavi's Chief of Staff. She also

served for a period as the Mojahedin's central headquarters Chief of Staff.

Shahrazad Sadr has a 13-year-old daughter.

Ozra Alavi-Taleqani was born 39 years ago to a religious and politically active family in Tehran. Her father was arrested and imprisoned several times under the shah. She finished her high school in Tehran and continued her studies in chemical engineering at Sharif University of Technology.

Mrs. Taleqani is a veteran Mojahedin member, serving in the organization since the early 1970's. When a communist coup in those years led to the organization's disintegration, she stood firm against the plotters and actively worked to expose them. She lived underground until the 1979 revolution.

Mrs. Taleqani served in the Mojahedin's labor section, where she was involved in producing the organization's publication for workers, and later in the government employees division. She was a Mojahedin candidate in Iran's first post-revolution parliamentary elections.

After the arrest and execution of her husband, Ahmad Kalali, Mrs. Taleqani was transferred abroad, where she took charge of the organization's general services department. She was elected to the Executive Committee in 1985.

In 1986 when Iranian Resistance Leader Massoud Rajavi left France for the Iran-Iraq frontier to form the National Liberation Army, Mrs. Taleqani was transferred to the military section as a commander of an all-female brigade. She played an active role in the formation of the brigades and training of women recruits. The NLA's women first took part in military operations under her command in the Shining Sun operation, March 1988.

Her brigade was one of the forward units in the NLA's largest operation, Eternal Light, in July 1988, and launched several daring offensives against Khomeini's Guards. In that offensive, the NLA thrust 170 km deep into Iran, liberating two towns and inflicting some 55,000 casualties on the mullahs' regime.

Mrs. Taleqani was commander of the

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NLA's Fourth Command in Operation Pearl in March 1991 when the mullahs' regime took advantage of the post-Persian Gulf War circumstances to dispatch its *Pasdaran* [Revolutionary Guards] to Iraq to destroy the NLA. Mrs. Taleqani's forces launched some of the key counterattacks and routed a large number of the Guards.

Presently, Mrs. Taleqani is the NLA's Chief of Staff.

Mahvash Sepehri was born in 1956 in Sanandaj, Iranian Kurdistan. She has a B.A. in mathematics from the School of Sciences.

Mrs. Sepehri began her political career in 1975 as a student activist. On the eve of the 1979 revolution, she began working with the Mojahedin in Kermanshah, and was soon appointed an official of the social section and served in Sanandaj and Paveh.

In June 1981, she took charge of logistics for the operational units in Kurdistan. In the meantime, the Khomeini regime's agents arrested her father and two sisters and imprisoned them for four years. Her husband, Jalal Mir Mohammad Ali, was executed in February 1982.

From 1982-87, she served in various posts, among them supplies' manager for operational teams in Kurdistan, and in the recruitment department. For some time, she commanded the operational teams in southern Kurdistan.

After the NLA's formation in 1987, Mrs. Sepehri held various posts within the command hierarchy. In Operation Eternal Light in July 1988, she was a commander of logistics.

In the Pearl operation in March 1990, she commanded the army's Fifth Command. Next she headed the training directorate. Currently, she is the NLA's Deputy Chief of Staff for Administration.

Mrs. Sepehri has an 11-year-old daughter.

Hamideh Shahrokhi was born in 1957 in Tehran. She studied mechanical engineering in the College of Science and Technology.

She first became acquainted with the Mojahedin in the 1970's when some of her relatives were arrested by the shah's secret police, SAVAK. She established contact with the organization in 1975.

Mrs. Shahrokhi actively participated in the antimonicarchic revolution. Immediately afterwards, she began working in the Mojahedin's different centers, and served in the social section, where she was involved with the organization of students and the political affairs of Tehran's high schools.

When the nationwide Resistance began in June 1981, she worked in some of the key bases of the Mojahedin. Once the regime attacked these bases, she lost contact with the organization. Her husband was killed in these clashes.

Before long, she reestablished contact with the organization. In 1983, she went to Kurdistan and subsequently abroad. Mrs. Shahrokhi was one of the first officials in charge of the Union of Moslem Iranian Students Societies Outside Iran, Supporters of the People's Mojahedin Organization.

In 1984, Mrs. Shahrokhi was transferred to Kurdistan, to the training base for teams operating inside Iran. In 1986, she was elected to the Executive Committee and became head of logistics at one of the NLA's garrisons. In early 1988, she successively commanded the ordnance, communications and transportation sections of the NLA's Logistics Command.

Mrs. Shahrokhi commanded one of the NLA's combat brigades in Operation Eternal Light in July 1988. In 1989, she was appointed deputy commander and subsequently commander of the NLA's Third Command. She served in



Fahimeh Arvani



Shahrzad Sadr



Ozra Alavi-Taleqani



Mahvash Sepehri



Hamideh Shahrokhi



Mahboubeh Jamshidi

Mrs. Arvani, 33, was elected Deputy Secretary General of the Mojahedin in 1991, prior to which she was Chief of Staff of the National Liberation Army

this capacity during Operation Pearl in 1991.

Mrs. Shahrokhi's latest post has been the NLA's Deputy Chief of Staff for Special Fields and Training.

One of the first female commanders of the NLA, **Mahboubeh Jamshidi** was born 36 years ago in Tehran. On the eve of the antimonicarchic revolution, she joined the Mojahedin on a full-time basis.

Because of her talent in military fields, she was transferred to the Mojahedin's security department in June 1981. She proved her mettle directing the activities and operations of resistance cells in various Iranian cities, as well as recruiting forces for dispatch to the border bases.

In the winter of 1986, Mrs. Jamshidi was transferred to the Mojahedin's bases at the frontier. In 1987, she became commander of one of the NLA's first women brigades. In subsequent preparations for the Shining Sun, Forty Stars, and Eternal Light operations, she was recognized as one of the best qualified commanders of the National Liberation Army of Iran.

Mrs. Jamshidi presently is the NLA's Senior Deputy Chief of Staff and serves as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence and Operations.

Mahboubeh Jamshidi has a 10-year-old daughter. Her sister, Zohreh, was executed by the Khomeini regime.

Mahnaz Maymanat was born in 1959 in Tehran. She was a student in the School of Agriculture in Karaj (west of Tehran) where she became acquainted with the Mojahedin.

Mrs. Maymanat began working full time with the Mojahedin after the victory of antimonicarchic revolution and served in the central security department as well as the military section.

After June 1981, she continued her activities in the Mojahedin bases. Upon her transfer abroad, Mrs. Maymanat served in the administrative and legal affairs sections and the central headquarters. In 1986, she was assigned to serve at the bases located on the Iran-Iraq borderstrip.

In 1989, Mrs. Maymanat was elected to the Executive Committee and in 1991 she took charge of the Mojahedin's central headquarters.

Her brother, Massoud, was killed under torture by the regime's agents in 1981. Her mother, Akhtar Mowlavi, and her husband, Mohammad Massoumi, one of the NLA's brigade commanders, were killed in action in the Eternal Light operation in July 1988.

Batool Rajaii was born in 1953 in Amol, northern Iran. Her father was a supporter of Dr. Mohammad Mossadeq, Iran's nationalist leader.

Mrs. Rajaii received her B.S. in soil engineering from the School of Agriculture in Karaj, where she became politically active.

After the victory of the 1979 revolution, she worked with the Mojahedin's headquarters in Amol, and served in the teachers and students sections. Meanwhile, she was elected a member of the City Council in Amol's public elections.

Her husband, Mehdi Abouei, was a popular figure in Amol and the Mojahedin's candidate for parliament from this city. He was executed after June 20, 1981.

In the following years, Mrs. Rajaii served in the

Mojahedin branches in Pakistan and France and was subsequently transferred to the National Liberation Army. In 1990, she was elected an Executive Committee member. In the Eternal Light operation in July 1988, she was in charge of logistics, weapons procurement and ordnance.

After extensive theoretical and practical training in recent years, during which she gained experience in various command levels, Mrs. Rajai was appointed to the NLA's General Command in 1992.

Born in 1957 in Isfahan, **Shohreh Ainolyaqin** was a student in metallurgical engineering at Sharif University of Technology, where she began her political activities in 1977.

On the eve of the 1979 revolution, she became an activist and an official in charge of the Moslem Students Society (supporters of the Mojahedin) at SUT. After the revolution, she was elected to Tehran's eastern district society.

From 1981-83, she shouldered heavy responsibilities in the Mojahedin resistance's bases, after which she was transferred abroad and served as an official in charge of the Mojahedin's branch in Germany. Next, she was transferred to the National Liberation Army of Iran. In the Eternal Light operation in July 1988, she was a combat brigade commander.

In 1989, she was elected to the Executive Committee and commanded, among others, logistics, artillery, and combat units. In Operation Pearl in March 1991, she commanded a combat unit.

In 1992, Mrs. Ainolyaqin was appointed to the NLA's General Command.

Sepideh Ibrahim was born 33 years ago in Tehran. She was a student of medicine at Tehran's Melli University, subsequently leaving for the U.S. to continue her studies, where she became acquainted with the Mojahedin.

After the fall of the shah's regime, she began working full-time with the Moslem Iranian Students Societies supporting the Mojahedin in the United States.

In 1985, she was transferred to the Iran-Iraq border-strip. For three years, she served in the general services, training and medical departments, among others. In spring 1988, she was transferred to a combat unit.

Mrs. Ibrahim proved her competence as commander of a mechanized unit, and as deputy commander and commander of combat units. Her forces dealt heavy blows to the mullahs' regime's Guards in Operation Pearl in spring 1991.

She was appointed to the NLA's General Command in 1992. She has a nine-year-old son.

Born in 1963 in Isfahan, **Badri Pour-Tabbakh** was a student of physics at the University of Isfahan. She became affiliated with the Mojahedin in 1979 through her brother, Mostafa, who was executed in 1981 by the Khomeini regime.

In the two and a half years following the overthrow of the shah, when the Mojahedin waged a peaceful political campaign opposing the mullahs' policies, Mrs. Pour-Tabbakh headed various Mojahedin sections dealing with the students or supporter associations in various districts of Isfahan.

After June 1981, she ran the affairs of various resistance bases in Isfahan, resolving their security problems and providing the operational requirements of the combatants.

Later, she was transferred to the organization's



Mahnaz Maymanat



Batool Rajai



Shohreh Ainolyaqin



Sepideh Ibrahim



Badri Pour-Tabbakh



Zahra Bakhshaii

recruitment and operations section. During the Eternal Light operation in July 1988, she served in the central command headquarters.

Mrs. Pour-Tabbakh was appointed head of the Mojahedin's branches in Turkey in 1988 and in Germany in 1990. Then she took charge of the branch in the United States. Presently, Mrs. Pour-Tabbakh is Director of the Mojahedin's Political Organization Outside Iran which consists of the networks of Mojahedin supporters abroad.

Zahra Bakhshaii was born in 1961 in Golpaygan (Isfahan Province) and earned her diploma in natural sciences. She began her political activities at the height of the anti-shah movement in 1979 and joined the Mojahedin after the victory of the revolution, distributing the organization's literature and exposing the policies of the Khomeini regime.

After June 1981, she was arrested and imprisoned for a year, during which she was tortured. Her brother, Nassrollah, was executed.

In 1983, she left the country upon her release from prison. For one year, she worked with the Mojahedin in Turkey, and was subsequently sent to Germany. Until 1988, when she was transferred to the National Liberation Army, Mrs. Bakhshaii served as an official in charge of the Mojahedin's branches in Germany and Sweden.

In 1989, Mrs. Bakhshaii was again sent to Turkey and then to Pakistan. Upon her return, she was elected to the Executive Committee and commanded one of the NLA units which participated in the Pearl operation, in spring 1991.

Mrs. Bakhshaii is presently a member of the NLA's General Command.

Zohreh Shafaii was born in 1961 in Isfahan. She was a student of economics when she started working with the Mojahedin after the 1979 revolution.

The Shafaii family was one of the most renowned families supporting the Mojahedin. Her father (Dr. Morteza Shafaii), mother, sister, brother-in-law, and two brothers were executed by Khomeini's Guards. In 1982, she lost contact with the Mojahedin for some time, but managed to reunite with the organization.

Mrs. Shafaii served in the NLA's artillery units during the Shining Sun operation. In Forty Stars, she was assigned to logistics. In the Eternal Light operation, she was commander of an artillery platoon.

In 1989, she was elected to the Executive Committee and took command of a combat unit in the National Liberation Army. She also served as Chief of Staff of the Central Command Headquarters.

Zohreh Akhyani was born in 1963 in Shahrood. Her full-time work with the Mojahedin dates back to 1979, when she started working at the organization's headquarters at that city. With the beginning of the Resistance, she led the military operations in Shahrood, which dealt heavy blows to the regime.

After the formation of the National Liberation Army in 1987, she began her work at the NLA's logistics and combat support units. In various military operations, she provided the military needs of the fronts. She was elected to the Executive Committee in 1989.

Between 1989-1992, Mrs. Akhyani was an NLA commander. Presently, she is member of the NLA's General Command and is Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics.

She has a 10-year-old daughter.

Maryam Akbarzadegan was born in 1963 in Tehran.

Her father, Samad Akbarzadegan, was a well-known bazaar merchant in Tabriz and Tehran.

She became acquainted with the Mojahedin at an early age and participated in the activities of the families of political prisoners. After the victory of the 1979 revolution, she distributed the Mojahedin's literature. For some time, she was in charge of the council of student supporters of the Mojahedin at Tehran's Kharazmi high school.

From 1985-1992, she served as the chief political editor of "Voice of Mojahed" radio and later took charge of the security detail for the leadership of the Iranian Resistance.

In 1990, she was elected to the Executive Committee and is presently Director of the Mojahedin's external relations department.

Mrs. Akbarzadegan's brother, Mohammad, was killed in action in Tehran in 1981. Her father and her husband, Mohammad Ali Khababani, were killed in action in the Eternal Light operation in July 1988.

Nassrin Parsyan was born in 1960 in Tabriz. She was a student of medical technology at the University of Tabriz. Her first acquaintance with the Mojahedin dates back to her college years in 1976.

In March 1979, she began working full-time with the organization's headquarters in Tabriz. After the beginning of the Iranian Resistance, she was in charge of coordinated the Resistance's operations in various provinces.

In 1982, she was transferred to the Armed Forces section where she commanded the pro-Mojahedin Iranian Army personnel carrying out operations in Iran.

Mrs. Parsyan was dispatched to the Iran-Iraq border-strip in 1985, where she was logistics commander for one of the combat units. In 1988, she was commander of a women's platoon and demonstrated much competence in the Forty Stars operation in June 1988. In the Eternal Light operation, she was a battalion commander.

Mrs. Parsyan has held various posts in the National Liberation Army including in the general services department, communications, airborne and artillery.

Mrs. Parsyan was elected to the Mojahedin Executive Committee in 1992 and served in the personnel directorate. Presently, she is in charge of recruits' admissions to the National Liberation Army.

Mrs. Parsyan has an 11-year-old son.

Heshmat Sariri was born in 1957 in Tehran. She left the country in 1977 to continue her college education in the United States. She began her political activities while a university student.

After the victory of the antimonarchic revolution, Mrs. Sariri joined the student supporters of the Mojahedin in Washington, D.C. She was in charge of the foreign relations committee in the Moslem Iranian Students Society. She was later transferred to Los Angeles and served in the MISS publicity committee. She was again transferred, to Texas, and took charge of the MISS's foreign relations committee in the southern U.S.

In 1985, Mrs. Sariri went to the border bases, where she served as the anchorwoman for "Voice of Mojahed" radio, and held various posts in production and broadcasting. She subsequently became director of the radio's broadcasting and production section. She also served as deputy to the technical department and was in charge of the radio's engineering unit.

Mrs. Sariri was elected to the Executive Committee in 1992. Her latest post before being elected to the Leader-



Zohreh Shafai



Zohreh Akhyani



Maryam Akbarzadegan



Nassrin Parsyan



Heshmat Sariri



Sarvnaz Chitsaz

ship Council was Director General of "Voice of Mojahed" radio.

Sarvnaz Chitsaz was born in 1957 in Tehran. She was a student of political science at Iowa State University in the U.S.

After the 1979 revolution, she joined the student supporters of the Mojahedin in the United States and began working with the Moslem Iranian Students Societies. From 1981-84, she was a member of the political committee of MISS in Iowa, and was subsequently transferred to the border bases. She served in the external relations department of the National Liberation Army of Iran.

In 1986, Mrs. Chitsaz was transferred to the international relations department and served in various divisions. For some time, she was Director of the Mojahedin's news agency. She was then transferred to Geneva and served in the international organizations division.

Mrs. Chitsaz also participated in the Forty Stars and Eternal Light operations in 1988. In the Pearl operation in spring 1991, she served in the logistical support section and was in charge of ordnance at various fronts. She returned to the international relations department in summer 1991.

Mrs. Chitsaz represented the Mojahedin in the Scandinavian countries and then became deputy for European countries. Her latest post before being elected to the Leadership Council was Director of the central headquarters of the Mojahedin's international relations department.

Mrs. Chitsaz has an 11-year-old son.

Sorayya Shahri was born in 1958 in Khorramshahr, southern Iran. She studied economics at Tehran University.

Mrs. Shahri began her political activities in 1979 with the Moslem Students Society at Tehran University. Later, she was transferred to the teachers section.

Mrs. Shahri played an important role in resolving the problems of the Mojahedin's operational bases after the beginning of the Iranian Resistance. She was transferred abroad in 1982 and served in the Union of Moslem Iranian Students Societies Outside Iran. For some time, she was in charge of the Mojahedin's branch in Britain, then she took charge of the Germany branch.

Mrs. Shahri was elected to the Executive Committee in 1986, and transferred to the border bases the same year. In 1987-88, she was commander of logistics for the National Liberation Army of Iran and served in that capacity in the Shining Sun, Forty Stars, and Eternal Light operations. The following year she took charge of one of the NLA commands.

In 1989, Mrs. Shahri served as director of the public relations and international relations departments. In 1990, she went back to the NLA. Presently, she is Chief of the Mojahedin's Command Headquarters inside Iran.

Mrs. Shahri's husband, Reza Hafibaradaran, was killed by the Khomeini regime in 1986.

Sohayla Sadeq was born in 1959 in Tehran. Her elder brother, Nasser Sadeq, a member of the Mojahedin's Central Committee, was executed by the shah's regime in 1972. Through him Sohayla became acquainted with the Mojahedin and began her political activities.

She was arrested by the shah's secret police in 1973 and remained imprisoned until 1976.

In the course of the 1979 revolution, she used her extensive contacts within the families of political prisoners and played an important role in the uprisings.

After the 1979 revolution, Mrs. Sadeq was an official of the students division within the social section of the organization. For some time, she served on the editorial board of the publication *Revolution's Generation*.

Mrs. Sadeq was transferred to Kurdistan in June 1981 and served on the editorial board of "Voice of Mojahed" radio. From 1982-84, she was a member of the editorial board of *Mojahed*, the organization's official publication.

One of the most valuable services of Mrs. Sadeq in this period was as head of the Center for Research on the Martyrs and Prisoners of the Iranian Resistance. With thousands of hours of work, her research teams published the List of Victims of Executions by the Khomeini Regime in several editions, providing irrefutable evidence exposing the crimes of the Khomeini regime on the international level.

Mrs. Sadeq was elected to the Executive Committee in 1985. She also headed the publicity department for some time. Since June 1991, Mrs. Sadeq has been in charge of the personnel directorate of the National Liberation Army of Iran.

Hassan Sadeq, her other brother, was killed by the Guards in May 1982. Her cousins, Giti and Mehrdad Sadeq, were executed by the Khomeini regime.

Zohreh Banijamali was born in 1957 in Arak. In 1975, she went to Tehran and began her studies in medicine at Melli University.

She became acquainted with the Mojahedin during her high school years through reading the biographies and last defenses of the organization's members executed by the shah's regime.

After the 1979 revolution, she began working full-time with the pro-Mojahedin Moslem Students Society. She also served in the Mojahedin's government employees section. With the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war, she was dispatched to the war zone in Ahwaz to provide medical assistance to the war refugees.

With the onset of the Resistance, she undertook various posts in the Resistance's bases. In summer 1982, she was transferred abroad and held different posts in the Mojahedin's branches in Italy, Britain, France and Scandinavia. In mid-1986, she was transferred to the border and took charge of the elementary and secondary schools for the children of the Resistance's combatants.

Mrs. Banijamali was elected to the Executive Committee in 1987 and served in the Logistics Command of the National Liberation Army, and in the command headquarters of one of the garrisons. She was also chief of training, commander of a garrison and logistics officer. Mrs. Banijamali's last post was head of the finance and purchasing department within the NLA's administrative directorate.

Zahra Rajabi was born in 1957 in Tehran and studied architecture at Tehran's Melli University. She began her political activities in the anti-shah student movement in 1977 and joined the Mojahedin after the victory of the 1979 revolution. Mrs. Rajabi was an official of the government employees division within the social section.

After June 1981, she served in the Mojahedin's intelligence department and commanded one of the Resistance bases at the height of the armed confrontations with the regime's Guards. Her husband, Mohammad Borqei, was killed in action. She was subsequently transferred abroad and took charge of the administrative and legal affairs of the organization in France.

Mrs. Rajabi was elected to the Executive Committee in 1986 and dispatched to the border region where she



Sorayya Shahri



Sohayla Sadeq



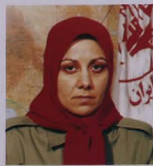
Zohreh Banijamali



Zahra Rajabi



Kobra Tahmasbi



Nikoo Kha'efi

served as a logistics commander in the National Liberation Army. She was a combat brigade commander in the Eternal Light operation. In the following years, she commanded the NLA's Seventh Command and then the NLA's Combat Engineering.

Mrs. Rajabi was transferred to the Mojahedin's political organization outside Iran in 1991. Before being elected to the Leadership Council, she was director of the central headquarters of the Mojahedin's political organization outside Iran.

Kobra Tahmasbi was born in 1956 in Tehran. She entered Tehran's Teachers Training College and got her diploma in linguistics. She continued her studies in metallurgical engineering in Sharif University of Technology.

In the early 1970's, she became acquainted with the Mojahedin. In 1976, she formed a team of Mojahedin supporters and distributed the organization's publications and actively participated in the anti-shah demonstrations in 1977-78.

After the 1979 revolution, she started her full-time activities with the Mojahedin in the Moslem Students Society and served in the teachers' division.

In June 1981, she went to the Resistance's bases in Gilan, northern Iran, and resolved problems relating to the bases and network of the Mojahedin activists in Gilan's forests. In 1982, she headed the social section's recruitment division in Azarbaijan. Next, she was transferred abroad.

In the publicity department, she served as managing editor for *Mojahed* and afterwards as chief social affairs editor for "Voice of Mojahed" radio. In 1988, Mrs. Tahmasbi was transferred to the NLA as commander of a combat unit.

In 1989, she became commander of the NLA's Sixth Command. In the Pearl operation in spring 1991, she commanded one of the NLA's decisive offensives. The forces under her command routed thousands of the Khomeini regime's Guards Corps who had infiltrated Iraq to surround the NLA's garrisons.

Mrs. Tahmasbi was the NLA's Deputy Chief of Staff for Special Fields before being elected to the Leadership Council. She has a nine-year-old daughter.

Nikoo Kha'efi was born in 1959 in Mashhad and continued her college education in the city's Nursing School. After the 1979 revolution, she began working full-time with the medical section of the Mojahedin's branch in Mashhad. Early in 1980, she was in charge of the section dealing with women in contact with the Mojahedin in various districts. In March 1981, Mrs. Kha'efi was transferred to the branch in Rasht.

After June 1981, she was transferred to Mazandaran Province, northern Iran, and took charge of the management and security of the Mojahedin's bases. In 1982, she was transferred to Kurdistan and served in the combat bases.

In 1987, Mrs. Kha'efi became deputy commander of an NLA combat unit. In 1989, she was elected to the Executive Committee.

Mrs. Kha'efi has also been in charge of air defense training, including courses on 23mm anti-aircraft guns. During the Pearl operation in 1991, her forces repelled the enemy's Guards from one of the border regions. She was commander of several NLA garrisons after the Pearl operation. She also served as commander of logistics at Ashraf basecamp and subsequently took charge of the NLA's construction projects and engineering.

Mrs. Kha'efi has an 11-year-old son. □

Added Impetus To Women's Role

Continued from page 3

culture, and as the embodiment of the history of ignorance and backwardness in our country.

We have to fight the culture of retrogression and backwardness. We cannot lead our nation towards progress, nor can we overthrow the ruling dictatorship, without promoting a culture counter to that of the mullahs. Such an undertaking would complement our political and military confrontation.

Your final vote today, was a historical moment. When you applauded the proliferation of leaders like Maryam Rajavi in the Leadership Council, I heard the bones of

In the prevailing culture of ignorance and backwardness, women are always the symbols of weakness, instability and debility. As the leaders of the ruling clerical regime put it, woman symbolizes lack of wisdom and power, she is a slave of her emotions, with transient, baseless and superficial feelings.

And how wonderful that among the Mojahedin, the highest military commanders, the best political officers, and the officials who turn the wheels of the movement, shouldering the heaviest responsibilities in the life-and-death battle to overthrow the ruling religious dictatorship, are so meaningfully and promisingly our women.

- From Massoud Rajavi's address to a Central Council meeting

Khomeinism shatter. May today's truth glow tomorrow as this reality spreads through the field of our face-to-face final battle with the ruling clerics.

Once again, on your behalf, I congratulate Maryam on the election of the Leadership Council and formation of this new organ of leadership for the Mojahedin. □

Bearing Brunt of Oppression

Continued from page 4

corruption, campaigning to promote virtue and forbid vice, etc., to create a reign of terror and strengthen its grip on power. The latest such campaign, in June 1993, met with extensive public defiance. The crackdown was described as the "most repressive since the mid-1980's." Checkpoints were set up all over cities, hundreds of shops and parks closed down, and thousands of women arrested, among them even non-Iranians and members of foreign diplomatic corps.

The medieval repression has had harrowing repercussions. Begging, prostitution and addiction plague the society. Perhaps the most tragic symptom is suicide, taking a specially high toll on women.

On September 29, 1992, *Salam* daily published a report on the high rate of suicide in the western province of Ilam (population of 400,000). "In the past 14 months, March 1991 through June 1992, a total of 139 persons have committed suicide in Ilam. Some 120 of them have died.... The large number of women is noteworthy. The available statistics indicate that twice as many women commit suicide as men, indicative of the more critical situation of women," it wrote.

Several months later, the same newspaper wrote on January 30: "The problem of suicide, previously affecting Ilam and its neighboring cities, has recently spread

north to some cities of Mazandaran. This problem has become prevalent in Gorgan, too, where our reporter has expressed concern...."

"In recent months, especially in the past two months, there has been an unprecedented rise in suicides in Ardebil [north-western Iran]."

A confidential report to the regime's highest authorities quotes the nurses' supervisor in a northern Tehran hospital, the capital's only burn unit, as saying: "In a 24-hour period we use 800 sheets for women who set themselves afire and we have to sterilize the same sheets again for the new cases." More than 95% of the victims brought to this hospital are from the poor southern districts, and the figure applies only to the small number of families who can pay for a cab to take their victim to the city's north, a luxury which few can afford.

In the same internal report, a member of the Supreme Council for the Cultural Revolution is quoted as saying: "One of the issues which enrages women is Article 1133 of the Civil Law, which states that men have the right to divorce their wives without any reason, in any form and at any time. This law does not leave any solution for women and consequently, we witness more and more women setting fire to themselves to escape from the pressure they are subjected to." Under the mullahs' law, women do not enjoy the right to divorce.

The confidential report cites family differences, wife-beating, the absence of laws to protect women, men's freedom to contract multiple marriages, compulsory marriages of divorced women and girls, low marriage age, and the pressures on women who are married to the Guards and soldiers who served in the eight-year war with Iraq and who suffer from psychological disorders, as the reasons for suicide among women. The following passages from the confidential report shed light on the depth of the tragedy:

"Lower class women say their major problem is balancing the family budget. One of the hospitalized women said she was sick and tired of selling her beef coupons to buy potatoes. Another said: 'I hate standing in long lines to shop for our needs. One has to stand in long lines for everything, I cannot stand it any longer.'

"The problem is different for affluent women. Physicians say the reason for the suicides of most women in this class is their deprivation of individual freedoms.

"Lack of jobs or financial support for widows is the next reason for women's suicide. In fact, most Iranian women have no source of income after the death of their husbands or divorce. If they have a child, life becomes much more difficult. When a society does not provide any opportunity for employment and a healthy life for such a person, she has to remarry and if this is not possible, prostitution or suicide are her only ways out."

□

World Press Reports

The election of the Mojahedin's Leadership Council was reported worldwide. Selected reports follow:

REUTERS, AUGUST 11

All-Woman Council to Lead Iran Opposition Group

The Iranian opposition group the Mujahideen Khalq said on Wednesday it had chosen an all-woman council to lead its fight to overthrow the Iranian government.

"Thousands" of Mujahideen members meeting at one of their bases in Iraq on Tuesday chose 12 women as members of a newly created Leadership Council, the group's "supreme decision-making body", it said in a statement sent to Reuters in Cyprus.

Twelve other women were chosen as alternate members. All 24 are aged between 30 and 40 and many are commanders of the Mujahideen's tank-equipped National Liberation Army.

One third of all Mujahideen members are women, according to an organization spokesman.

"Among the members and officials of the Mujahideen, men and women, these 24 are the most qualified whose competency has been proven in practice in recent years," the Mujahideen spokesman said.

The women were nominated by Maryam Rajavi, secretary-general of the Mujahideen and the wife of overall leader Massoud Rajavi, the statement said...

NETHERLANDS NEWS AGENCY, AUGUST 11

Women's Council To Lead Iranian Resistance Against Government

The largest Iranian opposition movement - the People's Mojahedin - has elected a new council, all of whose members are women. This council is to lead the Resistance against the Iranian government, announced the resistance movement Wednesday in a press release.

In a gathering of "thousands" of Mojahedin at a base in Iraq, Secretary General Maryam Rajavi announced the appointment of a new all-women council. Another 12 women were introduced as candidate members. The majority of the women are commanders of the Mojahedin's National Liberation Army.



Reuters

Thousands of Mojahedin take part in the vote to elect the Mojahedin's Leadership Council at a Mojahedin base in the Iran-Iraq border region. 12 women were elected as members and 12 others as candidate members of the Council. Iranian Resistance Leader Massoud Rajavi (3rd from left) also voted.

FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE, AUGUST 12

People's Mojahedin Elect Leadership Council

The Iranian People's Mojahedin resistance movement on Wednesday elected for the first time a leadership council as its supreme decision-making body. The 24-member council is made up exclusively of women. The central council prepared for the past two months for the council's formation.

Mojahedin Secretary General Maryam Rajavi emphasized that the extensive participation of women in the Iranian Resistance and their rise to the leadership in this organization contrasts with the mullahs' atrocities against Iranian women.

ARTE TV, AUGUST 13

France - The People's Mojahedin, the principal force of armed opposition against the Tehran regime, has created a 24-woman Leadership Council. Based in Iraq, the Mojahedin choose the women to lead their military struggle.

THE TIMES, AUGUST 12

Women Lead

The Iranian opposition group, the Mujahidin Khalq, said it had chosen an all-women council to lead its fight to overthrow the Iranian government.

ASSOCIATED PRESS, AUGUST 11

Mojahedin Unanimously Elect Women to Leadership Council

The Iranian People's Mojahedin resistance movement on Wednesday elected for the first time a leadership council as its supreme decision-making body. Women make up all 24 members of this council. The Central Council prepared for the new council's formation for the past two months.

Maryam Rajavi, the Mojahedin's Secretary-General emphasized, "Women's extensive participation in the Iranian Resistance and their rise to positions of leadership in the organization are the opposite side of the coin of the mullahs' regime's atrocities against Iranian women."

In a gathering of the organization's members, Massoud Rajavi, Commander in Chief of the National Liberation Army of Iran, said the election of this council, which replaces the Executive Committee, heralds the democratization of his country.

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE,

AUGUST 11

A Leadership Council of 24 Women at the Heart of the People's Mojahedin

The People's Mojahedin of Iran, the principal armed opposition movement against the Tehran regime, announced on Wednesday the creation of a "leadership council" of 24 women, selected from among the central council.

In a communique sent to Paris, the People's Mojahedin, whose secretary general is Maryam Rajavi, specified that the leadership council is the supreme decision-making body of the organization. The communique said the 24 women have been elected for a two-year-term.

The organization indicated that the formation of the leadership council was announced in a gathering of Mojahedin in Iraq. The central council is composed of 1,600 members.

ANSA, AUGUST 11

Iran: Mojahedin's "Leadership Council" Is All Women

The People's Mojahedin of Iran formed their organization's "leadership council" composed of 12 women. Another 12 women were elected as candidate members.

According to the statement of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran, Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, the Mojahedin's Secretary General, announced the formation of the leadership council. "The gathering followed several Central Council sessions in the preceding two months, during which they elected the 24-woman leadership council as the organization's supreme decision-making body," the statement said.

SENIOR OFFICIALS:

An All-out Confrontation with Khomeinism

In the course of the sessions held to elect the Leadership Council, a number of the organization's veteran officials expressed their views. Excerpts:

- **Mehdi Abrishamchi**, NLA's General Command member: All of us are closely acquainted with these officials and are familiar with their abilities to lead and manage. I think every reasonable person understands that such a step forward, the election of such a leadership, with all of its domestic and international repercussions, would have been too risky if the Mojahedin did not rely on a sound structure which themselves had erected through their own efforts. Otherwise, the whole thing would have collapsed on the Mojahedin.

The Leadership Council is the continuation of a message: to overthrow the Khomeini regime. Thus, we have to choose the best qualified to handle these affairs. Nevertheless, we [the veteran officials] remain as competent as ever, even more so. I can say this for myself and also for others.

- **Mohammad Mohaddessin**, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Council of Resistance: The guiding principle of the Mojahedin's efforts has always been the Khomeini regime's overthrow. But in a struggle with an enemy like Khomeini, one cannot succeed by just explaining the facts and stating the obvious. One must bring a new message and brandish more effective political and ideological weapons to prevail over the enemy and pass all the tests and challenges it faces in the real world. I believe this Leadership Council bears that message. This is what the Leadership Council adds to each and every one of us and to the organization as a whole, and this is indeed a precious gift.

The women who stand before us today, who lead us and under whose supervision we are proud to perform our duties, have already proven their competence and ability to lead, as well as their military, political and administrative capabilities. For many years, these women have carried the brunt of the

burden in the NLA, and must be given credit for its progress.

- **Mohammad Ali Jaberzadeh**, a veteran Mojahedin official and member of the National Council of Resistance: Our organization has always emphasized content, that is to achieve something and only then talk about it. We have avoided mentioning any progress before having anything concrete to show for it. Indeed, we have always lagged behind the facts in presenting our accomplishments. This is a serious problem especially in our publicity work. We have radio stations, television broadcasts, and our own publications. But we have been unable to convey even a small portion of our progress in recent years.

There is no place for formalism or empty gestures in our political tradition. This applies in particular to the important issues of the organization's leadership hierarchy, with all of its serious duties and responsibilities. For several years now, our women

Abrishamchi



Mohaddessin



Jaberzadeh



Zakeri



Ata'i



Bara'i

- **Ibrahim Zakeri**, NLA's General Command member: We know that the responsibilities placed on the shoulders of the members of the Leadership



Massoud Rajavi (center) and a number of veteran Mojahedin voting

Council and the tasks they have already accomplished in these years, are far more complicated than the tasks one faces in the field of battle.

In the battlefield, we must resolve one specific problem. But now, we must resolve all kinds of problems. Anyone with a military background and experience can attest to this fact. The extent and quality of work undertaken in the organization today cannot be compared with the past.

- **Mahmoud Ata'i**, NLA's General Command member: The most outstanding aspect of the Eternal Light operation was the women combatants' bravery. Of the epic scenes which occurred, those involving the Mojahedin women were the most glorious. Women took giant strides in the NLA, resolving problems and managing affairs, from training to logistics, improving our delegation of responsibility, and planning of military operations, from tactics to more complex discussions of strategy. Anyone familiar with or serious about this kind of work can well understand that one cannot give the responsibility of a war of liberation to incompetent persons.

I believe that progress towards overthrowing the regime is possible only under their leadership. I can clearly see that this Leadership Council has already strengthened the Mojahedin. I believe the regime's overthrow and the NLA's final victory is now guaranteed.

- **Mehdi Bara'i**, NLA's General Command member: We can divide the NLA's history into two distinct periods: Before and after 1989.

After 1989, the NLA leaped forward, evolving quickly and turning into an army with a realistic agenda. The members of the Leadership Council proved their competence in this process and they resolved many problems in managing the affairs of our units and improving their observance of discipline and coordination of efforts, avoiding repetition and wasted energy. They were very innovative and creative in opening the way at every step. Their message is indeed a full-fledged war on Khomeini. □