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IRAN'S FADAYAN 1971-1988:  
A CASE STUDY IN  
IRANIAN MARXISM

INTRODUCTION\*

The Organization of Iranian People's Fada'i Guerrillas-OIPFG (*sazman-e cherik-ha-ye fada'i-e khalq-e Iran*) was one of the largest Marxist organizations in Iran between 1971 and 1980 and one of the most significant organizations opposed to the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) during 1979 and 1980. Therefore, a study of the formation, evolution and demise of the *Fada'i* (Pl. *Fadayan*-devotees) as an armed Marxist-Leninist organization and a social force is not only important for understanding the forces opposed to both the imperial system (*nezam-e shahanshahi*) and the IRI, but also for assessing an important historical period in the development of the Marxist movement in Iran.

The *Fada'i* was formed as a military/political organization during a period when the Shah seemed to be at the peak of his power. According to one account, when the organization split in 1980, although the *Fada'i* had fewer than one hundred members, it had over half a million reliable supporters throughout Iran<sup>1</sup> (i.e. supporters who the organization could rely on to execute key policies). In any case, there is no doubt that the *Fada'i* could mobilize hundreds of thousands of supporters in its demonstrations throughout the country. By the fall of 1979, the organizational network of the *Fada'i* stretched from Kurdistan to Baluchestan and from Azarbaijan and Mazandaran to Khuzestan. The *Fada'i*, therefore, had the popular base and the prestige to play an important role in shaping the course of events in Iran after the downfall of the Shah in 1979. Yet, not only was the *Fada'i* not able to perform a significant role, but, from 1979 on, it disintegrated and lost the prestige it had gained fighting the Shah's dictatorship.

The Fada'i, as the largest organization in the Iranian Communist Movement, is the best example of the process of disintegration of communism in Iran. The Iranian Communist Movement was defeated by the IRI and has gone through a process of disintegration since 1980. As a case study of Iranian Marxism, this paper will document the process of the establishment and gradual disintegration of the Fada'i. There has not been any satisfactory study of the Fada'i either in Persian or English.<sup>2</sup> While the present paper is far from a complete study of the Fada'i, it is unique in that it is based on Persian primary sources and it may be considered a start on the study of an important part of Iranian history. Secondly, this paper will try to identify some key shortcomings in the Fada'i which led to its gradual demise. In this context, one important shortcoming concerning the Fada'i, and other similar groups in Iran, is their lack of respect for democracy in general, and intra-party democracy in particular. Did the Fada'i, in practice, believe in the democracy promised in its propaganda? If the answer to this question is negative, then, how can an organization which does not believe in democracy function as a sober and creative entity for a long period of time? This paper's thesis is that the absence of intra-party democracy played an important role in the Fada'i's demise.

The history of the Fada'i may be divided into four periods:

1. The period of preparation, 1961-1971. This was a period when young Marxist intellectuals gradually came to the conclusion that the only way to confront the dictatorship was to wage an armed struggle against it. This period started with the beginning of the Shah's land reform program in 1961 and ended with the *Siyahkal* operation in 1971.
2. The period of guerrilla warfare, 1971-1979. This was a period of intense armed struggle against the Shah's dictatorship. During this period the Fada'i built up its organization, engaged the security forces of the regime and participated effectively in its overthrow.
3. The period of relative freedom, 1979-1981. This was the time between the collapse of the old regime and the repression of all opposition by the IRI. During this period the IRI opposition was able to function in the open and with a degree of freedom of action. Yet, in this period, one may no longer talk of the Fada'i as a single organization.
4. The period of disintegration, 1981-1989. In this period all opposition political activities were banned in Iranian society. Therefore, all opposition groups were either forced underground or had to leave the country. The crisis of the Fada'i, as well as all other Marxist and non-Marxist organizations, in terms of unity or the lack of it, reached its peak during this period.

#### THE FIRST PERIOD: 1961-1971

The Fada'i was officially established in late April 1971<sup>3</sup> by the union of two Marxist groups following the *Siyahkal* operation. The gendarmerie post in *Siyahkal*, a village in the northern province of Gilan, was attacked by the *Jangal* group, in February 1971, to start the armed struggle against the imperial system. The *Jangal* group was one of the founding groups of the Fada'i. The *Siyahkal* operation was started by a team of sixteen guerrillas headed by Ali Akbar Safa'i-Farahani. By the time of the attack four members had already been arrested.<sup>4</sup> This operation sparked eight years of intense guerrilla warfare, led to the final establishment of the Fada'i, signaled the beginning of what came to be known as the New Communist Movement of Iran (*jonbesh-e novin-e komonisti-ye Iran*), and inspired many other political-military groups, Islamic as well as Marxist, to take up arms against the dictatorship. *Siyahkal* was a failure in the sense that all the guerrillas were caught and the majority of them killed. But, it was also a success since it sparked a new beginning for the militant anti-Shah opposition.

The *Jangal* group was the remnant of the Jazani-Zarifi group. The history of this group, which was named after its two central figures, Bizhan Jazani and Hasan Zia-Zarifi, goes back to the early 1960s. The members of the Jazani-Zarifi group were mostly experienced activists whose background went back to the Youth Organization of the Tudeh Party (*sazman-e javanan-e hezb-e Tudeh-ye Iran*). The Jazani-Zarifi group participated wholeheartedly in the political opposition movement to the Shah in the early 1960s but, after the defeat of the movement which resulted in the Shah's reform program (also known as the "White Revolution"), the massacre of June 1963, and the reestablishment of the Shah's dictatorship, they decided to change their strategy and use other methods of struggle. Influenced by the examples of the Cuban and the Algerian revolutions, the group concluded that armed struggle was the only way to confront the regime. The group spent one year, 1966, preparing for armed struggle. Although the group's members were experienced in open political organization, they had little or no experience in armed struggle or underground organization. Therefore, before the group was able to stage any military operation, it was discovered by SAVAK (the Shah's secret police) and its principal cadres were arrested in February 1967.<sup>5</sup> Their arrest followed their contact with what was then known as the Tehran Organization of the Tudeh Party (*tashkilat-e Tehran hezb-e Tudeh*). This organization, which was totally in the hands of Abbas Shahriari, a SAVAK agent, was approached by the Jazani-Zarifi group for logistical help.<sup>6</sup>

Before their arrest, Jazani and Zarifi managed to write and, in a limited way, distribute a pamphlet explaining the group's views.<sup>7</sup> A remnant of

this group managed to escape SAVAK and continue the task of organization. Among the remaining members, Farahani and Mohammad Safari-Ashtiani left the country for Lebanon and joined al-Fatah to get training and arms. The youngest member of the group, Hamid Ashraf, remained in Iran with the task of reorganizing and recruiting new members in order to keep the group alive.<sup>8</sup> Under Ashraf and Farahani, the group continued with the strategy of armed struggle in both rural and urban areas and, in 1968, made the first contacts with the second original founding group of the Fada'i, the Ahmadzadeh-Puyan group. In 1970, Farahani and Ashtiani returned from Lebanon with experience, arms, and ammunition. Subsequently, Farahani wrote his pamphlet which was the third official publication of the group.<sup>9</sup> From September 1970 to February 1971, the group prepared for the Siyahkal operation.<sup>10</sup>

The second group was named after two of its founding members, Ahmadzadeh-Puyan. The history of this group is parallel to the activities of its two important figures, Mas'ud Ahmadzadeh-Heravi and Amir Parviz Puyan. Unlike the Jazani-Zarifi group, the Ahmadzadeh-Puyan group was made up of younger members from religious and National Front backgrounds. Indeed, while the majority of the Jazani-Zarifi group's cadres were university students during the opposition movement of the early 1960s, the cadres of the Ahmadzadeh-Puyan group were high school students. In the early 1960s, Puyan and Ahmadzadeh established several political-religious groups in Mashhad in order to participate more actively in the opposition. In 1965, Ahmadzadeh moved to Tehran in order to enter the university. In Tehran he met and befriended Abbas Meftahi, who had already met Farahani in Sari and was exposed, through him, to Marxism. In 1967, after Puyan had already moved to Tehran, the three activists, as well as other friends, formed a secret cell to discuss social issues. At this point Puyan had already accepted Marxism and, in a year, both Ahmadzadeh and Meftahi joined him. By this time, Ahmadzadeh, Puyan, and a number of others in their group had learned foreign languages, such as English and Spanish, and had started to translate political and theoretical articles and books.

The Ahmadzadeh-Puyan group's history, at this stage, may be divided into two phases. The first phase was from February 1967 to March 1968. During this phase, the group was established, accepted Marxism, and it managed to expand both in numbers and network. The group was sympathetic to Mao's version of Marxism. Ahmadzadeh and Puyan, through their contacts with their native city, managed to establish a cell in Mashhad in March 1968. In the same period, through the literary contacts of Puyan and Samad Behrangi (a well-known writer), the group managed to establish a cell in Tabriz. Meftahi, also in the same year, managed to establish a cell in Sari. The second phase was from March 1968 to April

1971. During this phase, the group developed a theory of armed struggle (the group essentially believed in city warfare) and an analysis of the Shah's reform program, rejected the Chinese model of revolution, made contacts with the remnants of the Jazani-Zarifi group, and entered into discussions for unity with that group. The group also published its first two theoretical works, one by Ahmadzadeh and the other by Puyan. While entering upon discussions of unity with the Jazani-Zarifi group, the Ahmadzadeh-Puyan group also provided a few members to the Jangal group for the attack on Siyahkal, aided it in logistical terms, and attacked a bank in Tehran to provide for its financial needs.<sup>11</sup>

Although the two groups managed to unite and form the OIPFG, many theoretical differences continued to exist. To understand the points of unity and differences between the two, it is necessary to understand the important issues facing the two groups. One of the most important issues for both groups was the analysis of Iranian society. In this context, they were confronted with such issues as analyzing the reform program, or the so called "White Revolution" staged by the Shah with U.S. backing, the nature of the Shah's dictatorship, the role of foreign powers (imperialism) in Iran, and an evaluation of the past performance of the Iranian Communist Movement. Another area in need of analysis was the strategy and tactics of their struggle against the Shah's dictatorship. Here the two groups needed to develop a class analysis of Iranian society and a theoretical framework for their notion of armed struggle in Iran. Finally, the differences between the two world communist giants, China and the Soviet Union, as well as the Soviet Union's role in Iranian politics, were important issues which needed analysis.

In attempting to address these issues, not all the original founders of the Fada'i had the necessary theoretical capabilities. Yet, it is known that the published works of Fada'i theoreticians were reviewed through group discussions, whether they were written in jail or underground. The original Fada'i theoreticians who had published works were Jazani, Ahmadzadeh, Puyan, Farahani, Zarifi, and Hamid Mo'meni, who joined the organization after its establishment, but, nevertheless, contributed greatly to the Fada'i. Ashraf, who was the main leader of the Fada'i between 1972 and 1976, also wrote a number of pamphlets. But, as he was mainly a revolutionary organizer and practitioner, the quality of his theoretical contributions was not very strong.

Among the above names, Jazani, Ahmadzadeh and Puyan have occupied a special place in the history of the Fada'i. This is mainly due to the effect their theoretical and practical work had, not only on Fada'i programs and policies, but also on the Iranian Communist Movement and on other guerrilla groups in general. Indeed, Puyan's only theoretical essay, *The Necessity of Armed Struggle and a Refutation of the Theory of Sur-*

vival, was widely distributed among students and intellectuals and had a profound impact upon them. In this essay, which was the first theoretical work on the armed struggle of the vanguard written by a member of the Iranian Communist Movement, Puyan attacked the passivity of those groups who believed in a purely political means for confronting the Shah's regime. He called this passivity the "Theory of Survival" and introduced the theory of the armed struggle of the vanguard as an alternative revolutionary solution. In this essay, which also contained an introduction by Dr. George Habash of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Puyan developed the thesis of "Two Absolutes" (*du motlaq*). Here, in answering the question of why the working class was not rising against the regime, Puyan stated:

Because they see the strength of their enemy in absolute terms and their own weakness in liberating themselves in absolute terms. How can they think of liberation when they see their own absolute weakness against such absolute strength? Linkage with the working class, in order to pull this class into a political struggle, may not be achieved except by changing this situation, by destroying these two absolutes in their minds.<sup>12</sup>

He goes on to suggest that the theory of armed struggle is the answer to this problem.

Ahmadzadeh's work, *Armed Struggle Both as a Tactic and Strategy*, had, by far, the greatest effect in shaping the Fada'i's theoretical foundation for close to six years and the theoretical foundation of the two Fada'i splinter groups after the 1979 revolution. In his pamphlet, Ahmadzadeh presented a socioeconomic analysis of Iranian society and its class structure, and addressed such issues as the working class and its allies, the organization of the revolutionary movement, and the role played by the armed struggle of the vanguard. The ideas of Latin American guerrilla theorists, as well as those of Regis Debray, had already found an eager audience among the group's theoreticians. Ahmadzadeh even took over Debray's metaphor of the "little motor" and the "big motor" to describe the relation between the guerrilla force and the revolutionary classes. In explaining the necessity of armed struggle, Ahmadzadeh wrote:

. . . how can the people become aware of their own historical strength? (A people which is not asking why should we fight, but can we fight? . . .)  
. . . How can we build such a movement in the path of which the people may recognize their own historical interests, their own enormous and invincible power and enter the process of struggle? . . . The only path is armed action.<sup>13</sup>

Among these three theorists, Bizhan Jazani has had the most effect on the Iranian Communist Movement since the 1953 coup. He is widely regarded as one of Iran's major Marxist theorists. But Jazani's major writings were not available to his group until after the establishment of the

Fada'i (between 1971 and 75) because they were written in prison after his arrest. Since he wrote his theoretical work in prison and smuggled it out to the Fada'i, he had no way of defending his views within the Fada'i. Indeed, it may be suggested that, unlike Ahmadzadeh and Puyan, Jazani had already lost his theoretical hegemony over his group by the time of the Fada'i's birth. With most of the experienced cadres arrested in 1967, the leadership of the group fell into the hands of Ashraf and Farahani. With Farahani's death in the Siyahkal operation, Ashraf, the youngest member of the Jazani-Zarifi group, accepted most of Ahmadzadeh's theses in the process of the Fada'i's formation. It was only six years after the Siyahkal operation and one year after Jazani and his comrades were murdered in jail that Jazani's theses were actually accepted by the Fada'i.

Jazani provided an in depth analysis of the situation in Iran and of the tasks of Marxist-Leninists in his writings on dependent capitalism, class structure in Iran, social psychology, the role of armed struggle, and a host of other issues. His analyses of the Shah's reform program and dependent capitalism are still regarded as important contributions by an Iranian Marxist.

In analyzing Iranian society, the theorists of the two groups had significant differences:

1. On the issue of land reform, both groups acknowledged that the program had caused deep changes. Almost independent of each other, they concluded that what had replaced the pre-capitalist socioeconomic formation was dependent capitalism. They both agreed that Iran's dependent capitalist system relied on state dictatorship and a capitalist class (*comprador bourgeoisie*) closely linked to that state, and that this arrangement was against the people's interest. Hence, both groups agreed that the new social changes were fundamentally reactionary and were made in order to integrate Iran into the world capitalist system. In this context, Ahmadzadeh believed that the reform program was imposed on society mainly because of the intervention and pressure of imperialism. To him, the pressure and interference of the U.S. (the foreign factor) was the major element in initiating and implementing the reforms. He also believed that the reforms, far from easing the class contradictions and conflicts within Iranian society, had intensified them and, therefore, brought about an objective revolutionary condition. In contrast to Ahmadzadeh, Jazani believed that a number of internal and external factors had led to the reform program. According to Jazani, Iran's pre-capitalist socioeconomic relations had reached a point of socioeconomic crisis in the late 1950s (the internal factor). Thus, the internal factor was the main incentive for the reform program and the foreign factor played a secondary role. In pointing out the internal factors, Jazani suggested that the reform program eased the class contradictions and conflicts in its aftermath (i.e. 1960s) and, because of

that, an objective revolutionary condition did not exist.<sup>14</sup> But he did suggest that because of the nature of a dependent capitalist system, such conditions would emerge in time and so the revolutionaries had to be ready for them.

2. On the nature of the dictatorship, Ahmadzadeh believed that the Shah's regime was merely a puppet of imperialism and that it was created and maintained by it. Therefore, according to this analysis, the main enemy of the future revolutionary movement would be imperialism (i.e. the foreign factor) and then the state. In contrast, Jazani believed that after the initiation of the land reform program, the nature of the regime changed. According to his analysis, although the Shah was installed by imperialism, the nature of his regime was that of a personal dictatorship. The Shah, although ultimately a puppet, had a certain amount of independence vis-a-vis imperialism and the Iranian bourgeoisie. Therefore, the slogan "Down with the Shah and his imperialist protectors" was suggested by Jazani as an alternative to the Fada'i slogan, which was adopted from both the Vietnamese experience and Ahmadzadeh's theses and which read "Down with Imperialism and its Running Dogs." Farahani also believed in the relative independence of the Shah, but his early death made his views ineffective in converting the Fada'i to the Jazani theses.<sup>15</sup> From the above points, it should be evident that the two positions had deep differences on the role of the foreign factor in Iran. While Ahmadzadeh saw the foreign factor as the major element in his analysis, Jazani consistently tried to put the foreign and domestic elements into a dialectical perspective.

3. On the history of the Iranian Communist Movement, especially the most recent experience (the Tudeh Party), Ahmadzadeh and Puyan did not put forth an analytical view. Ahmadzadeh believed that the Tudeh was only a caricature of a Marxist-Leninist party. They both believed that the past defeats and passivity of the Communist movement in Iran were due, for the most part, to the Tudeh's opportunism. The devotions and sacrifices of armed struggle against the Shah's dictatorship were supposed to help in clearing away the memories of past defeats and to bring back the Communist movement's lost prestige. The revolutionary heroism of the New Communist Movement could clear away the memories of the cowardice left behind by the Tudeh. It should be noted that, during this period, the Tudeh leadership in exile advocated purely political means of struggle. The Tudeh did not have any apparent presence inside Iran.

Jazani was in agreement with Puyan and Ahmadzadeh on the shortcomings of the Tudeh and its damaging role in the revolutionary process. He especially attacked the Tudeh leadership abroad, accused them of opportunism and indecisiveness in the final days of the Nationalist government, and criticized the role of the Tudeh throughout the 1960s. But unlike Ahmadzadeh, Jazani considered the Tudeh of the pre-1953 coup to have been the working class party of Iran.<sup>16</sup>

### *On Strategy and Tactics of the Revolution:*

1. In analyzing the class structure of Iran, both positions agreed that the Iranian national bourgeoisie, of whom Mossadeq was the political manifestation, was defeated and had entered a process of dissolution. None of the writers believed that the national bourgeoisie could play a leading role in the movement. In this context, Jazani provided an in depth analysis of how and why the national bourgeoisie was being eliminated. All of the writers also believed that the revolutionary classes consisted of the working class, the petty bourgeoisie and the remnants of the national bourgeoisie.

2. The deepest differences between the two analyses appeared over the theory of armed struggle. Since Jazani and his group in jail had a different analysis of the results of land reform, their version of the theory of armed struggle differed as to the basis of the objective conditions of revolution. As noted before, both Ahmadzadeh and Puyan believed that the reform program had intensified class contradictions in society. Therefore, in analyzing the causes behind the lack of a spontaneous movement, they both pointed to the role of the dictatorship as being fundamental. Ahmadzadeh suggested thus:

I believe that in the current situation of Iran, the lack of large-scale spontaneous movements is not the sign of the lack of an objective revolutionary condition . . . . I believe that the fundamental causes behind the lack of such movements are, on one hand, the violent and long-term repression by the imperialistic dictatorship, as the main agent of imperialist domination, and, on the other hand, the weaknesses of the revolutionary factor.<sup>17</sup>

Therefore, in Ahmadzadeh's view, while the objective revolutionary conditions did exist, the only other factor needed to start a successful revolution was a consistent attack on the dictatorship. Such an attack would gradually result in the creation of the People's Army and would bring the spontaneous revolt into the open. Throughout the period of the domination of the Ahmadzadeh theses, the Tudeh party attacked the Fada'i on the very same point. Without having any visible and significant activity inside the country, the Tudeh attacked the Fada'i as being petty bourgeois revolutionaries who were launching an armed struggle without the presence of revolutionary conditions; it, thus, called their movement anti-Leninist. The Fada'i defended itself by insisting on the presence of such conditions in the Iran of the early 1970s.

Jazani saw the situation differently. He believed that the land reform programs had eased class conflict in society and that objective revolutionary conditions did not exist. On the basis of this analysis, he suggested the "Armed Propaganda Theory." Jazani divided the process of armed struggle into two phases. The first phase, he suggested, would be that of the establishment of the vanguard organization. In this phase, the vanguard

would attack the dictatorship, declare its existence to the people, and organize the revolutionary elements who were ready to take up arms and join the struggle. In the first phase, armed actions would have the form of armed propaganda and would prepare the vanguard in terms of military, organizational and political experiences for the future revolutionary participation of the people. The second phase would be one of a mass-based revolutionary movement. In this phase, a people's army would be formed.<sup>18</sup> Jazani saw armed struggle as both a military and political process. Although he saw armed action as the axis of all other tactics and strategies, he indirectly criticized Ahmadzadeh and the Fada'i for not paying enough attention to the political side of the movement.<sup>19</sup> It is obvious that Jazani had an unorthodox Marxist view on this issue. Most Marxists (including Lenin) agree that the use of violent means as the main revolutionary tactic is legitimate only when objective revolutionary conditions exist. Jazani's heterodoxy was his theory of "Armed Propaganda," whereby the vanguard would use armed struggle as a means, first, of establishing itself, and second, of organizing the movement.

#### *On the International Communist Movement:*

All national Communist movements have a theoretical analysis of the International Communist Movement and make their alliances on this basis. The Ahmadzadeh group did not present any writing on this issue. What is known, however, is that, as noted before, the group had strong sympathies for the Chinese experience and Mao Zedong, but later rejected the Chinese model as not being applicable to Iran. The Fada'i, under Ashraf, showed strong Maoist sympathies but the organization managed to keep its independence from both China and the Soviet Union throughout the struggle against the Shah. Jazani was very much aware of the split between the Chinese and Soviet Communist parties in the 1960s and suggested that the Iranian movement should not take sides in this split. He rejected the Khrushchev thesis on world revolution and liberation movements.<sup>20</sup> Both Jazani and Farahani were critical of the Stalinist period<sup>21</sup>, although their views never found an audience in the Fada'i. Jazani detested and attacked the one-sided relationship between the Soviet Communist Party and Tudeh, both during and after Stalin, and described it as one of the reasons for Tudeh's failures. On the role of the Soviet Union in Iran and its close relationship with the Shah, Jazani wrote:

In this new situation, the Soviets gave their support to the land reform program. Soon after, the economic relations between the two countries expanded at a high rate . . . meaning that, right at a time when the regime was repressing the people and strengthening the dictatorship, the honeymoon between

Iran and the Soviets started. This development proved, once more, that the Iranian revolutionary movement must take an independent path vis-a-vis Soviet politics or any other foreign power, and rely on the power of the people. [This is so] since the Soviets and other powers and world movements have ignored the interests of our movement and have coordinated their relations with Iran according to their own needs.<sup>22</sup>

During the anti-Shah struggle, the Fada'i may be considered a Stalinist organization (despite the anti-Stalinist positions of Jazani and Farahani) without any direct affiliation to any socialist state. The Fada'i maintained its independence as it criticized the Soviet Union for having deviated from the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist path. On one occasion, Hamid Mo'meni even went as far as suggesting that capitalism was beginning to re-establish itself in the Soviet Union<sup>23</sup>, but this analysis was unique to Mo'meni and certainly was not the official line of the Fada'i.

The independence of the Fada'i stemmed from the Iranian communists' past experiences in terms of relying upon the Soviet Union for guidance and support. The results of past defeats, especially the incompetence of the Tudeh, had convinced the Fada'i that relying on the Soviet Union could only result in defeat. This was because, according to the Fada'i, the Soviet Union had proven to be more interested in its own national interest than in the fate of Iranian communists.

The Stalinist sympathies of the Fada'i had two implications. First, they showed that the Fada'i's Marxist education was highly influenced by the Russian revolutionary experience as it was conveyed by Stalinist propaganda. Second, they showed that many of the Stalinist values on "intra-party democracy" may also have been passed down to the Fada'i. Indeed, as we shall see below, the Fada'i did adopt many of the Stalinist norms on that matter.

#### THE SECOND PERIOD: 1971-1979

. . . in 1971, the Siyahkal guerrillas went into action. This event forced the Mojahedin, in 1971, to enter also into action and introduce themselves to society against their will and readiness. If they (the Mojahedin) had not entered into action, the People's Fada'i would have been left as the sole vanguard organization . . .<sup>24</sup>

The lines above describe how the Organization of People's Mojahedin of Iran<sup>25</sup>, as the major non-Marxist and religious advocate of armed struggle, viewed the Siyahkal operation. Indeed the Mojahedin, which had been established five years prior to the Fada'i, were forced to openly declare their existence, through armed action, in order not to fall behind the Fada'i in their quest for the leadership of the revolution. The Mojahedin's assessment of the Fada'i's role in Iran is only one example of the impact of

Siyahkal on the other guerrilla groups. Soon after the Siyahkal operation, other clandestine groups announced their existence as well. During this period, the Fada'i engaged the Shah's forces in intense, mostly urban, guerrilla activity. The organization, during the same period, lost its entire original leadership (Jazani, Ahmadzadeh, Zarifi, Farahani, Puyan, Ashraf and others), but maintained a hegemonic role within the various guerrilla groups, in both the theoretical and practical spheres. This period may be divided into two phases. The first was from 1971 to 1975, when Ahmadzadeh's theses were the official line and Ashraf was still alive. The second phase was from the summer of 1976 to February 1979, when the Jazani line was adopted. During this phase, the organization had to recuperate from the loss of its leadership (Ashraf and others), adapt to the Jazani line, and contain a challenge by a splinter group sympathetic to the Tudeh.

The initial phase had two main characteristics. First, it was marked mostly by military operations devised by an organization which had little experience in this field. During this phase, the Fada'i lost many of its able and dedicated cadres. Ahmadzadeh, Puyan, Meftahi, Farahani, and Ashtiani had all been killed by 1972. The second characteristic was the expansion of the organization. This process was achieved either by recruiting new members or by uniting with other smaller armed groups.

In the process of uniting with other groups, problems began to occur with the Fada'i. This was due mainly to the lack of clarity of the Fada'i's organizational status. During its first three years, it was not clear whether the Fada'i was an organization with a set theoretical form and internal order or whether it was a front type organization made up of various Marxist groups which agreed on uniting to fight the Shah, but had different theoretical frameworks. Indeed, the Fada'i did not call itself an organization until after 1972. Until then, the group was simply referred to as The People's Fada'i Guerrillas. The Fada'i emblem pointed to this fact as well.<sup>26</sup> Jazani never referred to the Fada'i as an organization. In analyzing the role of the Fada'i two years after its establishment, Jazani wrote that it may be viewed as a platform of unity for all Marxist-Leninists who believe in armed struggle.<sup>27</sup> A newly published source also confirms the above hypothesis. According to Mehdi Khanbaba-Tehrani, the term "organization" was added only during the Ashraf leadership in 1972.<sup>28</sup>

This lack of clarity in the status of the Fada'i later gave rise to the split of Mostafa Shoa'ian. Shoa'ian was a member of the People's Democratic Front (*jebhe-ye demokratik-e khalq*). Other well-known members of this group were Nader Shaygan-Shamasbi and Marzieh Ahmadi-Osku'i. While it is known that under Ashraf other smaller armed groups were invited to unite with the Fada'i, it is not known under what terms these unions were arranged. The People's Democratic Front, which also believed in armed struggle, joined the Fada'i in June 1973. Although by this time Shaygan had been killed, it was clearly known that both Shoa'ian and he had strong

reservations about Leninism and considered it a deviation from Marxism. Therefore, the group was invited to join the Fada'i, despite the differences. After his split, Shoa'ian claimed that he was assured by the Fada'i that he would be allowed to publish his views openly, as a member of the organization, after the process of unity had been completed. He also claimed that he had the understanding that the Fada'i was supposed to be a front made up of all those groups which believed in armed struggle and that the Fada'i, as a centralized organization with a single theoretical framework, was not what his group was aware of at the point of unity. At any rate, Shoa'ian's objections remained unanswered and he was eventually ousted from the Fada'i in 1975, while the rest of the People's Democratic Front adapted to the Fada'i theoretical framework.<sup>29</sup> Shoa'ian was killed in an armed clash a year later while trying to organize armed struggle on his own. Shoa'ian's accounts of the process of his isolation and eventual ouster from the Fada'i are an example of the Stalinist aspects of the Fada'i. These aspects, which gave little or no room for intra-party democracy, began to consolidate themselves as normative practice in the Fada'i during the Ashraf leadership and reemerged again and again throughout the life of the organization.

From the circumstances mentioned above, i.e. the initial name of the Fada'i, Shoa'ian's claims, Jazani's analysis, and Tehrani's information, it is possible to conclude that, although the Fada'i started off as a front, it changed into an organization under Ashraf.

At the end of the first phase, the Fada'i had reached a deadlock in its struggle against the Shah. Although many sacrifices had been made, many military operations had taken place, and the Fada'i had been established as a militant military-political organization in Iranian society, yet, many shortcomings prevented the Fada'i from continuing along the same lines of development. These shortcomings were mainly the inability of the organization to build any kind of base among the working class and the people in general. The organization remained basically a militant guerrilla group, whose members were mostly from the intelligentsia. Ahmadzadeh's thesis, that suggested that the "little motor" can start off the "big motor", had not come true. Although the organization had attacked the dictatorship forcefully, the dictatorship had not "cracked". Under these circumstances, discussions began in order to reevaluate Fada'i strategy and tactics. This process ended with the rejection of Ahmadzadeh's thesis and the adoption of Jazani's thesis. The change of theory was officially published in the Fada'i official publication, *Nabard-e Khalq* number six, in the beginning of 1975.

During the second phase, in the process of adopting Jazani's line, two blows were dealt to the Fada'i. First, in March 1975, Bizhan Jazani, the most able theoretician of the Fada'i, was murdered in jail by SAVAK, along with six of the original members of the Jazani-Zarifi group and two

members of the Mojahedin. The loss of Jazani, at a time when the Fada'i was about to adopt his line, left the organization without its principal theoretician at a critical juncture. Second, in June 1976, came the deaths of Hamid Ashraf and some other leaders and members in a long battle with the police in Tehran. Ashraf's death came at a time when the Jazani line had already been accepted and the Fada'i was in the process of adjusting to it.

Among political activists, Ashraf was famous for his organizational ability, bravery, and expertise in confronting the political police. Indeed, it is said that he had managed to escape police traps many times before his eventual death. Ashraf was on the top of the most wanted list of SAVAK. An evaluation of Ashraf's role and leadership is not an easy task. His role in Fada'i history has strong positive as well as negative aspects. His organizational abilities were instrumental in reorganizing the Jazani-Zarifi group in 1968, after Jazani and his associates were arrested. His skills also saved the Fada'i from probable annihilation after the death of Ahmadzadeh and Puyan in 1972. While it is hard to say what the Fada'i would have looked like without Ashraf, it is possible to suggest that its strength would have been considerably less without his leadership. Yet, under his leadership, the Fada'i consolidated its Stalinist practices. Although this development may not have had any immediate effect on the Fada'i, it did become a prime cause for its eventual disintegration. The death of Ashraf left the Fada'i without leadership. Subsequently, a center named the "Grand Council" was formed to fill the vacuum. The Fada'i, however, did not recover from these blows until after the 1979 revolution.

Under the Jazani line, the Fada'i changed tactics and began to give more importance to political propaganda and agitation, especially among the working class. Although the organization still believed in armed struggle as the axis of all tactics, it began to adopt what Jazani called the "movement's second leg". This meant giving more importance to the political side of the work and to organizing non-military agitation among the people.

With the authority of Ashraf gone and the adoption of Jazani's line not yet completed, a split occurred in the Fada'i in 1976. The members leaving the organization were basically disappointed with the theory of armed struggle and had by now accepted the line of the Tudeh party. They called themselves OIPFG (The Splinter Group) (*goruh-e monsha'eb*) and were headed by Turaj Heidari-Bigvand. As far as is known, this group numbered only three members, whose leader was killed a few months after the split. The group abandoned armed struggle altogether, joined the Tudeh party and published a paper called *Navid*. After joining the Tudeh, the Splinter Group apparently became the only active Tudeh branch inside Iran between 1976-79.<sup>30</sup>

The Fada'i adoption of Jazani's theses coincided with the early begin-

nings of the revolutionary tide in Iran. Although the Fada'i's capabilities were limited and it was still trying to recover from the blows it had received, the organization was the only armed group which participated in the anti-Shah revolutionary struggle in any effective and organized manner. The general situation of guerrilla groups between 1976 and 1979 was one of setbacks or total destruction. The Mojahedin, for example, because of a bloody internal split and of blows from the regime's security forces, were reduced to an insignificant force. Therefore, their participation in the revolutionary upheaval, as two separate groups (one Moslem and one Marxist), was much more limited, both militarily and politically, compared to that of the Fada'i.<sup>31</sup> The Tudeh, which attacked the movement throughout the guerrilla period for their "adventurist" and "petty bourgeois" theories, had not been an active force in Iran since the 1953 coup. The only active Tudeh branch was the OIPFG (Splinter Group), and this only in a limited way after the 1976 split in the Fada'i. The Islamic movement, under Grand Ayatollah Khomeini, did gradually gain the leadership of the mass anti-Shah movement, but it was not a significant armed force and did not play a major role in the organized armed struggle. Indeed, when the revolutionary struggle came to a head-on, violent clash during the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth of February, 1979, the Fada'i, as well as other guerrilla groups, joined the people in storming the military garrisons. When the Air Force cadets were attacked by the "immortals" of the Imperial Guard, it was the Fada'i which wholeheartedly and effectively led the battle for the overthrow of the imperial system.

In regard to the conclusion of the second period, one important piece of information has recently come out which must be noted. This was provided by Hasan Masali in a speech he delivered in West Germany in 1985. Masali was a member of a group known as Communist Unity, now known as the Organization of Communist Unity (*sazman-e vahdat-e komonisti*). The roots of Communist Unity dated back to the Middle East Branch of the National Front (*jebhe-ye melli-ye khavar-e mianeh*). Communist Unity was basically a group operating from outside Iran and did not have an organizational network inside Iran. During the anti-Shah struggle, the group opened a dialogue with the Fada'i, hoping for eventual unity. Although this task was never realized (primarily because Communist Unity was fundamentally anti-Stalinist), the group did, for a period of time, have close relations with the Fada'i under Ashraf's leadership and aided the Fada'i in its operations abroad. Masali suggested that between 1972 and 1976, the Fada'i members outside Iran (Ashraf Dehqani and Mohammed Hormati-Pur) were ordered by their leadership to approach the Soviet government for military, propaganda, and financial aid. This contact was made under secrecy and even ordinary members of the organization were not to know about it. According to Masali, in return for support, the Soviets asked the Fada'i to provide them with intelligence on the



Iranian military. This offer was angrily refused by Ashraf. Masali did not know the outcome of the Soviet connection, since his group subsequently was involved in a dispute with the Fada'i and contacts between the two groups were cut.<sup>32</sup>

This policy of requesting aid from the Soviet Union has two implications. First, while this policy was in direct contradiction with the Fada'i's declared policy of self-reliance and independence, Ashraf's response underlines the Fada'i's sensitivity about any outside influence. Second, the Fada'i at this time had strong Maoist sympathies. These sympathies were openly declared in the Fada'i's official publication.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, to show sympathies for China and to ask the Soviet Union for aid seem to be contradictory policies which show a strong pragmatist tendency in the Fada'i during the Ashraf period.

What were the results of eight years of armed struggle as an urban guerrilla organization? One important result, or lack of result, was that the Fada'i did not manage to gain the leadership of the revolution and armed struggle did not become a mass movement. The causes behind this were many, the most important of which was that the original founders of the Fada'i, while experienced politically and theoretically, started their movement from scratch with very little practical experience. On this path of revolutionary agitation, they put their lives on the line with the hope that others would continue what they had started. Although others did continue their path, this task was done by members who were less prepared, both practically and, especially, theoretically. In this context, and parallel to adopting Stalinist norms, dogmatism and inflexibility emerged in the process of understanding the realities of society and struggle. For example, it took the Fada'i a long time to change to the Jazani theses.

But the eight-year period of guerrilla warfare (1971-1979) had its positive aspects, despite the inability of the Fada'i to lead the 1979 revolution. As a direct result of the Fada'i struggle, many radical intellectuals were attracted to the struggle. The Fada'i managed to reach a stalemate with the regime. This is to say that, although it did not succeed in becoming the leader of the revolutionary movement, the Fada'i nonetheless managed to prevent the government from destroying its organization. As a result of eight years of armed struggle, the Fada'i emerged as a popular, prestigious, social force after the revolution. It changed from a small group into a Marxist organization with the largest number of supporters and a major opposition to the IRI for a period of time.

#### THE THIRD PERIOD: 1979-1981

The political freedom which followed the 1979 revolution gave a chance to political organizations and parties, from the left to the right (with the

exception of the pro-monarchy forces), to organize. After twenty six years of relatively consistent dictatorship, this newly achieved freedom gave an important breathing space needed by all groups and parties, especially those of the left. Hence, since the Iranian Communist Movement was the major target of the Shah's dictatorship, the post-1979 freedom was a "blessing," especially to the Marxists. During the immediate months after the downfall of the imperial regime, for the first time in twenty-six years, the Marxists found a chance to organize on a mass basis. Among the various Marxist organizations, the Fada'i emerged as the largest and soon found itself as the major opposition organization to the IRI. The Fada'i's opposition to the IRI was the direct result of the latter's move to consolidate its power. After the collapse of the imperial system, it took the new regime almost three years to achieve this task. The consolidation of power by the IRI started almost immediately after the overthrow of the former regime and the first confrontation with the Fada'i came on March 12, 1979. On this date, the Islamic leadership organized a referendum and asked the population to choose between the imperial system and the Islamic Republic. The Fada'i boycotted the referendum, claiming that the notion of an Islamic State was vague and that the election procedures were undemocratic.<sup>34</sup>

It is not yet clear how the Fada'i leadership was arranged after the revolution. What is known, however, is that there were two categories of members in the post-revolutionary Fada'i. First, there were those who, in one way or another, had managed to stay out of prison during the anti-Shah struggle. Second, there were those who had been put in jail and were released a few months before the collapse of the imperial regime. Therefore, the post-revolutionary Fada'i was made up of two categories of members who had not been in touch with each other for years. In fact, many of them had joined the Fada'i long after the others were arrested.

The first post-revolutionary breakaway in the Fada'i occurred in May 1979. The split was made by those members who still believed in the complete validity of the Ahmadzadeh theses. Among the famous members who joined the split were Ashraf Dehqani, a woman guerrilla who, for a while, was in charge of the Fada'i's operations abroad; Ali Reza Sabburi, who was recently released from prison and was known to have engaged Jazani in ideological discussions; and Mohammad Hormati-Pur, another well-known guerrilla who had just come back from abroad. The spokesperson of this group which called itself the People's Fada'i Guerrillas (without using the term "organization") was Dehqani.<sup>35</sup> She accused the Fada'i leadership of having rejected armed struggle without clarifying their position to their supporters and members. She claimed that the split was imposed on their group and that they were ejected from the organization undemocratically, without being given the opportunity to explain and defend their position. This faction, which subsequently became known as

Fada'i (Ashraf Dehqani), soon took a radical anti-IRI position and advocated armed struggle to overthrow it. The dimension of this split was relatively small. The Ahmadzadeh theses had been rejected years ago and Dehqani's claims did not find many followers. But her claim of undemocratic treatment by the leadership was valid, when put in the context of past experiences (e.g. Shoa'ian), and showed the continuation of undemocratic intra-party relations even after the lifting of the Shah's dictatorship. This group participated in the Kurdish war (between the Kurdish movement seeking autonomy for Iranian Kurdistan and the IRI, which started in August 1979) from its beginning.

Besides the Dehqani split, from the very early days of the post-revolutionary period, and especially once *Kar*, the weekly publication of the Fada'i, was published openly, two contradictory policies began to emerge. These two policies were, on the one hand, one of resisting IRI's pressure and, on the other hand, one of reconciling with it. For example, while the organization supported boycotting the March 1979 referendum legitimizing the IRI, *Kar* (number two) published a conciliatory letter (known to have been written by Farrokh Negahdar-see endnote #4) to the Provisional Government, which headed the IRI government in this period. It must be noted that at this stage, February to August 1979, the Fada'i still had not confronted the government in any direct or open way. This was mainly due to the extreme popularity of Ayatollah Khomeini. Confronted with this post-revolutionary situation, many, including the Marxists, viewed Ayatollah Khomeini as a progressive figure. Still, in the context of the general belief in Ayatollah Khomeini's progressive views, one position in the Fada'i favored challenging the IRI for its attacks against democratic freedoms and the other position favored appeasement and reconciliation.

During the early summer of 1979, these two positions began to form themselves into two factions within the Fada'i. The radical faction, which stood for confronting the state whenever necessary, had its organizational base concentrated within the editorial board of *Kar* and a minority faction of the Fada'i central committee. This faction became known as the "Minority" (*aqaliyyat*). The conservative faction, which advocated reconciliation with the new state, was basically organized around a majority of the central committee. This faction became known as the "Majority" (*aksariyyat*). When IRI's open war with the Kurdistan movement started in August 1979, the two factions came into a head-on clash. For the time being, this internal clash was kept secret and a plenum of the Fada'i was arranged to study the differences. The first post-revolution plenum was held in October 1979 in Tehran. Evidently, the plenum was controlled by the "Majority" faction, which also controlled the central committee. The exact discussions of this plenum were never officially revealed, but an un-

official version was circulated. It has been said that the unofficial version was circulated by the Tudeh, which had strong supporters and allies among the "Majority" faction. During the plenum, the two factions took definite shape. The "Minority" faction's grievances basically centered around the incompetence of the central committee. It charged the "Majority" faction with lacking a coherent program of action in confronting social crises. It saw the ideological crisis of the Fada'i as the main cause of the inability of the organization to draft a concrete strategy. The "Minority" faction proposed open ideological discussions as to the roots of the crisis and the nature of the new state and its class base. The "Majority" faction, which was the authority which had called the plenum together, wanted to limit the meeting to discussing the problems raised by the struggle in Kurdistan. Yet, it must be noted that the "Majority" faction was forced to call the plenum because of the growing internal crisis. In this context, it did not allow all the members of the Fada'i to participate and invited only one member of *Kar*'s editorial board (i.e. the principal "Minority" power base) to take part in the plenum. Evidently, undemocratic means of confronting ideological opponents, which had become a tradition within the Fada'i, continued during this period. At any rate, the new crises which followed the Fada'i plenum put an end to any effort of reconciliation within the organization, if in fact there was any made at all.<sup>36</sup>

The first post-plenum political crisis which confronted the Fada'i was the takeover of the U.S. Embassy in November 1979. While the anti-American stand of the IRI was interpreted as progressive and anti-imperialist by the "Majority" faction, it was looked upon with suspicion by the "Minority" faction. What came to be known as the American Hostage Crisis only added fuel to the process of division in the largest Marxist organization in Iran. The second crisis was the Turkman Sahra war. Turkman Sahra, which was a mechanized agricultural area by the time of the February revolution, had developed a unique system of peasant's councils after the revolution. This meant that following the collapse of the imperial system, the Turkman agricultural laborers moved to seize the mechanized lands. The land confiscation was followed by the establishment of Turkman Peasant's Councils (*shoraha-ye dehqani-ye turkman sahra*), which soon took charge of the new socioeconomic order in the area. The Fada'i was the main organizer and force behind these Councils for the duration of their brief existence. The Turkman Peasant's Councils, however, were a unique experience in Iran and their situation was like that of a small island amidst a large and hostile sea. Therefore, much like the Kurdish situation, the Turkman Councils soon came into confrontation with the IRI. The confrontation occurred when four top Council leaders and Fada'i members were murdered while in Tehran for negotiation with the central government at the invitation of the IRI. The

"Majority" position on this event was one of backing down in the face of IRI's aggressively hostile actions. The "Minority" position was to defend the Councils. After two battles and much bloodshed, the Councils had been crushed by winter 1980.<sup>37</sup> As a result, the Fada'i's internal crisis deepened.

In June 1980, this Fada'i crisis resulted in a major split by the "Minority". By publishing its own issue of *Kar* (number sixty-one), the "Minority" officially declared its independent existence. Calling itself the OIPFG, it accused the "Majority" of opportunism and of using bureaucratic, rather than democratic, means to deal with internal differences. It insisted that under the circumstances it had no choice but to split off. The "Minority" believed that the differences of the Fada'i on the nature and class base of the IRI was the main political reason behind the split. It also accused the "Majority" of rejecting the fundamental theoretical achievements of the Fada'i's anti-Shah struggle and of moving steadily toward the Tudeh.<sup>38</sup> The "Minority" believed that the organization's past had its mistakes, but that it had been a positive development in general.

The "Majority" accused the "Minority" of left sectarianism, and of splitting off without valid reasons. It rejected the accusation of moving towards the Tudeh, but did not disguise its sympathy and support for the IRI. It did state, however, its rejection of past Fada'i theories such as the validity of armed struggle against the Shah or any repressive regime. Indeed, the "Majority" soon dropped the term "guerrilla" from its name, stopped using the Fada'i emblem and called itself The Organization of Iranian People's Fadayan (Majority).<sup>39</sup>

It is hard to establish what portion of the organization sided with which faction, since there are no statistics available. The "Majority" claims that ten percent sided with the "Minority" while ninety percent supported the "Majority".<sup>40</sup> This claim is impossible to verify. What is known, however, is that the names "Majority" and "Minority" were chosen on the basis of the division within the central committee and not on the basis of an overall split within the organization. As far as it is known, the "Minority" had one representative in the central committee. This representative (Mostafa Madani), along with a number of other members, agreed with the principal views of the "Minority," but did not believe that the timing of the split was right. Hence, this group did not join the "Minority" in the split. It was to leave the "Majority" under the name OIPFG (Left Wing Majority) later in February 1981 (see below).

After the split, each faction moved towards reorganization and the declaration of their views on social issues. The "Minority" analysis was as follows: the IRI state is an organ of compromise between the medium, industrial bourgeoisie represented by the liberals (Bazargan, Bani-Sadr, etc.), the commercial bourgeoisie represented by the clergy-Bazaar alliance

and the Islamic Republic Party (IRP), and the upper layers of the traditional petty bourgeoisie incarnated by Ayatollah Khomeini and the people around him. The revolution is incomplete and in order to complete it, the IRI must be replaced by a revolutionary workers and peasants alliance. The anti-American moves of the IRI are not anti-imperialist. As of September 1980, the Iran-Iraq war was an anti-people's war which should have been stopped at once. The right of self-determination for national minorities, especially the Kurds, had to be defended (the "Minority" continued to participate in the Kurdish war). The Tudeh was an opportunistic organization which wrongfully claimed to be the workers' party of Iran. As for the Soviet Union, it was a socialist state, but with revisionist deviations.<sup>41</sup>

The "Majority" analysis was as follows: the IRI state is a petty bourgeois state and, therefore, a progressive and anti-imperialist one. The anti-imperialist stands of the IRI had to be defended, whereas its anti-democratic policies were of secondary importance compared with them. The Tudeh party is a workers' party (the plenum of the "Majority" in March 1981 officially approved a process of unification between the Tudeh and the "Majority"). The Soviet Union was viewed as a revolutionary socialist state. The right of self-determination for national minorities was seen as only secondary to IRI's anti-imperialist policies; thus, the "Majority" pulled out of Kurdestan. The IRI was viewed as passing through a non-capitalist path towards socialism under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini. On the issue of the war, the "Majority" defended the legitimate right of the IRI to fight Iraqi aggression and participated in the first three years of the war.<sup>42</sup>

The "Minority" forecast of the future of the "Majority" became true. The "Majority" capitulated to the Tudeh line rapidly. Less than a year after the split, the "Majority" went through yet another split in order to secure approval of a policy of unity with the Tudeh. The Tudeh policy, which the "Majority" came to accept, was at this time (1980-1981) one of unconditional support for the IRI. This policy meant not only attacking other groups for their confrontational policy against the IRI, but also using its strength against any spontaneous anti-IRI movement. The foundation of such a policy was primarily based on two premises. First came the Tudeh's class analysis of the IRI, which stated that since the class base of the state was the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie, the IRI, under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini, would be able to cross over to socialism without having to pass through a capitalist stage. Second, and closely linked to the above analysis, was the Tudeh policy toward the Soviet Union, which suggested that since the IRI was anti-American, this stance could result in the improvement of its relations with the Soviet Union. Such improvement would, in turn, aid the IRI in its progress towards socialism. This simplistic approach left many questions unanswered. For

example, a vital question was what would happen to the groups which were confronting the IRI while the IRI was progressing toward socialism? How about the spontaneous movement against the IRI or the Kurdish war? As we shall see, the logical conclusion of such questions led the "Majority" to consider all such groups and movements as anti-revolutionary, illegal, and worthy of suppression in collaboration with the IRI.

As noted before, in March 1981, a split occurred in the "Majority." The split was minor compared to the "Minority" split. The splinter group, which called itself the OIPFG (Left-Wing Majority), was made up of former "Minority" members within the Fada'i. By this time, their differences with the "Majority" had reached a stage where they believed they could no longer stay within the "Majority". These differences were over such issues as support for the IRI, unity with the Tudeh, and adherence to the Soviet Union. As noted, this group did not join the "Minority" initially because they believed that their split was not timely. The only significant difference between this group and the "Minority" was their analysis of the class base of the IRI. This group, while considering the IRI reactionary, believed it was founded on the petty bourgeoisie and rejected the "Minority" analysis of the "organ of compromise" (see above). Thus, although this group was close to the "Minority," it did not join it for the time being.<sup>43</sup>

By the summer of 1981, four separate organizations claimed to be the Fada'i. Besides these four, two more groups had their roots in the Fada'i. First, the Organization of Worker's Path, later known as the Organization of Revolutionary Workers of Iran (*sazman-e kargaran-e enqelabi-ye Iran*), came into existence in the autumn of 1979 with the issuing of its publication, *Rah-e Kargar*. The Worker's Path was, in part, made up of some former Fada'i sympathizers and members who had rejected the theory of armed struggle while in jail during the anti-Shah period. Second, the Fada'i's Path (*rah-e Fada'i*) was made up of supporters of the Fada'i abroad during the anti-Shah period. This group, which gave its total support to the Jazani theses, was not accepted into the Fada'i following the 1979 revolution. Later, they sided with the "Minority," although they did not join it either. In 1985, the Fada'i's Path joined the Worker's Path.

Not only did the splits within the ranks of the Fada'i diminish the organization's hegemony among the Marxist organizations, they also weakened the communist movement in general. With three of the splinter groups opposed to the IRI and one giving it total support, the Fada'i's prestige declined among the population. While the Fada'i might have been able to organize a strong opposition to the IRI if it had stayed united, its chances were diminished without such unity. After this period of splits and disintegration, it is not possible to analyze the Fada'i as a social force, but rather as a number of organizations, among other Marxist organizations and groups, without any substantial mass support.

#### THE FOURTH PERIOD: 1981-1988

The June, 1981 crisis and its subsequent outcome was a turning point in the contemporary history of Iran. After this date, what little political and social freedom there remained in Iran was destroyed by the IRI which openly outlawed almost all the opposition. The June 1981 crisis was basically a confrontation between the opposition political groups and the clerical faction of the IRI. Subsequent to this date, Bani-Sadr was dismissed as president and the Mojahedin started an all-out urban guerrilla warfare to overthrow the IRI. From this point on, the social discontent, which up to there until had manifested itself either in the form of supporting various opposition groups or spontaneous outbursts, was repressed by the IRI.

Under these circumstances, every Marxist organization in Iran experienced internal crisis and division. During this period, due to internal crises and divisions and external repression, the communist movement was actually reduced to an insignificant element in the social and political arena of Iran. Divisions and crises soon overtook all Fada'i factions. In the following section the developments within each faction will be discussed and updated up to 1988.

As noted, the "Majority" sided with the Tudeh in defending the IRI. This defense was not of the state as a whole, that is, the "Majority," like the Tudeh, defended a faction within the state which they considered progressive, revolutionary, and radical. This radical faction, which showed strong anti-American tendencies, included the students who had occupied the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. According to the "Majority" analysis, this radical faction, headed by Ayatollah Khomeini, was anti-capitalist and progressive. So when this faction, in unity with a more conservative clerical faction, came into collision with Bani-Sadr, along with his liberal supporters and the Mojahedin, the "Majority" gave its support to the former. In return, when Ayatollah Khomeini declared all opposition groups illegal, the "Majority" and the Tudeh were initially exempted. Within this context, the "Majority" changed its policies toward the opposition. While before the June 1981 crisis the "Majority" activities toward the militant opposition were limited to advising them against any "leftist" and anti-IRI activities, after the crisis the "Majority" moved directly toward open collaboration with the state in repressing these groups. Therefore, the "Majority" once more declared its loyalty to the IRI's constitution and declared all of the opposition movements (Mojahedin, the Kurdish movement, Fada'i factions in opposition, etc.) as anti-revolutionary. In this context, the "Majority" gave this guidance to its cadres and supporters in August 1981:

The Organization's supporters [meaning the "Majority" supporters] must be aware of their duties in this critical situation. Uncovering the policies of the

counter-revolution at the work place, in the family, and in any place where the masses are present is one of your most important duties.<sup>44</sup>

In December 1981, Rahman Karimi (a member of the "Majority") and Ghani Bulurian (a member of the Tudeh), received a letter of appreciation from Colonel (later Brigadier-General) Sayyad-Shirazi, the head of the army in Kurdistan. In this letter, Colonel Shirazi displayed his gratitude to the two for aiding the army in suppressing the Kurdish movement.<sup>45</sup> When in late January 1981 the Iranian Communist League (*ettehâdiah komonistha-ye Iran*) attacked and occupied briefly the city of Amol, the "Majority" had this to say:

The Iranian People's Fadayan (Majority) and the forces of Tudeh Party of Iran, from the very early moments of the attack by counter-revolutionary intruders, participated, shoulder to shoulder with the people, the Basij, and the security forces, in their suppression and defeat. Two of our comrades and Tudeh members were wounded . . . and are in hospital at this moment.<sup>46</sup>

The collaboration between the IRI and the "Majority" did not last long. As soon as the IRI was stable enough and had managed to repress the opposition, it turned its attention toward the "Majority" and the Tudeh.<sup>47</sup> By early 1983, both the Tudeh and "Majority" were declared illegal and went underground.

In December 1981, a split occurred within the "Majority." The dispute with this new faction, which was headed by Ali Keshtgar, centered on the issue of unity with the Tudeh. The "Keshtgar" faction was basically dissatisfied with the notion of merger between the "Majority" and the Tudeh. Therefore, they asked for a congress to settle this and other issues. In the declaration announcing their split, the new faction did not indicate any disagreement on the issue of the IRI. In fact, both the "Keshtgar" and "Negahdar" (the head of the pro-Tudeh faction) still analyzed the IRI as a progressive regime. At any rate, the "Keshtgar" faction initially called itself the Organization of Iranian People's Fadayan (Majority). So, at this point there were two organizations with the same name, publishing two different publications with the same name—*Kar*. Later, in 1984, the "Keshtgar" faction dropped the term "Majority" and began publishing *Fada'i* as its official publication.

The collaboration of the "Majority" faction with the IRI was a unique development in the history of Iranian Marxism. Although there have been other instances of closeness between a Marxist organization and an anti-Marxist ruling state, the close collaboration of the "Majority" with the IRI (up to the point of participating in the state-sponsored massive repressions) was a unique and new development. Because of this, both the "Keshtgar" and "Negahdar" factions became very isolated from the rest of the Marxist movement. There have been numerous, but separate, attempts by both groups to put forth a platform of unity so that a kind of

rapprochement could be achieved between them and other Marxist groups. For example, the "Keshtgar" faction has more or less criticized its past collaboration with the IRI.<sup>48</sup> The "Negahdar" faction, alongside the Tudeh, which had had at least two breakaway factions by 1987, has also tried to unite with other Marxist groups.<sup>49</sup> None of the other Marxist and non-Marxist organizations have shown any interest in unity, with the exception of the Worker's Path, which has found the "Keshtgar" faction's criticisms more or less acceptable. Today, neither of the "Majority" factions show any visible presence in the daily events inside Iran. Even in Kurdistan, where other groups have some presence, the two "Majority" factions are very much unwelcome due to their past deeds against the Kurdish resistance. However, they both publish their official publications abroad.

The "Minority" was better organized and was the largest leftist organization in opposition to the IRI by the time of the June crisis. The organization lost two important figures immediately following the crisis. First, Sa'id Sultan-Pur, a prominent poet and Fada'i activist since the anti-Shah period, was executed. Then Siyamak Asadian, the head of the organization's military operations, was killed, along with two other members, near Amol. Despite these events, while other Marxist organizations were either in retreat or were being totally destroyed (e.g. the Paykar Organization), the "Minority" managed to function, to avoid the state's security nets, and to publish its weekly *Kar*. In November or December 1981, as Iran was close to a civil war, the "Minority" managed to organize the first Fada'i congress ever in the history of any Fada'i faction. At this congress, the leadership of the organization criticized itself for its inability to provide a coherent policy and its inactivity in the face of the new situation (i.e. the June crisis). But, while the congress was supposed to unify the "Minority" and to set its new policies, it revealed a deep ideological and political crisis within the ranks of the "Minority".

Before the congress could even get into its agenda, a division occurred. Six important and experienced members, headed by a member named Haydar, left the organization. At this point this group was known as the Resigning Group. Haydar was one of the editors of *Kar* before the "Minority"- "Majority" split. He was a leading member of the "Minority," a member of its central committee from the time of the split to the time of the congress, and one of the faction's leading theorists. But, it seems that by the time of the congress he had developed deep differences with the rest of the organization. The nature of these differences centered around the policy of the organization in the face of the new situation, issues surrounding the International Communist Movement, and a variety of other problems. It seems that the differences were so deep that this group did not even participate in the discussions of the congress. At any rate, this faction moved abroad, formed the Organization of Freedom of

Labor (Fada'i) (*sazman-e azadi-ye kar-Fada'i*) and started publishing an official publication in 1985 called *Kar*. As far as is evident, this group currently engages in polemical debates abroad and has an office in Kurdistan.<sup>50</sup>

Once the "Minority" congress started on its agenda, even deeper differences appeared. It became clear that two factions, a majority and a minority, existed. These two factions revealed themselves with the vote on every resolution. There were differences on how to confront the regime, how to organize the working class, with whom to unite and with whom not to, on the International Communist Movement, etc. The congress gave short-term answers to these long-term problems. To begin with, it decided against further division by arguing that, whenever possible, a compromise resolution would be drafted and, whenever impossible, the issue would be left for future congresses. In the meantime, it was decided that the differences would be discussed openly in special ideological bulletins.<sup>51</sup>

The OIPFG (Left-Wing Majority) was invited to attend the congress and to join the "Minority." By the time the congress ended, an unknown portion of the OIPFG (Left-Wing Majority), headed by Mostafa Madani (the only "Minority" member in the Central Committee of the OIPFG before the "Majority"- "Minority" split), decided to join the "Minority." Those OIPFG (Left-Wing Majority) members who did not join the "Minority" moved abroad and began the publication of *Aqazi-No*. Hence, the OIPFG (Left-Wing Majority) was dissolved at this point.

The "Minority" congress tried to contain the crisis. The congress elected a new Central Committee in proportion to the two factions. The new Central Committee was made up of two minority faction members and four majority faction members. At this point, the organization managed to set a number of solutions to cope with its internal differences and the general social crisis. The congress drafted a program of action on how to continue its struggle against the IRI.<sup>52</sup> But, soon after the congress, the situation changed drastically and the "Minority" proved unable to cope with it. First, the head of the congress, a member of the Central Committee and one of the most experienced members of the "Minority," Mohsen Modir-Shaneh-chi (from the majority faction) was killed in a shootout with the security police in late December 1981. Then, in a strong blow by the government forces in March 1982, the "Minority" underground publishing and distribution centers were attacked and confiscated. In this process, alongside many rank and file members, two more Central Committee members were killed. These were Mohamad Reza Behkish (from the minority faction) and Ahmad Gholamian-Langehrudi (from the majority faction). This blow, from which the "Minority" was never to recover, had two effects. First, it severely damaged the organizational network of the "Minority." Second, with three members gone, it left the Central Committee with three remaining members who were either incompetent or unable to handle the crisis. From this point on, the ability of the "Minority"

to act as an effective opposition took a path downward. First, the two majority faction members of the "Minority" Central Committee purged the remaining minority faction member and the minority faction from the organization instead of continuing with the congress's plan of ideological debate. This act undermined the spirit of co-operation arranged by the "Minority" congress and the organization's intra-party democracy. Subsequently, in June 1982, the minority faction distributed a declaration, identifying itself as the OIPFG (Socialist Revolutionary Tendency), (*gerayesh-e sosializm-e enqelabi*) and gave its views on the purge.

The Socialist Revolutionary faction was a losing cause from the very beginning, for it was not a unified one and its members were basically only united over their differences with the majority faction. On the contrary, the majority faction had more in common among its members. The Socialist Revolutionary faction was hit hard during the blow of March 1982. Indeed, most of the cadres killed in the publishing and distribution centers were Socialist Revolutionary sympathizers. Some members of the Socialist Revolutionary sympathizers had developed close ties with a small Trotskyite group called the Socialist Worker's Party (*hezbe kargaran-e socialist*), and were already in a process of theoretical reevaluation. This faction was able to distribute a few issues of a publication named *Nazm-e Kargar* inside Iran, but it moved abroad later and soon its internal differences deepened. The Socialist Revolutionary Central Committee member left this faction and soon joined the Worker's Path. The rest of this group simply dissolved after 1983.<sup>53</sup>

After the purge of the Socialist Revolutionary faction, the two remaining majority faction members of the Central Committee began the task of reorganizing the "Minority." They managed to republish *Kar* and to distribute it in a much more limited capacity. They appointed two new members to the Central Committee and arranged for a plenum to be held in June 1982. The organization even managed to establish a radio station, named *Voice of Fada'i*, in Kurdistan. But the situation of this organization continued to deteriorate due to a number of external blows and internal splits, which proved that its internal crisis persisted. Externally, from 1982 to 1985, the organization lost the remaining organizational networks, in the form of underground workers and neighborhood committees, it had managed to save from the March 1982 blow. In Kurdistan, where the organization had kept a visible military presence, it had to accept military setbacks as the IRI forces recaptured the area. Internally, the first split occurred between the very two persons who were in charge of the Central Committee and the purge of the Socialist Revolutionary faction. These two, Akbar Kamiabi (also known as Abbas Tavakkol) and Mehdi Same', had already appointed two new members to the Central Committee. It was agreed that these appointments were only made temporarily until the new congress could elect a new Central Committee. Soon, however, differences began to emerge between Kamiabi and Same'. Same' was a pro-Mojahedin

figure and, even in the congress, it is said, he took a sympathetic stand toward the Mojahedin. Kamiabi, on the other hand, was a strong sectarian ideologue who did not envision any alliance between the "Minority" and other groups. Therefore, while Same' sought a policy of closing ranks with the Mojahedin, Kamiabi sought a confrontational policy toward them. In this round of infighting, Same' lost in the very same way he had helped purge the Socialist Revolutionary faction. In June 1983, Kamiabi, allied with two hand-picked members of the Central Committee, purged Same', Same's wife (who was an advisor to the Central Committee) and the "non-members" who supported him. A year later, the OIPFG (*peyro-ye barnameh-ye hoviyyat*) ["in search of identity program"], with Same' as its leader, declared its existence.

The scope of Same's purge probably was very limited. Besides himself and his wife, there were probably no other members in his departing group. His support for the Mojahedin was a lost cause since the Mojahedin by this time had lost much of their own prestige and power. Same's cause could have found a better audience among the "Minority" during the initial phase of the June 1981 crisis. At any rate, his faction soon joined the Mojahedin-dominated National Council of Resistance and began to publish an official publication named *Nabard-e Khalq*. Considering the dependence of this faction, even for the simplest propaganda need, on the Mojahedin, it may be said that they are more of a symbolic name (i.e. Fada'i) at the disposal of the Mojahedin, rather than a substantial force.<sup>54</sup>

After the Same' purge, the rest of the "Minority" continued its downward path. In February 1985, after a shootout between its own members at the Radio Fada'i's hideout in Kurdistan, which left a number of people dead and wounded, another split occurred in the "Minority". The shootout was the result of two years of internal disputes and tensions which had gradually manifested themselves in the form of two factions: one around the Central Committee, and the other around the Kurdistan Branch. According to reports produced by a fact-finding commission (The commission was made of members from one Iraqi Kurdish, two Persian and two Iranian Kurdish organizations)<sup>55</sup> which looked into the dispute, the shootout was the result of deep differences over the conduct of the organization. According to these reports, because of a lack of coherent policy, of systematic setbacks to and decline in the organization, disputes had begun to take shape. One party in these disputes had called for the assembly of the long overdue congress in order to review the past, set future policies, and change the members of the Central Committee, whom it viewed as incompetent. The Central Committee had promised the convening of the congress, but had begun to purge some key members of the opposition prior to the congress. This, in turn, resulted in a group of dissatisfied members approaching the radio station's hideout where the Central Committee was also based. When they were fired upon from the radio base, they returned fire and, as a result, a number of people were killed

or wounded, including the head of the Kurdistan branch, who was killed. The Central Committee's opposition included such veteran members as Mostafa Madani and Hemad Sheibani. On the other hand, all the Central Committee members (including Kamiabi) had become members of the Fada'i only after the 1979 revolution. At any rate, the opposing party immediately declared the creation of a "Grand Council" and, with the favorable verdict of the fact-finding commission, declared the Central Committee and their supporters purged. The Central Committee, on the other hand, called the other party infiltrators in the ranks of the Fada'i, and in turn purged them.<sup>56</sup> Subsequent to these events, the two factions came to be called OIPFG (Central Committee) and OIPFG (Grand Council), respectively.

Three months after the June 1981 crisis, a split also developed in the IPFG (Ashraf Dehqani). The exact points of the dispute are not clear. What is known, however, is that a faction headed by Ashraf Dehqani developed a more or less revisionist view on the original Ahmadzadeh theses. The other faction, headed by Mohammad Hormati-Pur, took a more orthodox stand on these theses. The latter called itself IPFG (Iranian People's Liberation Army) (*artesh-e raha'i bakhsh-e khalgha-ye Iran*), while the former continued to call itself the IPFG. The Liberation Army faction waged guerrilla warfare in the Mazandaran and Gilan provinces subsequent to the split. But almost all the guerrilla team which operated in the area was uprooted by the IRI and its members killed (including Hormati-Pur) by the beginning of 1982. The IPFG (Dehqani) faction's organizational network was uprooted by the IRI, especially in the city of Bandar-Abbas and the southern provinces where they were strong, and moved to Kurdistan. Today, both of these factions operate out of Kurdistan. None of them ever established any official publication, but once in a while they both publish pamphlets explaining their views. Factions from both groups have split off and joined the Iranian Communist Party.<sup>57</sup>

#### *The Fada'i's Social Background:*

A limited study of the Fada'i's social background is possible through an examination of the background of the organization's fallen members. In a list provided by the Mojahedin, out of 12,028 persons killed for their opposition to the IRI, 433 belonged to one of the Fada'i factions.<sup>58</sup> This figure does not include any of those affiliated with the two "Majority" factions. Many opposition groups do not consider the two "Majority" factions as part of the legitimate revolutionary opposition because of their previous policies (see above).

A comparison of this study with one done on the pre-revolution Fada'i (Table One)<sup>59</sup> reveals that the Fada'i's social base has remained the intelligentsia and the more educated strata of the society.

TABLE 1

22 women	12.8%	7 office workers	4 %
12 workers	8 %	19 engineers	11 %
5 army personnel	3 %	17 teachers	9.9%
8 housewives	4.6%	1 high school student	0.6%
4 intellectuals	2.3%	73 university students	42.5%
3 doctors	1.7%		

TABLE 2

21 workers ( <i>kargar</i> )	13.1%
6 military personnel ( <i>arteshi</i> )	1.8%
2 intellectuals ( <i>roshanfekr</i> )	1.2%
3 doctors ( <i>pezeshk</i> )	1.8%
7 office workers ( <i>karmand</i> )	4.3%
9 engineers ( <i>mohandes</i> )	5.6%
21 teachers ( <i>mo'allem</i> )	13.6%
57 high school students ( <i>danesh-amuz</i> )	35.6%
38 university students ( <i>danesh-ju</i> )	23.7%
6 lawyer ( <i>vakil</i> )	3.7%
2 university professors ( <i>ostad-e daneshgah</i> )	1.2%
9 others	5.6%

TABLE 3

38 university students	17.5 %
57 high school students	26.3 %
90 high school diplomas	41.66%
23 university graduates	10.64%
5 Ph.D.s	2.31%
3 others	1.3 %

Out of the 433, 39 were women (9%). The occupation of 160 persons (Table Two) and the education background of 216 persons (Table Three) are known. Although there is a small increase in the working class base of the Fada'i, the figures show that the biggest increase has been by far in the number of high school students. While the Fada'i's social base before the revolution was mostly young university students, after the revolution this changed to include even younger forces. Finally, in a country where the illiteracy rate is still around 30%, the educational background table shows that the appeal of the Fada'i has been to those with an average level of education.

## CONCLUSION

Why, seventeen years after Siyahkal, has the Fada'i, an organization made up of a considerable number of devoted members who could have played a decisive role in the history of Iran, become so fragmented that it cannot be considered as an important factor in any social and political developments in Iran for the foreseeable future? There is not any simple answer to this complex question. There are a number of causes which are fundamental to the Fada'i's fragmentation and even, more generally, to the defeat of Iranian Marxists after the February 1979 revolution. Some of these causes were discussed in this paper, and more research is needed for the roots of others. The absence of intra-party democracy has been an important defect in the Fada'i history. Without intra-party democracy and the free exchange of ideas, any gathering of human beings will be unable to collectively face the problems confronting them. This inability to solve problems will have a long-term, destructive effect on the performance of any political organization. Thus, in the Fada'i case, Shoa'ian may have been purged easily and without much difficulty, but this simplistic attitude toward solving differences will sooner or later result in difficulties, such as the purge of the "Minority" by the "Majority" or the "Minority" shootout.

In a society where various types of dictatorship have been the order of the day for a long period of time, a despotic or repressive culture and political environment will take root. This repressive or despotic cultural and political environment has a direct bearing on all social groups and classes, even those intellectuals who claim democracy and liberation for all. Such a despotic culture can have implications far beyond the intra-democratic relations of any organization. The Fada'i considered itself the vanguard of the working class, and promised this class and other toiling masses a people's democracy and liberation. Could the Fada'i fulfill these promises, while it did not believe in intra-party democracy? Rosa Luxemburg has an interesting observation relevant to this point: "If the people that make the

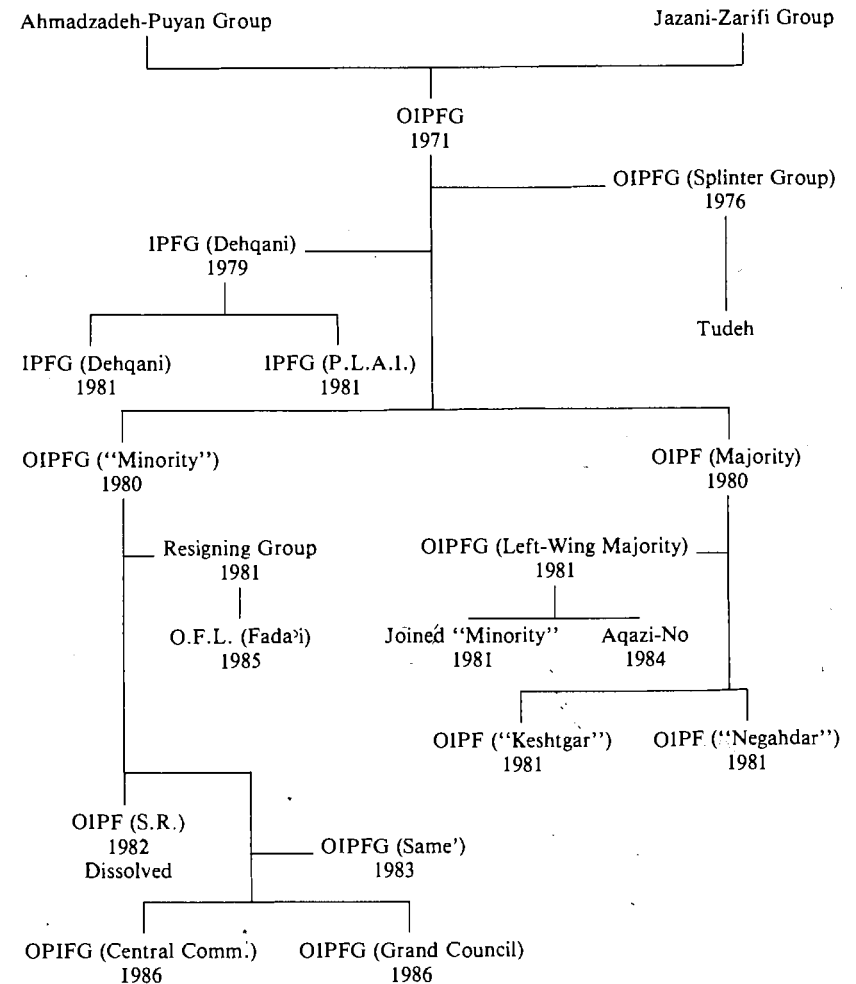


revolution are damned, won't the revolution be damned? If the revolutionaries are not human, if they don't understand the art of living, how can they create a better life for others?"<sup>60</sup>

The Stalinist education of most Iranian Marxists is an issue in need of more research. Most of the post-World War II Marxists in Iran were introduced to Marxism through what Leon Trotsky named "the Stalin School of Falsification," and were highly affected by the experiences of the Russian Revolution as it was revealed by the Stalinist propaganda. It is evident that Stalinism played some role in shaping the Fada'i's theoretical frame of reference. This particular school of Marxism believes in, among other things, little or no need for any kind of democracy. Stalinism served only to aggravate the anti-democratic tendencies of a Marxist organization which arose in a society with a despotic culture.

Among other elements in the Fada'i's demise was the lack of mature leadership. The reader may have realized that although this paper has put much emphasis on the theoretical development of the Fada'i during the pre-revolutionary period, the same has not been done for the post-revolutionary period. As noted, the founders of the Fada'i started their movement from ground zero. In this process they created a movement with a theoretical framework that strove gradually for the acquisition of experience. The theoretical output of the Fada'i's founders was original, new, and creative. There is an evident contrast, when a simple comparison is done, between the pre-revolution output of the Fada'i's founders and that of the post-revolutionary leaders of the Fada'i. The post-revolutionary works of every Fada'i faction are simple copies of classical Marxist texts, of other movements, or of other socialist countries. Hence, there was an evident decline in the theoretical output of the Fada'i. This decline, in turn, hampered the Fada'i's ability to analyze and understand post-revolutionary Iranian society.

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Diagram 1: *The Evolution of the OIPFG*

## NOTES

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1. *Kar*, The Publication of OIPFG (Grand Council), No.203.
2. There are a number of brief accounts of Fada'i history in Persian. These accounts are more of a summation of the organization's operations and experiences rather than a historical study. See: Hamid Ashraf, *jam' bandi-e se saleh* [The Summation of Three Years] (Tehran: OIPFG, 1979). Hamid Ashraf, *tahlili az yek sal jang-e cheriki dar shahr va kuh* [Analysis of One Year of Guerrilla Warfare in City and Country] (n.p.: n.p., n.d.), *goruh-e Ahmadzadeh-Puyan*, "19th of Bahman Theoretical" No.7 (n.p.: n.p., 1976). *goruh-e Jazani-Zarifi*, "19th of Bahman Theoretical" No.4 (n.p.: n.p., 1976). There are also a number of studies, in English, on the Iranian Communist Movement in general. Each of these studies include a section on the Fada'i. Ervand Abrahamian's chapter on the Fada'i is a compact and useful study on the pre-revolution Fada'i and other guerrilla groups. This study is unique in that it provides the reader with a statistical evaluation of the Fada'i members' social origins. Unfortunately, Sepehr Zabih's chapter on the Fada'i has many inaccuracies which reduces the book's usefulness. Ironically, Zabih suggests that the Iranian Communist Movement is strong enough to play a significant role in the near future developments of Iran. This suggestion runs against available analyses on the Iranian Communist Movement, including this paper. See: Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982), 480-495. Sepehr Zabih, *The Left In Contemporary Iran* (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1986), 113-158.
3. Ashraf, *The Summation*, 6.
4. The members of the Jangal Group were: Ali Akbar Safa'i-Farahani, Mehdi Eshaqi, Eskandar Rahimi-Mespehi, Ahmad Farhudi, Mohammad Ali Mohades-Qandchi, Mohammad Rahim Sama'i, Sho'a'aldin Mashidi, Abbas Danesh-Behzadi, Hadi Bandeh Khoda-Langerudi, Jalil Enferadi, Hushang Nayyeri, Iraj Nayyeri, Mohammad Hadi Fazeli, Naser Seif-Dalil-Safa'i, Isma'il Mo'ini Araqi, Ghafur Hasan-Pur Asil. The latter four were arrested before the operation and the only person not executed was Iraj Nayyeri, who received a life sentence.
5. Initially a group of eleven were arrested. To this group was added a group of three who tried to cross the Iraqi border in July 1968. The arrested were: Bizhan Jazani, Hasan Zia-Zarifi, Abbas Suraki, Sa'id Kalantari, Aziz Sarmandi, Ahmad Afshar, Mohammad Chupanzadeh, Mohammad Kianzad, Zahedian, Majid Ahsan, Qasem Rashidi, Kiumars Izadi, Heshmatollah Shahrzad, and Farokh Negahdar. Negahdar played an important role in the history of the Fada'i 13 years later when he headed the "Majority" faction. After the arrests, Manuchehr Kalantari, another member of the group who was in Europe, had to remain in exile. Kalantari later published *19th of Bahman Theoretical*, which devoted most of its issues to publishing Jazani's writings. Kalantari was killed in 1982 while a member of the "Minority" faction. See: Bizhan Jazani, *tarh-e jame'eh-shenasi va mabani-ye esteratezhi-ye jonbesh-e*

*enqelabi-ye khalq-e Iran* [The Sociological Plan and the Strategic Foundation of Iranian People's Revolutionary Movement] (Tehran: Mizan Publications, 1979), 165.

6. Shahriari was known as an agent with one thousand faces. He was a Tudeh member who had changed sides after the 1953 coup without Tudeh's knowledge. He ran the Tehran Organization of the Tudeh Party. For close to ten years, through him, many activists were identified and arrested. Shahriari was assassinated by the Fada'i in early 1975. His assassination sparked a SAVAK retaliation by murdering Jazani and eight others. See: *e'dam-e enqelabi-ye Abbas Shahriari* [Revolutionary Execution of Abbas Shahriari] (n.p.: OIPFG, 1975).

7. *tez-e goruh-e Jazani-Zarifi* [The Jazani-Zarifi Thesis] (n.p.: 19th of Bahman publications, 1976).

8. In his chapter on the Fada'i, Ervand Abrahamian mentions that Farahani and Ashtiani were connected to the Palestinian movement by Radmanesh, the first secretary of Tudeh. I have not encountered any evidence to this effect. See: Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, 484.

9. The second being that of Zarifi on the Tudeh and the 1953 coup. See: Ali Akbar Safa'i-Farahani, *anche yek enqelabi bayad bedanad* [What a Revolutionary Must Know] (n.p.: 19th of Bahman Publications, 1976). Hasan Zia-Zarifi, *hezbe Tudeh va kudeta-ye 28 mordad* [The Tudeh Party and the 1953 Coup] (n.p.: n.p., n.d.)

10. For more on the development of Jazani-Zarifi group, see: *19th of Bahman* No.4.

11. For more on this group, see: *19th of Bahman*, No. 7.

12. Amir Parviz Puyan, *zarurat-e mobarezeh-ye mosalahaneh va rad-e te'ori-ye baqa'* [The Necessity of Armed Struggle and a Refutation of the Theory of Survival] (n.p., OIPFG, 1970) p.52.

13. Mas'ud Ahmadzadeh, *mobarezeh-ye mosalahaneh ham esteratezhi ham taktik* [Armed Struggle, Both as Strategy and Tactic] (n.p.: OIPFG, 1970), 79.

14. In the *Jazani-Zarifi Thesis*, Jazani's views were similar to those of Ahmadzadeh regarding the existence of objective revolutionary conditions. But his views changed later. See:

Bizhan Jazani, *jam' bandi-ye mobarezat-e si saleh-ye akhir dar Iran*, [A Summation of the Recent Thirty Years Struggle in Iran], 2 vols., (n.p.: 19th of Bahman Publications, 1976).

For an English summation of Jazani's views, see:

Bizhan Jazani, *Capitalism and Revolution in Iran* (London: Zed Publications, 1980).

15. For Jazani's argument, see:

Bizhan Jazani, *nabard ba diktatori-ye shah* [War Against Shah's Dictatorship] (n.p.: OIPFG, 1978). For Farahani see: Farahani, 30-31.

16. Jazani, *The Sociological Plan*, 5-45.

Bizhan Jazani, *che kesani beh marxism-leninism khiyanat mikonand* [Who is Betraying Maxism-Leninsm?] (n.p.: OIPFG, 1978).

17. Ahmadzadeh, 73.

18. Bizhan Jazani, *cheguneh mobarezeh-ye mosalahaneh tudeh'i mishvad?* [How Armed Struggle Becomes A Mass Movement?] (n.p.: OIPFG, 1978).

19. In his analysis of the Fada'i, Professor Abrahamian does not seem to view

the different approaches as important. Disregarding the differences between Ahmadzadeh and Jazani makes it impossible to analyze the future development of the Fada'i. See: Abrahamian, 483-389.

20. In his thesis, presented to the 22nd congress of CPSU, Khrushchev suggested that the road to socialism was passing, mainly, through an economic struggle (i.e. competition) between the socialist camp (headed by the USSR) and the capitalist camp (headed by the U.S.A). This view was criticized and challenged by the Chinese Communist Party. Jazani suggested that the main road to socialism was a revolutionary one based on liberation movements. See: Jazani, *A Summation*, 189-202.

21. Jazani, *The Sociological Plan*, 19-20 and Farahani, 60.

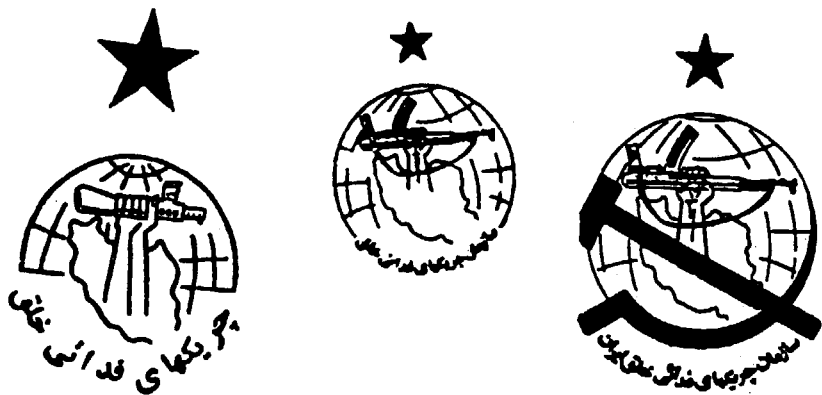
22. Jazani, *A Summation*, 58.

23. *estalinizm*, [Stalinism], (n.p.: Communist Unity, 1979), 23-135.

24. *tarikh-e jaryan-e kudeta va nazarati dar bareh-ye khat-e mash'-ye konuni-ye sazman-e Mojahedin khalq-e Iran* [A History of the Process of the Coup and Views on the Current Political Line of the Organization of People's Mojahedin of Iran] (Tehran: Abuzar Publications, 1979), 14.

25. For a history of the Mojahedin see: Ervand Abrahamian, *The Iranian Mojahedin* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989).

26. The Fada'i emblem has gone through a process of evolution. Originally, it did not carry the term organization; this was added in the later version. The latest version consists of the red star, the planet earth, Iran's map, a fist holding a machine-gun, the hammer and sickle, and the organization's full name.



27. Bizhan Jazani, *se maqaleh* [Three Articles], "19th of Bahman" No.1 (n.p.: n.p., 1976): 1-10.

28. Hamid Shokat, *negahi az darun beh jonbesh-e chap-e Iran* [A Look from Inside at Iran's Left Movement], Interview with Mehdi Khanbaba-Tehrani (Germany: Baztab Verlang, 1989), 195.

29. For more on the history of the People's Democratic Front and Shoa'ian's ordeal see:

Mostafa Shoa'ian, *panj nameh-ye sar-goshadeh beh sazman-e cherikha-ye Fada'i khalq* [Five Open Letters to the OIPFG] (n.p.: Mazdak Publications, 1979).

Mostafa Sho'aian, *sheshomin nameh-ye sar-goshadeh beh sazman-e cherikha-ye Fada'i Khalq* [The Sixth Open Letter to the OIPFG] (n.p.: Mazdak Publications, 1976).

30. Professor Abrahamian suggests that the Splinter Group was strong enough to play an important role in the downfall of the imperial regime. Although the group did have a limited political activity (e.g. in the universities), there is no evidence that the scale of it was as large or as effective as the Fada'i.

31. For more on the pre-revolution division in the Mojahedin and this group's role in the 1979 revolution, see: Abrahamian, *The Iranian Mojahedin*, 145-186.

32. *The Results of Wiesbaden Conference on the Crises of Iran's Left Movement* (Frankfurt: n.p., 1985).

33. *Nabard-e Khalq*, April 1974, No.2.

34. *Kar*, The Publication of The OIPFG, No.4.

35. For the group's initial views see: *mosahebeh ba rafiq Ashraf Dehqani* [Interview With Comrade Ashraf Dehqani] (n.p.: n.p., 1979).

Ashraf Dehqani is the sister of Behrooz Dehqani. Behrooz was one of the original organizers of the Ahmadzadeh-Puyan group in Tabriz. He was mainly responsible for recruiting Ashraf. After Behrooz's death, Ashraf continued her cooperation with the Fada'i. Later she was arrested and tortured by SAVAK, but managed to escape and write a book on her experience in jail, see:

Ashraf Dehqani, *hamaseh-ye moqavemat* [Epic of Resistance] (Middle East: The National Front Publications, 1974).

36. For more on the first post-revolution plenum see: *pasokh-e aqaliyyat beh nameh-ye "markaziyyat"* [The Answer of the Minority to the Letter of the Central Committee] (n.p.: OIPFG Publications, 1980).

37. For more on the Turkmen Peasant's Councils see: *zendegi va mobarezat-e khalq-e Turkman* [The Life and Struggle of the Turkman People] (n.p.: The Central Office of Turkman Sahra's Councils, 1980).

38. Both factions at this point claimed to be the supporters of Jazani's theses. But the "Minority" claimed that the "Majority" did not believe in these theses and that in fact they have accepted the Tudeh analyses on both the anti-Shah period and on the progressive nature of the IRI. The "Minority" grievances showed that many of Dehqani's claims were true. For the "Minority" view on the anti-Shah period, see:

*diktatori va tabligh-e mosalahaneh (qahr)* [Dictatorship and Armed Propaganda (violence)] (n.p.: OIPFG, 1982).

39. For more on the "Minority" and "Majority" views immediately after the split, see *Kar*, the organ of both factions, No.61,62, and 63.

40. *Kar*, The Publication of OIPFG ("Minority"), No.62.

41. Between the two, the "Minority" stood within the Fada'i traditions. These were struggle against a non-socialist dictatorship, defence of people's rights as it perceived it, and militant stands on social issues. See:

*Nabard-e Khalq*, The Theoretical Journal of OIPFG ("Minority"), No.1 and 2.

42. The "Majority" was a repetition of the Splinter Group experience. The "Majority" rejected the Fada'i past and suggested that Tudeh's anti-armed struggle position was right throughout the anti-Shah struggle.

43. The OIPFG (Left-Wing Majority) also accused the "Majority" of

bureaucratism and undemocratic methods in confronting their opponents. For more on the Left Wing see:

*nokati piramun-e mas'aleh-ye anternasionalizm-e proletari* [A Few Points on the Problems of Proletarian Internationalism] (Tehran: OIPFG [Left-Wing Majority], 1981).

*naqdi bar binesh-e hakem bar jenah-e rast-e aksariyyat* [A Critique of the Majority-Right Wing's Views] (Tehran: OIPFG [Left-Wing Majority], 1981).

*bahsi piramun-e bohran dar sazman-e ma* [A Discussion on Crisis in Our Organization] (Tehran: OIPFG [Left-Wing Majority], 1981).

44. *Kar*, The Publication of OIPF (Majority), No.120, August 1981.

45. This document was first published by the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran and was reprinted by the Mojahedin. See: *Mojahed*, The Publication of the Organization of Iranian People's Mojahedin, No.257, August 1985.

46. *Kar*, The Publication of OIPF (Majority), No.127, February 1982.

47. For more information on the planned attack on the "Majority" and the Tudeh, see: *Kar*, The Publication of OIPFG ("Minority"), No.112, May 1981.

48. For more on the developments of the Keshtgar faction, see the resolutions of the sixth and seventh plenum of the Organization of Iranian People's Fadayan in:

*Fada'i*, The Publication of OIPF, No.11, 1985 and No.30, 1986.

49. For more on the developments of the Negahdar faction, see the results of their plenum in:

*Kar*, The Publication of OIPF (Majority), No.29, 1986.

50. For more on this faction, see *Kar*, its official publication and:

*Kar*, The Theoretical-Political Publication, No.1 and 2, 1983 and No.3, 1984.

51. For the "Minority" congress, see: *Kar*, The Publication of OIPFG ("Minority"), No.140 and 141, December 1981.

*Sozializm va Enqelab*, No.4, September 1983.

52. *barname-ye 'amal-e sazman-e cherikha-ye fada'i khalq-e Iran* [The OIPFG's Platform of Action], (n.p.: OIPFG, n.d.).

53. For more on the Socialist Revolutionary faction see:

*Nazm-e Kargar*.

Five issues of these bulletins were distributed in Iran.

*Sozializm va Enqelab*.

Only the first three issues of this bulletin were published with the participation of the Socialist Revolutionary faction.

*Nataej va Cheshm-Andaz* [Results and Perspectives] (Tehran: OIPFG ['Minority'], 1982).

54. For more on Same's views, see his group's publication *Nabard-e Khalq*. Also see:

*Mojahed*, The Publication of OIPM, No.160, 161, August 1983; No.165, September 1983; No.185, November 1983; No.221, September 1984.

Tehrani mentions that Same' initially was accepted in the National Council of Resistance as an individual but that after seven months he suddenly claimed to be representing an organization. See:

Shokat, p.527.

55. *Kar*, The Publication of OIPFG (Grand Council), Nos 197-201, February to May 1986.

56. For more on the Central Committee faction, see:

*Leninism ya Troteskizm* (Tehran: OIPFG, 1982).

*enqelab-e Iran va vazaeef-e proletaria* [The Iranian Revolution and the Duties of the Proletariat] (Tehran: OIPFG, 1982).

*Internal Discussions Bulletin* No.2 and 5 (n.p.: OIPFG, 1986).

All of the above were written by Kamiabi. This faction had two more splits in 1987.

For more on the Grand Council faction see:

*Internal Discussions Bulletin* No.1,3,4, and 6 (n.p.: OIPFG, 1985).

Mostafa Madani, *enteqad va enteqad az khod* [Criticism and Self-Criticism] (n.p.: OIPFG, 1985).

Khosrow Khavaroqlu, *enqelab-e Iran va vazaeef-e proletaria* [The Iranian Revolution and the Duties of the Proletariat] (n.p.: OIPFG, 1986).

57. The Iranian Communist Party was established in 1982 after a union between the Toilers Organization of Iranian Kurdistan (Kumoleh) and a Persian Marxist group called The Unity of Communist Militants.

58. *A Partial List (12028) of Names and Identities of the Martyrs of Iran's New Revolution with 1199 Photographs* (OIPM, 1984).

59. Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, 481.

Professor Abrahamian's study was done on information available on 172 Fada'i guerrillas.

60. Elizbieta Ettinger, *Rosa Luxemburg: A Life* (Boston: Boston Press, 1988), 61.