



Kurdish National Congress of North America

P.O.Box 50216, Irvine, CA 92619, www.kncna.org

Summary of the seminar: Hope, Trauma, and Resilience, the Case of Rojhallat of Kurdistan

July 23, 2011

The Kurdish National Congress of North America (KNC-NAL) organized a seminar on July 23, 2011 in Irvine, CA titled: Hope, Trauma, and Resilience, the Case of Rojhallat of Kurdistan. Guest speakers included Mrs. Sohyela Qazi, and Dr. Kajal Rahmani in addition to some of the KNC-NA directors and other local personalities in Southern California. Following is a short script of the program:

Rojhallat of Kurdistan resembles a battered woman separated from three living sisters. She has witnessed various traumas, her hopes have been crushed many times, yet she remains resilient and plans not to give up until she is free. The lives of many of her children remind us of orphans abused by an antisocial, manipulative, and violent step father, the central government of Iran. Some of the offspring of the traumatized Rojhallat of Kurdistan include:

Qazi Muhammad (1893-1947) was the founder of Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran, ascended to the presidency of the short lived Republic of Kurdistan in Iran, and was hanged in public in March 1947. According to some reports the Iranian monarch of the time had later apologized to Qazi's family for taking Qazi's life under the pressure of Washington DC.

Mr. Foad Mostafa Soltani (1948-1979) studied Electrical Engineering. He and a number of Kurdish university students formed a clandestine organization which later came to be known as Komala in the fall of 1969. He was imprisoned and tortured by Shah's regime. After the Islamic Revolution in Iran he continued to live for the not-haves and their human rights. He died after a short battle on August 31, 1979 and like his four brothers, Amin, Hossain, Majed and Amjad gave his life for his belief.

Dr. Abdul Rahman Qassemlou (1930-1989) was a political scientist who was elected to the general secretary of Democratic Party of Kurdistan of Iran (PDKI) and fought for "Democracy for Iran and Autonomy for Kurdistan". In July 1989, Qassemlou had a meeting with the representative of the Islamic Republic to solve the Kurdish conflict peacefully. He and two of his companions were assassinated during the negotiation.

Mr. Sedigh Kamangar (1946-1989) was a lawyer and one of the founders of Komala, a Marxist group which distanced itself from the Soviet Union. In 1979 he mobilized the people of Sina to take over the city's military base prior to the Islamic government's



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arrival. Two of his brothers had lost their lives for their cause, Rauf Kamangar in 1979 and Maaruf Kamangar in 1983. Sedigh himself was assassinated on September 4, 1989 by his own bodyguard, Tofigh Gerjhali, who was working for the Islamic regime.

Dr. Mohammad Sadegh Sharafkandi (1938-1992) was a chemist who moved up to become the secretary of PDKI after Dr. Qasimlou. Like his predecessor he also believed that the Kurdish struggle in Iran should be linked to the struggle of the rest of the country against tyranny and injustice. He had a meeting with an Iranian opposition group to discuss how to resolve the Kurdish conflict. He too was assassinated on September 17, 1992 in Mykonous Restaurant in Berlin.

Mr. Ahmad Muftizadeh (1933-1993) was an influential political and religious thinker, a journalist, and a writer. He became involved with the Kurdish movement and was arrested and brutally tortured for one year in 1962. He led a peaceful movement in the 1970s that opposed armed resistance to achieve Kurdish autonomy. During the Islamic Revolution, he negotiated with the Iranian Ayatollahs but later withdrew his support for the Islamic State after the Ayatollahs violated their agreements. He was subsequently imprisoned for ten years, and because of the consequences of brutal torture, he died only two weeks after his release.

Mr. Farzad Kamangar (1978-2010) was a teacher, a human rights activist, a poet, a journalist, and a social worker. He was arrested by the Islamic State and charged with being the enemy of god and a member of the armed resistance group PJAK, which he refused to accept. He was repeatedly tortured and electrocuted. Kamangar was one of six political prisoners highlighted in International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran's September 18, 2008 document "Rights Crisis Escalates, Faces and Cases from Ahmadinejad's Crackdown". He was executed on May 9, 2010.

Shaikh Ezzeddin Hoseini (1921-2011) was a spiritual leader in Mahabad. He was a young clergy in 1942 when he joined Komala Jiâne-Kurdistan, which later merged with KDPI. In 1979 he negotiated with Tehran on behalf of the Kurds. Unlike Khomeini, he believed in separation of religion and state. He gave up the idea of a peaceful resolution of the Kurdish problem, and supported armed resistance against Khomeini. The government offensive of 1980 forced him to flee. He died in exile in 2011. He is remembered by many as a progressive and enlightened cleric.

Mr. Ghani Bluryan (1924-2011) was a founder of the Kurdish Democratic Youth Group, a member of the First Kurdish Democratic Party Congress, a member of Tudeh party, and the publisher of newspaper "Rega", The Way. He spent over 20 years in prison and was released in 1979. Believing in cooperation with Ayatollas, he was opposed by main Kurdish parties. In 1990s he lived a private life in exile and published his memoirs in



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1997. Later he supported the green movement of Iran. He died in exile in 2011. The Islamic regime refused his family bringing his body back to his hometown.

As learned from the lives and deaths of the above personalities, the central government of Iran has no mercy for any Kurd who demands justice and equality regardless of his or her political views. It is imperative for the Kurds to remain united, vigilant, and not to fall for the state manipulative, abusive, and deceptive behavior. None of them could do everything, but any of them could do something fruitful for all of them. As hopeful, traumatized, and resilient children of the Kurdistan, they have to give priority to their own national security and work together to secure their linguistic, cultural, and national rights. The speakers of the seminar urge all organizations, and personalities of Rojhallat of Kurdistan to work together, not to negotiate separately with Iran, but create an alliance, and let such alliance find a peaceful solution for the Kurdish conflict in Iran.