

Karrubi's Letter to the People of Iran

Monday, September 14th, 2009

In the Name of God, the Merciful and the Compassionate,

To the honorable, heroic people of Iran,

As you know, your servant [Karrubi] has written numerous warning letters addressed to high officials after the election and its aftermath. [I wrote these letters] in hopes that a solution be found, no injustice and tyranny be inflicted on the innocent, so that the echoes of the oppressed will not forever follow and haunt us. Because as our historical experiences have shown us: a government lasts with corruption but not with tyranny.

Three months have gone by in the life of our country, but what have these months been like? If in the 2005 election, our few hours of sleep was like the sleep of the Companions of the Cave (Ashab-e Kahf) and we went to sleep and got up to find everything upside down, in the recent presidential election, even staying awake did not help matter.

[In the 2005 presidential election, as votes were being counted, Karrubi was second, after Rafsanjani. But from late night until morning, that changed and Ahmadinejad became second amidst allegations of fraud. Karrubi complained, but a letter by the leader silenced everyone. Karrubi famously compared his late night sleep to that of the Companions of the Cave, a famous story in the Quran in which a devout group of friends sleep in a cave and wake up centuries later.]

Because they are no longer afraid to only rob [us] at night, but rather, the bandits openly rob us at midday. But this of course was only the beginning of the story. I would have never imagined that in the Islamic Republic, they would answer peaceful protests the way they did. They certainly did answer people's doubts about the election but not with reason and logic, but with bullets and batons and beatings. I saw every unimaginable [atrociousness] in the streets. Images that only awakened memories of our youth. But after time, other horrendous news began to come out, like the torture and other baffling abuses in unnamed detention centers. News that bewildered me and any other spectator. People would come and say things, or show evidence of what they had been forced to endure while in custody.

Dear lord, what was Mehdi Karrubi hearing and seeing? I wish he was not alive to see a citizen of the Islamic Republic come to him to complain of having been forced to endure all sorts of obscene, abnormal acts in unnamed detention centers. From stripping prisoners and forcing them to sit side by side, to all sorts of obscene name calling and urinating on their faces, to releasing girls and boys in the middle of the desert with blindfolds. Like this wasn't enough, we also heard news of rape. We asked ourselves: three decades after the revolution and two decades after the death of the Imam [Khomeini], where are we now, truly?

It is natural to feel your blood boiling at such disgrace and dishonesty. Was it possible to sit calmly upon hearing such news? That is why I took pen to paper and wrote a letter to

the head of the expediency council [Rafsanjani]. I wrote that there's news of torture and rape and all sorts of improper acts and I want you to investigate to find out if such atrocity had indeed occurred. When this letter was published, it was answered with an ocean of insults and threats directed at me. The Friday prayer leaders, in an organized move that came from administrators above them, launched a full-scale attack against me. This is how my doubts grew stronger. I told myself that if such atrocities had not occurred, they would have simply told us that they did not. But such unusual attacks from Friday prayer podiums big or small, and such obscenity from some newspapers, clearly showed that some were scared. I found it a personal responsibility to stand my ground and see this thing to the end.

The letter I had written to the head of the expediency council was also given to the head of the judiciary, and Ayatollah Shahroudi issued an order for Dorri Najafabadi, the head of the Supreme Court to investigate. Mr. Najafabadi contacted me and said that he would send a representative to me and when he came, I identified [to him] an individual who claimed that he had been both raped and tortured as one example. The representative also stated that no one should find out about this, as not to interfere in the investigations and he even insisted that interrogations should take place somewhere far from my office to stay secret. Until this point, reactions were reasonable. Until the prosecutor of Tehran [Mortazavi] entered the scene. He contacted me and told me that a representative would be sent to me. The person came and wanted evidence. The correct thing to do was to stick to what had been agreed with the previous representative, and to say that Mr. Najafabadi's investigators are currently looking into the matter and they've asked me not to share my information. But because I saw no errors in my evidence, and because I wanted to cooperate with the officials, I allowed this second representative to meet with this individual in my office and to hear his claims. I asked [the rep] if he wanted to meet in another location, but unlike Mr. Najafabadi's rep, he wanted to meet in my office.

Unlike the previous meeting which had gone well, this one didn't such that in the middle of the meeting, the boy came out and said that these people are after something else and they want to erase the entire problem, they are not after investigating my claims. He said that the representative for Tehran's prosecutor wants him to visit medical experts [with their entourage]. I encouraged him to go. But on their way, they had told him that he should keep silent and not shame himself and his family. They had said other things which I will not mention here.

The following day, that same boy came to me terrified, and said that they'd gone to his neighborhood and asked about him. I told him not to be scared, as they aimed to find the truth. But the boy came to me yet again and said that they had told the story to his father, and that he was completely ashamed and that his father was constantly crying. I asked the boy to bring his father to me so I could calm him down. But the boy left and never came back. After quite a while, the father came to me last Tuesday and he was very worried for his son. I saw a 70 year old man with pain and anguish all over his face. He said: we are Muslims, we are religious, and why did they do this to us? He brought out pictures to show me of his family's past. Pictures of his son wounded in the hospital during the war, while the president and current leader [Khamenei] was standing by his bedside kissing his forehead. The father said: this was our past, what has happened today? He said that

they had completely disgraced them in the neighborhood and even asked the neighborhood shopkeepers about them. He said that he was terrified of being in his own home. They had forced him into a car and asked questions about his son, to which he had replied that his son is an honest person with integrity. But after he had gone back home, he had heard the doorbell. He'd gone to answer it, but no one was there. This happened a number of times until the last time, there was a man on a motorcycle with a terrifying presence, taking pictures and shouting and cursing. The father said that they no longer have peace and safety in that neighborhood.

It seems that these were the judiciary officials who had come to investigate the case. And this was the result of the first piece of evidence we gave the judiciary. The judiciary in the Islamic Republic which claims to follow Ali [the Shi'a saint], sends armed, threatening individuals on motorcycles to the victims' door. They should be ashamed of bringing the name of Ali.

Today, I chronicle these events so that people do not compare Imam Ali to what is happening. I tell this story so that people know how some completely tore away the veil of modesty, prudence and integrity and future generations do not say that such injustices were inflicted and no one spoke a word and no one rose to scream out against it.

This was a lesson for us not to reveal our evidence so easily to Tehran's prosecutor. Mr. Najafabadi was dismissed from his position, and thus all the doors were shut. This was while the obscenity hurled at Karrubi were increasing day by day, in state owned newspapers. This is why I wrote a letter to the new head of the judiciary [Larijani] and asked him to investigate the allegations. This is how the three member committee was formed [Deputy Head of Judiciary Ebrahim Raeesi, Attorney General Gholam-Hosein Mohsen Eje'i, and President of the Presidential Body of the Judiciary Ali Khalaf] which was responsible to look into the claims put forth by the victims' families. A first meeting was held and went well. During this meeting, I reiterated the evidence that I had given to Mr. Najafabadi, and also presented two other cases, which I now feel obligated to explain for you people.

The second document was regarding a lady who had been to the demonstrations and who had been taken into custody while in the street. Her story was that they had played with her bosom while in the car, and once there, they had asked her to take off her pants, which she had refused. They had forcefully ripped them off. In the midst of this, a higher official had come into the room and asked what was going on. The officers had accused her of trying to manipulate them by taking off her clothes and falling to the ground. And this is while the woman was screaming that they had done this to her by force. God knows!

The third case was regarding a young man who was a member of a legal political party. His mother had contacted me and sent him to me. He had documents from medical experts and a CD with him which showed signs of torture on his body. He did not claim that he was raped, but the photos showed signs of inflammation and redness on his anus. He said that he had been unconscious due to the severe beatings, and he didn't know what went on or what they did to him. Medical examiners, seeing the inflammation had

written that more examinations had to be done with a letter from the judiciary. He had been in custody for only five days, but had endured such severe beatings that officers had thought he was going to die. They had told him they were transporting him to Evin, but had let him go blindfolded in the middle of nowhere.

These were three documents I presented during our first meeting and I spoke about two others. I told them that there was no written document for the latter two cases. One case was that of the real Taraneh Mousavi and I told them that her family does not speak to us and it is better for you [the judiciary] to investigate. More evidence [for the truthfulness of this story] was the vain attempt of some to create a false Taraneh Mousavi [IRIB]. If the committee's job was to investigate, it should have gone to question those who had created this false film that was broadcast on state TV. Those who had told the fake Taraneh Mousavi's family: "Do not worry about the real Taraneh Mousavi, we'll solve that problem." It's as if Karoubi's sole crime was to reveal the case of the real Taraneh Mousavi that had similarities to the chain murders; his daring tongue sealed the fate of Etemad-e Melli newspaper as the newspaper was shut down as soon as the matter was revealed. I told the committee the story of the real Taraneh, as I had heard it. She had been arrested along with one other girl and a few boys in front of Qoba mosque, on the anniversary of Ayatollah Beheshti's death. The girls exchanged numbers so as to inform the others' families if they got out sooner. In the first days of imprisonment, and during the severe slashing and thrashing of the prisoners, they notice that Taraneh is missing. When one of the girls is released, she calls the investigative committee [Karrubi's] and also Taraneh's family to inform them that she has gone missing. Apparently Taraneh's mother is very scared and asks the girl not to call her back. This girl appeared in the investigative committees of both Mr. Mousavi and I and told us the story of the real Taraneh. I asked this committee to investigate this case, and since the story of the false Taraneh was at their disposal, it should have made their job easier. I thought that in a judicial system which claims to follow the path of the prophets, our suggestions were enough to get them to investigate. I was wrong!

The second piece of evidence I only spoke of was regarding Saeedeh Pouraghayei. I said that I have heard some news about a person with this name, the daughter of a war veteran. But because I had not personally spoken to her family, I did not speak too long or too hard about this case, and went over it very quickly and I said that whoever she is, her funeral was held in Tehran. This was the least credible case I spoke of in that meeting, and I quickly let it pass by.

Two days after that meeting, I was involved in further investigations about this last case, of which I knew very little, and I met with a lady who was Saeedeh Pouraghayei's stepsister. She said that their father was not a war veteran, but had died six years ago. She wanted the address of Saeedeh's mother, who she said was her stepmother and according to her, they did not have a relationship and she didn't know of their whereabouts. I didn't have an address and thus asked Mr. Moghayeseh from Mr. Mousavi's headquarters and the person who had originally told us of this story. He declined our request, saying that their investigation may be interrupted [by any disturbances]. When I couldn't get the address over the phone, I convinced Mr. Moghayeseh to join me in a meeting with Saeedeh's stepsister last Saturday. I was thus able to sit Mr. Moghayeseh and Saeedeh's

sister opposite one another and I told her that I pray to god that her sister has not been killed and she said that the photo that was published is her sister, and thus, she is certainly dead. I asked Mr. Moghayeseh to give the address to Saeedeh's sister because if he did not, she would have to live with this doubt. At this point, Mr. Moghayeseh said that what had happened up to now regarding Saeedeh is questionable, because they'd found that her father was not a war veteran and had passed away six years ago and that Saeedeh had run away from home on a few occasions. I told him to give the address to her nonetheless so that she can have her doubts erased and he finally did so.

It was last Monday when Mr. Eje'i called and wanted me to come to a meeting at 2 p.m. and thus the second committee meeting took place. The committee members began by saying that they would like to continue investigating and without saying anything about the three written documents I had given them, or Taraneh Mousavi, they went straight to Saeedeh Pouraghayi and asked if I had any news about her. I went over the details of my meeting with her sister, and told them that contrary to what had previously been said, her father is not a war veteran and he passed away six years ago, and Saeedeh has run away from home on a number of occasions and the rumor about her being shot while chanting Allah o Akbar was also false. And I told them that Mr. Moghayeseh had told me this account, and I also told them of the joint meeting between Mr. Moghayeseh and Saeedeh's sister. What is interesting is that in this meeting, except for a very brief discussion on Taraneh, the committee did not at all discuss the documents I had given them and only focused on the story I knew very little about.

In this meeting, another topic that was discussed was Mr. Raeesi's interview between the first and second meeting in which he had stated that "Karrubi's statements must be investigated." Even though, Mr. Khalafi spoke differently about "investigating statements and documents." And I reminded them that what I had given them during the first meeting was not just statements but evidence and documents as well which had been provided on a CD. They said: "But a CD is not evidence." and I replied: "I wasn't there during the rape to make a film to provide you with, and I wasn't there when the crime was being committed to pass a thread [what does that mean?!] to tell you of the distance between them. And did you expect me to provide you with the instruments of crime? I also said that my job is not to collect evidence, and this is not my court, and if I have provided you with evidence, it's just a clue so that you'd go and investigate further and to bring an end to this injustice.

And that day I only provided them with another document related to a woman who had been taken right there [in the street] and raped in the car, along with another girl. I told them that this lady is frightened and worried and I told them that she has said that if her parents find out, she will be disgraced and will commit suicide. I informed them of the sensitivity of this issue, and warned them not to repeat the acts of Tehran's prosecutor and to disgrace an entire family in their neighborhood. I provided them with written documents about this rape, and I told them that there is also another case about a female nurse who was arrested and whose photos I had not looked at in detail as not to embarrass her. I just know that her entire body is black from all the bruises and she claims that she too has been raped and I will send in her documents for you to investigate. And I also

declared right then and there that I will stop bringing in evidence and what I have already provided is enough for to begin their investigations.

This meeting too went well, but the day after, the tides turned completely. My office and the party headquarters were sealed, and Mr. Beheshti, Alviri and Davari were taken into custody. The three member investigative committee gave out a hasty statement, instead of looking further into the allegations, and now as I look at their written statements I am certain that they too were ordered to finish off the cases and they've just hurriedly tried to finish everything. But I must mention two points regarding their report:

In this report, they have told of things I said, which I didn't say, and, at the same time they have not even hinted at things I did say – words that the witnesses had declared were said by the rapists, that were quite obscene.

They've also written that I had no evidence of rape and indecent acts before I wrote the letter to the head of the expediency council. It is astonishing that these gentlemen speak on my behalf, and make up tales. Mehdi Karrubi wrote that letter to the head of the expediency council after credible individuals and victims came to him, and cried of everything that had befallen them and those around them. And here and now I salute their courage for coming to a lone individual like Mehdi Karrubi, in the midst of obscenity and terror.

In this report, they have not written of the first document I offered them, which spanned 15 lines, or the second which was 7 lines, or even the third (5 lines) and they have not even referred to the fourth written document I offered them in the second meeting. In this latter document, four lines are written about Taraneh Mousavi, and then, a further 200 are written to clarify the accounts of Saeedeh Pouraghayi, whose story we personally had doubted [and investigated.] If now, we declare the name of the IRI official who released the body to the family, or [tell you] that they did not even allow Mr. Mousavi's rep to see the body, wouldn't it make you think that elements of the story was [deliberately] faked? This suspicious is further provoked when we see that this story alone was the basis of the report written by the committee.

Of course here I must point out how happy I am that the committee did not go after the fourth document I gave them, and limited their truth finding activities to this case alone, and at least they did not play with the dignity and the life of yet another individual. I am grateful to god for this.

The three person committee has asked that the judiciary strongly and justly deal with me. And thus, the result of the judiciary's activities is silencing me. I however am happy about this and welcome the circumstances. Maybe an opportunity will present itself for me to reveal details about these documents, and others I have and to retell what I have never told up to today and to be a voice for those seeking justice. I am happy if another opportunity presents itself so I can rid the hands of the Islamic Republic from atrocities like this and many others which occurred after the death of the Imam.

Today, Mehdi Karrubi knows that he has placed his finger on the right spot. From this chaotic and hasty response, I can tell that the gentleman's ghaba [the long clerical robe] is stuck between the doors [they are complicit in these crimes.] Imam Ali told Malek Ashtar [one of his disciples and the governor of Egypt] to govern in a way such that the oppressed can get justice without fear. We are far, far from Imam Ali's teachings. The son of the late Ayatollah Motahari tells us that a woman came to him and told him of the ordeals of her son in a detention center. After that, they have caused so much pain for the family that she herself has said: "we have no complaints" and, as we Lurs say "my donkey has had no tail from birth" [Persian proverb: I've never had any luck] This is getting justice without fear that was Imam Ali's advice to Malek! It is obvious where things are heading. Chaos and commotion entwined with terror has been so great in the past few weeks that some families have come to me and asked me to stop my investigations. They are scared of their future and tell me that I have created problems for them and for myself. But when they arrest the daughter of a prisoner and release her into the desert at night with blindfolds on, to a point where a newspaper belonging to the principalists also condemn this action and writes that this girl was left in Behesht-e Zahra cemetery, we figure out who is left to govern and plan over this country and people have the right to be worried for their future.

Their obscenity has gone so far, that instead of putting the culprits and wrongdoers on trial, they speak of putting Mehdi Karrubi on trial. They are unaware that the real trial will take place in the courtroom of the people, we must go to them and see who they find guilty and who they believe is the voice of truth seekers. Lord, I come to you for refuge of the atrocities they have collectively inflicted, which are not only a disgrace for the Islamic Republic, but for Iran, and which have disgraced justice and the Islamic court of law.

The three member committee has completed its task and has asked that I be put on trial but I leave judgment to the people and the lord and here I conclude the letters I have written in this regard. Although I have to also share this with the head of the judiciary and tell him that he must not be influenced by outside forces and pressure in his judgment and to disregard justice. Because compared to his two predecessors, he has an advantage and that is being the son of the great Ayatollah Mirza Hashem Amoli, and the son-in-law of the great Ayatollah Khorasani. I hope that Ayatollah Larijani does not act in such a way that at the end of his term, the marja'iyat will see harm.

[Arabic] The Lord Almighty knows the essence of all things

Mehdi Karrubi