

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 5, 2009

The Hon. Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
United States Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Madam Secretary:

Members of Congress have previously expressed, both to your predecessor and to you, our grave concern for the future well-being of the three or four thousand persons now living in Camp Ashraf in Iraq. They are refugees from Iran, identified as members of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI), and, thus, they have every reason to fear persecution, if not execution, if involuntarily repatriated.

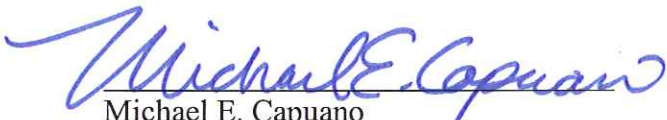
In 2004, the United States officially recognized the inhabitants of Camp Ashraf as "protected persons" under the Fourth Geneva Convention; and coalition troops, in fact, guarded the camp until the United Nations mandate for the Multi-National Forces expired on December 31, 2008, and the Government of Iraq assumed responsibility for them. On June 30 of this year, in response to Congressional concern for their safety and well-being, Richard R. Verma, Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, wrote that the Government of Iraq "has given the United States assurances that it will treat the residents of Ashraf humanely and will not transfer them to any country where there are substantial grounds for believing they would be persecuted...."

Reliable reports now tell of a July 28 assault on Camp Ashraf by Iraqi forces, during the visit of the United States Secretary of Defense to Baghdad. The number of casualties has yet to be verified, but all accounts agree that people were beaten and, possibly, shot. General Ray Odierno is quoted as saying that "using non-lethal force is a good sign." It cannot, however, be evidence of the "humane treatment" supposedly guaranteed by the Iraqis.

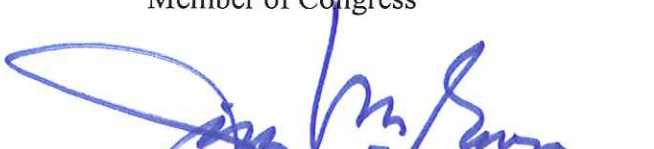
And yet, in the same *Washington Post* article from July 28, 2009, Ian Kelly, a spokesman for the Department of State, gives assurances that DOS will monitor the situation to assure that residents "are treated in accordance with Iraq's written assurances that it will treat the residents humanely." Madam Secretary, this response is clearly inadequate. A community of protected persons has been set upon by security forces of the state to which we relinquished their protection. We believe there is cause to fear the forced expulsion of the Ashraf residents by Iraqi forces.

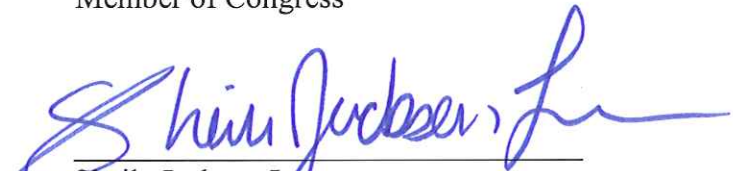
We ask that you instruct Ambassador Christopher Hill to not only engage the Iraqi government as soon as possible on arrangements for the security and well-being of these persons, but also to ensure Iraq's plans comport with international law and with the assurances Iraq gave the U.S. regarding Ashraf residents. We must demonstrate to all countries in the region our continuing concern. Please keep us informed on any progress you make with the Government of Iraq on this front, and any actions taken by Iraqis to address this apparent change in protocol.

Sincerely,


Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress


Dana Rohrabacher
Member of Congress


James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

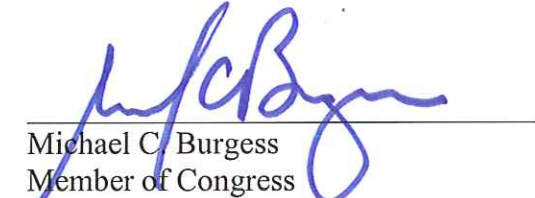

Daniel E. Lungren
Member of Congress

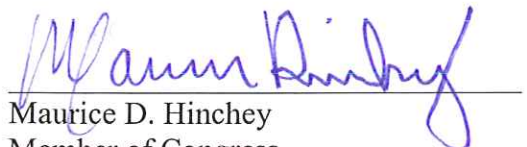

Brad Sherman
Member of Congress

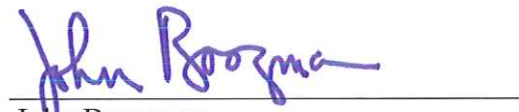

John Culberson
Member of Congress


Wm. Lacy Clay
Member of Congress


Ted Poe
Member of Congress (via fax)


Michael C. Burgess
Member of Congress


Maurice D. Hinchey
Member of Congress


John Boozman
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Duncan Hunter
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Bob Filner
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Bob Inglis
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Loretta Sanchez
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