

## UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

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### On the Process of Interrogation

#### THE INTERROGATIONS AT SEPPAH PRISON

Each Baha'i arrested is subjected to a four-stage interrogation process that leads either to release or execution. The first stage consists of a series of formal interrogations by an Islamic judge appointed by the Public Prosecutor.

These take place inside the prison. The interrogations, which last for many hours, are usually held with a number of the prisoners present, although some are also held with each prisoner alone. The revolutionary guards are usually masked and the prisoners blind-folded, and made to sit facing a wall. At each stage the victim is verbally abused, asked the same questions over and over again, and often asked to write down the answers since the majority of the revolutionary guards and many of the interrogating judges are illiterate, while their Baha'i victims are often well-educated. The interrogators demand to know the names, addresses and telephone numbers of all the Baha'is in a given city, then in all of Iran, then around the world.<sup>10</sup> At each stage the prisoner is asked to deny their Baha'i beliefs and become a Muslim.

The next stage is an interrogation at the Islamic Revolutionary Court, which is carried out by the Assistant to the Public Prosecutor. This interrogation may also take many hours, but is normally completed in one day. The final interrogation takes place in front of an Islamic Revolutionary Judge, and usually lasts only a short time, sometimes less than an hour.

After the three interrogation stages, there is no set time before a "sentence" is handed down. It can take weeks, months or longer. In all interrogations and before any Baha'i is executed, however, he or she is given numerous opportunities, usually under great physical and mental anguish, to recant.