

Winter 1983-84

# World Order

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**The Persecution of Iran's Bahá'ís—**

**An Update**

**A Congressional Hearing**

**Congressman Gus Yatron**

**Congressman John Porter**

**Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams**

**Judge James F. Nelson**

**Said Eshraghi**

**Wilma M. Brady**

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**The House Debate**

**The Senate Debate**

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**A Concurrent Resolution**

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BP000281

World Order



Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians are allowed token representation in the Majlis and may organize certain community institutions.

Despite this degree of official sanction for continued existence in the Islamic Republic, members of all three faiths are subjected to discrimination in several areas. Proper Muslim credentials are a pre-requisite for many government positions, thus denying opportunities to both nominal Muslims and members of religious minorities. While skilled professionals and technicians in areas such as the oil industry have retained their jobs, their opportunities for advancement are limited. Public services, which are frequently obtained through the intervention of revolutionary institutions, are less readily obtained by members of religious minorities. Furthermore, disputes continue between minority community institutions and the Khomeini regime as the government attempts to interfere and to impose Muslim social practices such as the ban on alcoholic beverages, complete segregation of the sexes, and all-covering dress for women and girls.

In addition, the Baha'i, the Christians, and

the Jews are, for differing reasons, viewed as having ties and loyalties to the West and to Israel, and their loyalty to the regime is suspect.

### *Baha'i*

THE REGIME'S worst treatment is extended to Iran's other non-Islamic minority, the Baha'i. In what is perhaps the most egregious human rights problem of all in Iran and one of the worst in the world, the Khomeini regime has virtually criminalized a particular religious faith, that of the Baha'i, which arose in Iran during the nineteenth century as an offshoot of Shi'ite Islam.

Viewing the Baha'i as heretics and as a potential fifth column for the United States or Israel, the Khomeini regime has robbed the Baha'is of their rights as citizens in a way sickeningly reminiscent of Nazi Germany's treatment of German Jews before the Holocaust. Baha'i marriages never were officially recognized in Iran, but the revolutionary regime has branded Baha'i married women as "prostitutes." Baha'i shrines and cemeteries have been desecrated and destroyed. Baha'is have been fired from jobs and denied pensions and social services. Baha'i-owned businesses

mented our abhorrence of this flagrant violation of human rights and international standards of decency in our annual human rights reports to the Congress as well as in the official statements of Department spokesmen. The voice of America regularly carries items about the persecution of the Baha'i in its Farsi language broadcasts. In addition, the United States has been working with allied and other friendly countries in international fora to focus attention on this problem, to support involvement by the United Nations Secretary General in attempts to alleviate this

and other human rights abuses in Iran, and, to the extent possible to bring international pressure to bear on the Iranian authorities. In so doing, we must be sensitive, however, to the Iranian regime's tendency to make the baseless charge that the Baha'is are a fifth column of American agents in Iran, and that our interest in the Baha'i is not solely based on humanitarian concerns.

We welcome these hearings as a further opportunity to bring the plight of the Baha'i and other human rights violations in Iran to the public's attention.

attacked by a mob and strangled. Her body was publicly burned.

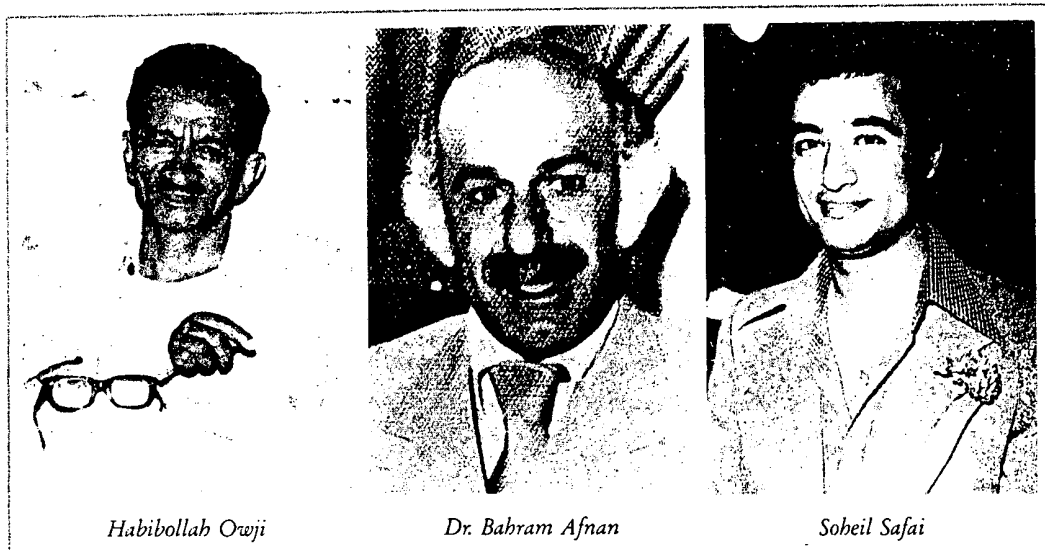
In February 1983, again in Shiraz, twenty-two Baha'is were sentenced to death. The sentences were sustained by Iran's Supreme Court, though no formal charges had been preferred. The names of the condemned were not made public, increasing the agony of a large number of Baha'is whose relatives were in prison and could have been among the condemned. When the presiding judge of the Revolutionary Court was asked by a reporter for the *Khabar-e Junub*, a local newspaper, to comment on the death sentences, he stated: "It is absolutely certain that in the Islamic Republic of Iran there is no place for Baha'is or Bahaism. . . . Before it is too late, the Baha'is should recant Bahaism, which is condemned by reason and logic. Otherwise, the day will come when the Islamic na-

tion will deal with them in accordance with its religious obligations. . . ." The judge added menacingly that the files of five hundred Shiraz Baha'is were being studied by his revolutionary court.

While the United Nations Commission on Human Rights on March 10, 1983, adopted a resolution expressing concern at the violations of human rights in Iran, and while specific appeals were being made on behalf of the condemned Shiraz Baha'is by various governments and the European Parliament, Islamic authorities, on March 12, hanged Yadollah Mahmudnezhad, Rahmatollah Vafai, and Mrs. Tuba Zaerpur.

In April 1983, there were more arrests. On the 29th the entire membership of the Spiritual Assembly of Zahedan was imprisoned without being charged.



*Habibollah Owji**Dr. Bahram Afnan**Soheil Safai*

On May 1 two Baha'is, Soheil Safai and Jalal Hakimian, who had recently been transferred to Tehran from a jail in Esfahan, were summarily executed.

On May 12, in the city of Dezful, Mrs. Iran Rahimpur, who, while in prison, had given birth to a son, was put to death. The infant was given away to a Muslim family and its subsequent fate is unknown.

JUNE 1983 was a month drenched in blood. In spite of pleas by foreign governments, in spite of a personal appeal by President Reagan, six men were hanged in Shiraz on the 16th. They were Dr. Bahram Afnan (forty-eight years old), a prominent and highly respected cardiologist; Bahram Yaldai (twenty-three years old), a student; Jamshid Siavushi (thirty), a merchant; Enayatollah Eshraghi (sixty), a retired officer of the Iranian National Oil Company; Kurosh Haqbin (twenty-seven), an electrician; and Abdul Hoseyn Azadi (sixty), a retired employee of the Ministry of Health. One of Mr. Eshraghi's sons is with us today. He will presently tell the committee the harrowing tale of what befell one Baha'i family.

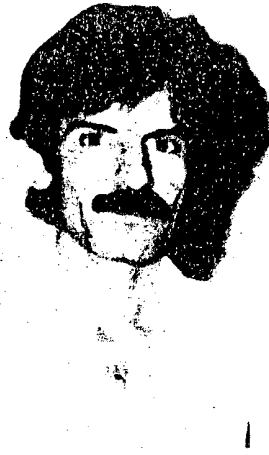
Still hungry for Baha'i lives, the Islamic authorities next hanged ten women. They were Nosrat Yaldai (fifty-four years old), mother of

a student who died on the gallows only two days earlier; Ezzat Eshraghi (fifty), wife of Enayatollah Eshraghi; Roya Eshraghi (twenty-two), daughter of Enayatollah and Ezzat Eshraghi; Tahereh Siavushi (thirty-two), wife of Jamshid who had been hanged on June 16; Mona Mahmudnezhad (eighteen), whose father had been hanged on March 12; Zarrin Moqimi (early twenties); Shahin Dalvand (early twenties); Akhtar Sabet (nineteen); Simin Saberi (early twenties); and Mahshid Nirumand (eighteen).

The hanging of ten women, among them three teenage girls, was a particularly heinous crime. The courage and steadfastness of the victims have already become legendary among Iranian Baha'is.

An eighteen-year-old girl, Mona Mahmudnezhad, charged with the crime of teaching Baha'i children's classes, bravely debated Judge Qazai, the religious magistrate who eventually sent her to the gallows. I would like to read a brief excerpt from a letter written by a Baha'i woman who shared Mona's incarceration and survived to bear witness to the young girl's heroism.

... in her trial the religious magistrate, Mr. Qazai, after insulting and humiliating her, said, "Your father and mother have deceived

*Mrs. Iran Rahimpur**Kurosh Haqbin**Bahram Yaldai*

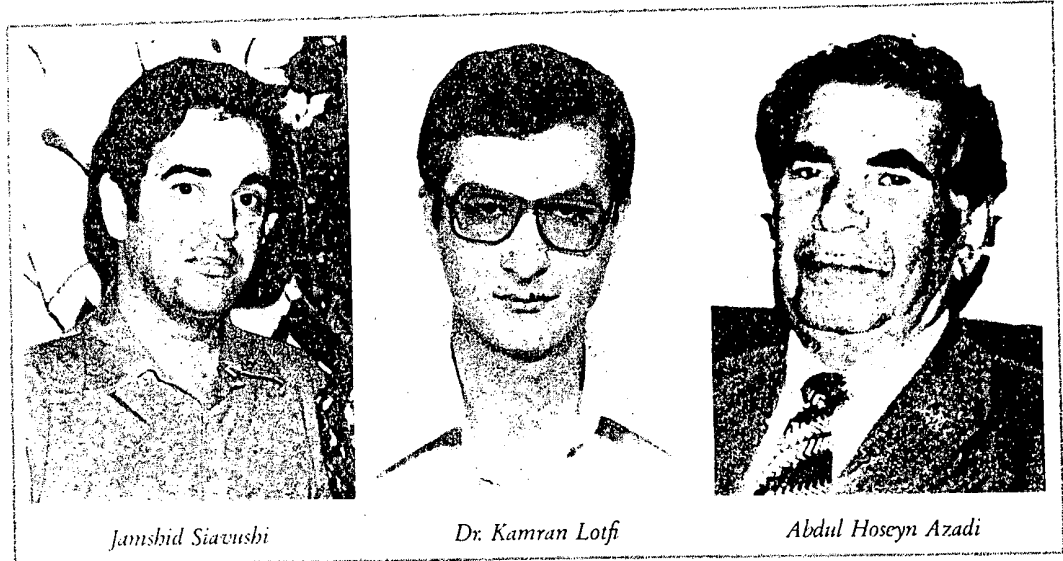
and misled you." In reply Mona said, "Your honor, it is true that I learned about the Baha'i Faith from my parents, but I have done my own reasoning. In the Baha'i Faith one adheres to religion after investigation, not by imitation. You have many of our books; you can read and find out for yourself. My father and mother did not insist on my accepting their belief; neither did they force me to become a Baha'i. If the religious magistrate thinks I should abandon my belief, I will never do so, and prefer submitting to the order of execution." The religious magistrate was astounded and said, "Young girl, what do you know about religion?" Mona exclaimed, "Your honor, I was brought here from the classroom in school. I have been in prison and going through trials for three months. What better proof of my religious certitude than my perseverance and steadfastness in the Faith? It is the Faith that gives me confidence to go through this trial in your presence..." The religious magistrate remained silent for a while, then said to Mona, "What harm did you find in Islam that you have turned to Bahaism?" Mona's answer was, "The foundation of all religions is one. From time to time, according to the exigencies of time and place, God sends His

Messenger to renew religion and guide the people in the right path. The Baha'i religion upholds the truth in Islam, but if by Islam you mean the prevailing animosity, murder, and bloodshed in the country, a sample of which I witnessed in prison, that is the reason I chose to be a Baha'i."

In Shiraz jails as elsewhere, the Revolutionary Guard freely applied torture to prisoners, both male and female. Accounts written by surviving eyewitnesses are full of gruesome details of beatings. They tell of prisoners whipped with metal cables; of prisoners having boiling water poured on their heads, and having their heads smashed against concrete walls; of prisoners being kicked with heavy boots and being beaten with fists and sticks; of prisoners being beaten on the soles and then forced to run on lacerated feet.

Two more Baha'is perished in Shiraz before bloody June was over. On the 28th Soheil Hushmand (twenty-eight) was hanged, and on the 30th Ahmad-Ali Sarvestani (sixty-seven) died in prison.

Thereafter the rate of executions decreased dramatically. There were no executions in July 1983. Though Mohammad Eshragi, a prominent eighty-one-year-old Baha'i died in prison in Tehran on August 31, and his death can be

*Jamshid Siavushi**Dr. Kamran Lotfi**Abdul Hoseyn Azadi*

directly attributed to his incarceration, it was not an execution. The same holds true of Abdul Majid Motahhar, who was imprisoned in Esfahan in September and died shortly after. October, as far as we know, was free of deaths. Bahman Dehqani, a highly respected Baha'i, was killed by a mob in Mohammadiyah near Esfahan on November 19, 1983. December again was free of murders and executions.

January 1984 witnessed the arrest in Kerman of Rahmatollah Hakimian, a former official of the Ministry of Agriculture. The most distressing feature of his case was that he died after undergoing severe torture.

There were no reported deaths in February. However, in March at least three Baha'is died in prison in mysterious circumstances. The body of Mohsen Razavi (fifty-five years old) who died in Narmak near Tehran bore the marks of hanging. Abdul Hoseyn Shakeri-Hasanzadeh died in prison in Tehran under mysterious circumstances. His body was not released to his family for burial. The same happened with Nosratollah Ziyai (sixty-one) in the town of Baft.

In April we received the news of the execution in the notorious Evin prison in Tehran of Kamran Lotfi (thirty-two), a university professor who had been incarcerated since May 5,

1983. Rahim Rahimiyan (fifty), a businessman, arrested on the same day as Professor Lotfi, was executed in Narmak, near Tehran, in April. Yadollah Saberiyan (sixty), a printing press manager, imprisoned on February 9, 1982, was put to death in Tehran.

Though the number of killings diminished, probably at least in part because of worldwide publicity, other forms of pressure intensified. Recent reports indicate that torture is being used not only to force recantations and conversions to Islam but also to extract false confessions of various fictive crimes, confessions which would "prove" the old accusations that the Baha'is were Zionist or imperialist agents, foreign spies, or a political subversive group. Having failed in five years to produce a single document or a single genuine admission indicating Baha'i participation in any antigovernment activity, the authorities seem desperately anxious to force their Baha'i victims to incriminate themselves and their community.

The number of arrests and imprisonments has increased greatly in the last two years. Between May 1982 and May 1984 over 1,000 persons were arrested and jailed. Of these at least 703 were still held as of two weeks ago. This constitutes an almost fivefold increase over the number of Baha'is in custody in May 1982.

*Shabin Dalvand**Simin Saberi**Mrs. Tabereh Siavushi*

PARALLEL with the actions of the authorities there has been a great deal of semiofficial anti-Baha'i activity. Typically, a local revolutionary committee or an individual mullah will arouse a mob of simple-minded fanatics and lead a pogrom of the local Baha'is.

For sixteen days in August of 1982 fifty Baha'is in the village of Seysan were subjected to violence and abuse. They were finally forced to sign prepared documents of recantation. Immediately thereafter they wrote letters affirming their belief in the Baha'i Faith and stating that they had signed the documents under duress. These letters they sent to the government together with copies to the newspapers that had publicized the alleged recantations. It should be pointed out that the reaffirmation of belief in the Baha'i Faith was an act of great courage since it opened them to the possible accusation of being lapsed heretics worthy of instant execution.

Mob scenes were repeated in December 1982 in Qomsar, near Kashan, where Baha'i properties were set on fire and individual Baha'is were attacked in the streets.

On June 29, 1983, in the village of Ival, near Sari in the province of Mazandaran, some 130 Baha'is, including women and children, were driven into an enclosure in an open field and

told that they would be held there without food or water until they recanted their religion. For two days and nights the Baha'is resisted the demand. On the third day they were permitted to return to their homes. However, that same night they were attacked by a mob and forced to seek shelter in the dense Mazandaran forest.

As it did in earlier years, the Islamic government of Iran between May 1982 and May 1984 continued to deprive Baha'is of work, to deny pensions to retired Baha'is, to expel Baha'i children from schools, to bar Baha'i youth from universities, to withhold business licenses from Baha'is, to confiscate private property belonging to Baha'is, and to make every effort to impoverish the Baha'is, thus breaking their spirits and making them amenable to conversion to Islam. An appendix to this testimony includes a number of official documents that prove the truth of the above conditions. For example: On April 6, 1983, one of Iran's leading newspapers, *Ettelaat* (No. 16980), published an official report of a purge of Iran's oil ministry. The head and the high officials of the ministry met with the president of the Supreme Court of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In the course of the meeting a list of persons discharged from the ministry with the reasons for the discharge was



given out to the press. Of the 778 persons on the list 61 were named as collaborators with the SAVAK, the political police of the Shah's regime; 39 were purged for "efforts in consolidating" that regime; 24 were dismissed as free masons or members of organizations affiliated with freemasonry; 134 were purged for membership in organizations whose constitutions denied God and had been banned; 8 were discharged for deeds detrimental to the Islamic republic, rumor mongering, spying, and armed aggression; 7 were dismissed for bribery, fraud, misappropriation of government funds, and extortion; 2 were dismissed for calumny, perjury, contempt of court, and forgery; 31 were dismissed for immorality; and 472—more than half of the 778—were purged for membership "in the misguided group of Baha'ism which, according to the unanimous verdict of Muslims, is a heretical group outside Islam."

The above document leaves no doubt as to the purely religious nature of the persecution of the Baha'is and the overwhelming ill will the clerical rulers of Iran bear them. Unfortunately, the purge of the oil ministry was not unique. Other government departments have undergone similar Islamization. Such processes inevitably remind one of the actions of other ideological dictatorships and their treatment of undesirables whether they were "inferior" races or class enemies.

THE HEAVIEST of all blows fell upon the Baha'i community on August 29, 1983, when the Revolutionary Prosecutor General Hojjatu'l Islam Seyyed Hoseyn Musavi Tabrizi in an interview with a reporter of the newspaper *Keyhan* proclaimed that as of that day

all the collective and administrative activities of Bahaism in Iran are banned, even though this has always been so. This is being announced in behalf of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The constitution of the country has also not recognized them. . . . Therefore, because of such sabotage activities and illegalities which prevail in the Baha'i administration, such administration, according to the opinion of the office of the Prosecutor General of the Islamic Republic, is hostile

and subversive. Any form of activity carried out in behalf of the administration, therefore, is forbidden.

The Prosecutor General quite inconsistently stated that "if a Baha'i himself performs his religious acts in accordance with his own beliefs, such a man will not be bothered by us, provided he does not invite others to the Baha'i Faith, does not teach, does not form assemblies, does not give news to others, and has nothing to do with administration. Such people," the Prosecutor General continued, "are not only spared execution, they are not even imprisoned. If, however, they decide to work within the administration, this is a criminal act and is forbidden. . . . Such people are considered as conspirators."

Thus the mullahs outlawed the entire organizational structure of a religion that has no clergy and administers itself through local and national elective bodies. The Spiritual Assemblies collectively perform the work of priest, teacher, advisor, trustee of funds, and keepers of records. They admit to membership, witness marriages, supervise the religious education of children, settle disputes among individuals, grant religious divorce, encourage good deeds, and censure reprehensible behavior. Spiritual Assemblies are central to the life of the Baha'i community. They are viewed as divinely blessed institutions and their members as trustees who perform indispensable functions on behalf of the entire Baha'i population. There were in Iran at least 3,600 Baha'is who served on local Spiritual Assemblies. Each of these Assemblies had numerous committees and subcommittees, multiplying the number of individuals directly involved in organizational activity three or four times. Thus well over 10,000 people were instantly turned into criminal conspirators.

In reply to the statement of the Prosecutor General the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Iran, men and women, seventeen of whose predecessors had been either abducted or put to death by the Islamic authorities, addressed a letter that was delivered to two thousand government officials and public personages in Iran.

The letter accused the authorities of "brazenly bringing false accusations against a band of innocent people, without fear of the Day of Judgment, without even believing the calumnies they utter against their victims, and having exerted not the slightest effort to investigate . . . the validity of the charges they are making."

The Prosecutor, the letter said, has accused the Baha'is of espionage but produced not even one document in support of the accusation. "What is the mission . . . of this extraordinary number of 'spies': What sort of information (do) they obtain and from what sources? Whither do they relate it and for what purpose? What kind of 'spy' is an eighty-five-year-old man from Yazd who has never set foot outside his village? Why do these alleged 'spies' not hide themselves, conceal their religious beliefs and exert every effort to penetrate, by every stratagem, the Government's information centers and offices? . . . What secret intelligence documents have been found in their possession? What espionage equipment has come to hand? What 'spying' activities were engaged in by primary school children who have been expelled from their schools?"

Systematically, logically, with overwhelming evidence, the letter demonstrated the falsehood of the accusations hurled against the Baha'is by the Prosecutor General and the government authorities of the Islamic Republic. It reiterated with dignity and eloquence the principles that animate the Baha'i community and spoke of the "pure and innocent lives that have been snuffed out; . . . the precious breasts that became the targets of firing squads." The National Spiritual Assembly then announced "the suspension of the Baha'i organizations throughout Iran, in order to establish its good intentions and in conformity with its basic tenets concerning complete obedience to the instructions of the Government. Henceforth, until the time when, God willing, the misunderstandings are eliminated . . . the National Assembly and all local spiritual assemblies and their committees are disbanded and no one may any longer be designated a member of the Baha'i Administration."

IN CONCLUSION the National Assembly expressed the hope that the authorities would "reciprocate by proving their good intentions" by ending persecutions, arrests, torture, and imprisonment of Baha'is for imaginary crimes; guaranteeing their lives, property and honor; according them freedom to choose their residence and occupation; restoring them their civil rights; restoring them their jobs; releasing Baha'i prisoners; restoring to the Baha'is their property; permitting Baha'i students abroad to continue their education; permitting those Baha'is who have been prevented from continuing their studies to resume their education; permitting Baha'i students stranded abroad to receive their allowance on the same basis as other Iranian students; restoring Baha'i cemeteries and permitting Baha'is to bury their dead in accordance with Baha'i burial ceremonies; guaranteeing the freedom of Baha'is to perform their religious rites, solemnize Baha'i marriages and divorces, and to carry out acts of worship, "because although Baha'is are entirely obedient and subordinate to the Government in the administration of the affairs which are in the jurisdiction of Baha'i organizations, in matters of conscience and belief, and in accordance with their spiritual principles, they prefer martyrdom to recantation or the abandoning of the divine ordinances prescribed by their Faith."

The Islamic government has paid no attention. It has disregarded not only the legitimate requests of Baha'i citizens of Iran but has, in fact, intensified pressure against them. Hundreds of persons, most of them former members of the no longer existing Spiritual Assemblies, have been imprisoned since September 3, 1983, the date on which the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Iran announced the dissolution of all Baha'i institutions in that country.

It would serve no useful purpose to rehearse once again the sad tale of continuing economic pressure, social harassment, legal disablement, and psychological assault relentlessly applied to the Baha'is by the authorities of the Islamic Republic. However, one element of the situation must be mentioned again and again—the

growing resort to torture, that ultimate act of inhumanity that has become a regular feature in what passes for judicial process in today's Iran.

The voice of the Iranian Baha'i community has been stilled. Through the thick walls of Islamic Republic's dungeons the world hears only the muffled groans of those whose bodies are torn and mangled by the torturer's lash. We American Baha'is who live in freedom have the duty of alerting the world.

The people and the government of the United States have an abiding commitment to decency, tolerance, and religious freedom. Through their elected representatives they have already expressed their sense of outrage at the persecution of the Baha'is in Iran. We hope that the Congress will reaffirm its support for the oppressed Baha'is and invite other governments and peoples to raise their voices in defense of the most fundamental rights of an oppressed minority.



*Three of the four martyrs of Qazvin, left to right:  
Manuchehr Farzaneh-Moayyad, Mohammad  
Mansuri, and Jadidollah Ashraf*

LIST OF BAHÁ'ÍS KILLED (K), DISAPPEARED AND ASSUMED KILLED (D),  
AND DIED IN PRISON (P) SINCE 1978

NAME	LOCATION	DATE	
ABBASIYAN, DR. YUSIF	TEHRAN		D
BASHIRI, MR. AHMAD	TEHRAN		D
HIDAYATI, MR. JAHANGIR	TEHRAN		D
MAHMUDI, MR. HUSHANG	TEHRAN		D
MUQARRIBI, MR. ATAULLAH	TEHRAN		D
MUVAHHID, MR. SHAYKH MUHAMMAD			D
NADIRI, MRS. BAHIIYIH	TEHRAN		D
NAJI, DR. HUSAYN	TEHRAN		D
NAYYIRI-ISFAHANI, MR. HUSAYN	ESFAHAN		P
QAIM-MAQAMI, MR. MANUHIR			D
QUDIMI, MR. YUSIF	TEHRAN		D
RAHMANI, MR. IBRAHIM	TEHRAN		D
RAWHANI, DR. HISHMATULLAH	TEHRAN		D
RAWSHANI, MR. RUHI			D
SADIOZADIH, DR. KAMBIZ	TEHRAN		D
TASLIMI, MR. ABDUL-HUSAYN	TEHRAN		D
ISMAILI, MR. AHMAD	AHRAM	-78	K
HAQIQAT, MR. DIYAULLAH	JAHROM	08-12-78	K
AKHAVAN-I-KATHIRI, MR.	SHAHMIRZAD	08-27-78	K
NAW-RUZI, MR.	SHAHMIRZAD	08-27-78	K
AZIZI, MR. HAJI-MUHAMMAD	KHORMUJ	10-10-78	K
DASTPISH, MR. SHIR-MUHAMMAD	BUYR-AHMAD	12- -78	K
RUZBIHI, MR. HATAM	BUYR-AHMAD	12- -78	K
RUZBIHI, MR. JAN-ALI	BUYR-AHMAD	12- -78	K
FAHANDIZH, MR. AZAMATULLAH	SHIRAZ	12-14-78	K
FAHANDIZH, MR. SIFATULLAH	SHIRAZ	12-14-78	K
FAHANDIZH, MRS.	SHIRAZ	12-14-78	K
AFNANI, MR. KHUSRAW	MIAN DUAB	12-22-78	K
AFNANI, MR. PARVIZ	MIAN DUAB	12-22-78	K
MANAVI, MR. IBRAHIM	HESAR, KHORASAN	-79	K
SHAKURI, MR. HUSAYN	USHNAVIYYEH	04-02-79	K
VUJDANI, MR. BAHAR	MAHABAD	09-27-79	K
SATTARZADIH, MR. ALI	BOWKAN	10-28-79	K
DAVUDI, DR. ALIMURAD	TEHRAN, DATE KIDNAPPED	11-11-79	D
PANAHI, MR. HABIBULLAH	ORUMIYYEH	02-04-80	K
AAZAMI, MR. GHULAM-HUSAYN	TEHRAN	05-06-80	K
MUINI, MR. ALI-AKBAR	TEHRAN	05-06-80	K
YAZDANI, MR. BADIULLAH	TEHRAN	05-06-80	K
KHURSANDI, MR. ALI-AKBAR	TEHRAN	05-09-80	K
BAYANI, MR. PARVIZ	PIRANSHAHR	05-11-80	K
MUKHTARI, MR. MIR-ASADULLAH	ANDRUN, BIRJAND	05-18-80	K
ISMAILZADIH, MR. HASAN	SANADAJ	06- -80	K
SUBHANI, MR. YUSIF	TEHRAN	06-27-80	K
ASTANI, MR. YADULLAH	TABRIZ	07-14-80	K
SAMANDARI, DR. FARAMARZ	TABRIZ	07-14-80	K
DADASH-AKBARI, MR. ALI	RASHT	07-16-80	K
MAHBUBIYAN, MR. YADULLAH	TEHRAN	07-30-80	K
MUMINI, MR. DHABIHULLAH	TEHRAN	08-15-80	K
AKHTAR-KHAVARI, MR. NURULLAH	YAZD	09-08-80	K

NAME	LOCATION	DATE	
DHABIHIYAN, MR.			
AZIZULLAH	YAZD	09-08-80	K
FARIDANI, MR. FIRAYDUN	YAZD	09-08-80	K
HAZANZADIH, MR. MAHMUD	YAZD	09-08-80	K
KAZIMI-MANSHADI, MR.			
ABDUL-VAHHAB	YAZD	09-08-80	K
MUSTAQIM, MR. JALAL	YAZD	09-08-80	K
MUTAHHARI, MR. ALI	YAZD	09-08-80	K
FIRUZI, MR. RIDA	TABRIZ	11-09-80	K
MASUMI, MR.			
MUHAMMAD-HUSAYN	NUK, BIRJAND	11-23-80	K
MASUMI, MRS. SHIKKAR-NISA	NUK, BIRJAND	11-23-80	K
SANAI, MR. BIHRUZ	TEHRAN	12-17-80	K
HAKIM, DR. MANUCHIHR	TEHRAN	01-12-81	K
ANVARI, MR. MIHDI	SHIRAZ	03-17-81	K
DIHQANI, MR.			
HIDAYATULLAH	SHIRAZ	03-17-81	K
YARSHATIR, MRS.			
NURANIYYIH	TEHRAN	04-81	K
KHUSHKHU, MR. SATTAR	SHIRAZ	04-30-81	K
MIHDI-ZADIH, MR.			
IHSANULLAH	SHIRAZ	04-30-81	K
VAHDAT, MR. YADULLAH	SHIRAZ	04-30-81	K
HABIBI, MR. SUHAYL			
(MUHAMMAD-BAQIR)	HAMADAN	06-14-81	K
HABIBI, MR. SUHRAB			
(MUHAMMAD)	HAMADAN	06-14-81	K
KHANDIL, MR. HUSAYN	HAMADAN	06-14-81	K
KHUZAYN, MR. TARAZULLAH	HAMADAN	06-14-81	K
MUTLAQ, MR. HUSAYN	HAMADAN	06-14-81	K
NAIMI, DR. FIRUZ	HAMADAN	06-14-81	K
VAFAI, DR. NASIR	HAMADAN	06-14-81	K
ALAVIYAN, MR. BUZURG	TEHRAN	06-23-81	K
FARNUSH, MR. HASHIM	TEHRAN	06-23-81	K
MAVADDAT, MR. FARHANG	TEHRAN	06-23-81	K
FARHANGI, DR. MASIH	TEHRAN	06-24-81	K
FARID, MR. BADIULLAH	TEHRAN	06-24-81	K
PUSTCHI, MR. YADULLAH	TEHRAN	06-24-81	K
TIBYANIYAN, MR. VARQA			
(TIBYANI)	TEHRAN	06-24-81	K
BAKHTAVAR, MR.			
KAMALUD-DIN	MASHAD	07-26-81	K
KATIBPUR-SHAHIDI, MR.			
NIMATULLAH	MASHAD	07-26-81	K
ASADULLAH-ZADIH, MR.			
HUSAYN	TABRIZ	07-29-81	K
ASADYARI, MR. ABDUL-ALI	TABRIZ	07-29-81	K
BAHIRI, MR. MIHDI	TABRIZ	07-29-81	K
DAKHILI, DR. MASRUR	TABRIZ	07-29-81	K
FIRUZI, DR. PARVIZ	TABRIZ	07-29-81	K
KHADI, MR. MANUCHIHR	TABRIZ	07-29-81	K
MITHAQI, MR. ALLAH-VIRDI	TABRIZ	07-29-81	K
TAHQIQI, MR. HABIBULLAH	TABRIZ	07-29-81	K
ZIHTAB, MR. ISMAIL	TABRIZ	07-29-81	K
RASTIGAR-NAMDAR, MR.			
HUSAYN	TEHRAN	08-05-81	K
AZIZI, MR. HABIBULLAH	TEHRAN	08-29-81	K
ATIFI, MR. BAHMAN	DARUN, ESFAHAN	09-11-81	K
ATIFI, MR. IZZAT	DARUN, ESFAHAN	09-11-81	K
RAWHANI, MR. ATAULLAH	DARUN, ESFAHAN	09-11-81	K
RIDVANI, MR. AHMAD	DARUN, ESFAHAN	09-11-81	K
THABIT-RASIKH, MR.			
GUSHTASB	DARUN, ESFAHAN	09-11-81	K

NAME	LOCATION	DATE	
SIPIHR-ARFA, MR. YADULLAH	TEHRAN	10-23-81	K
AMIN AMIN, MR. MIHDI	TEHRAN	12-27-81	K
AZIZI, MR. JALAL	TEHRAN	12-27-81	K
FURUHI, MR. IZZATULLAH	TEHRAN	12-27-81	K
MAHMUDI, DR. ZHINUS	TEHRAN	12-27-81	K
MAJDHUB, MR. MAHMUD	TEHRAN	12-27-81	K
RAWHANI, MR. QUDRATULLAH	TEHRAN	12-27-81	K
RAWSHANI, DR. SIRUS	TEHRAN	12-27-81	K
SAMIMI, MR. KAMRAN	TEHRAN	12-27-81	K
AMIR-KIYA BAQA, MRS. SHIDRUKH	TEHRAN	01-04-82	K
ASADULLAH-ZADIH, MRS. SHIVA	TEHRAN	01-04-82	K
AZIZI, MR. ISKANDAR	TEHRAN	01-04-82	K
FIRDAWSI, MR. FATHULLAH	TEHRAN	01-04-82	K
MUHANDISI, MR. KHUSRAW	TEHRAN	01-04-82	K
TALAI, MR. KURUSH	TEHRAN	01-04-82	K
YAVARI, MR. ATAULLAH	TEHRAN	01-04-82	K
KHAYRKAH, MR. IBRAHIM	BABOL SAR	02-26-82	K
VAHDAT-I-HAQ, MR. HUSAYN	TEHRAN	02-28-82	K
MUHAMMADI, MR. ASKAR	RAHIM KHAN, BOWKAN	04-02-82	K
KHAYYAMI, MR. IHSANULLAH	ORUMIYYEH	04-12-82	K
GULSHANI, MR. AZIZULLAH	MASHAD	04-29-82	K
FARUHAR, MR. MAHMUD	KARAJ	05-08-82	K
FARUHAR, MRS. ISHRAQIYYIH	KARAJ	05-08-82	K
HAQPAYKAR, MR. BADIULLAH	KARAJ	05-08-82	K
MUSHTAIL, MISS JALALIYYIH	ORUMIYYEH	05-10-82	K
TIZFAHM, MR. AGAHULLAH	ORUMIYYEH	05-10-82	K
AMINI, MR. NASRULLAH	KHANIABAD	05-16-82	K
BABAZADIH, MR. SADULLAH	KHANIABAD	05-16-82	K
ABBASI, MR. MUHAMMAD	QAZVIN	07-09-82	K
ASHRAF, MR. JADIDULLAH	QAZVIN	07-09-82	K
FARZANIH-MUAYYAD, MR. MANUCHIHR	QAZVIN	07-09-82	K
MANSURI, MR. MUHAMMAD	QAZVIN	07-09-82	K
SADIQIPUR, MR. ABBAS-ALI	SHIRAZ	07-15-82	K
NAIMIYAN, MR. ALI	ORUMIYYEH	08-11-82	K
VAFAI, MR. MANUCHIHR	TEHRAN	09-02-82	K
AWJI, MR. HABIBULLAH	SHIRAZ	11-16-82	K
AHRARI, DR. DIYAULLAH	SHIRAZ	11-21-82	K
SIYAVUSHI, MR. HIDAYAT	SHIRAZ	01-01-83	K
ALIPUR, MRS. GULDANIH	SARI, MAZENDARAN	01-10-83	K
MAHMUDNIZHAD, MISS MUNA	SHIRAZ	03-12-83	K
MAHMUDNIZHAD, MR. YADULLAH	SHIRAZ	03-12-83	K
VAFAI, MR. RAHMATULLAH	SHIRAZ	03-12-83	K
ZAIRPUR, MRS. TUBA	SHIRAZ	03-12-83	K
HAKIMAN, MR. JALAL	TEHRAN	05-01-83	K
SAFAI, MR. SUHAYL	ESFAHAN	05-01-83	K
RAHIMPUR (KHURMAI), MRS. IRAN	DEZFUL	05-12-83	K
AFNAN, DR. BAHRAM (SON OF MIHDI AFNAN)	SHIRAZ	06-16-83	K
AZADI, MR. ABDUL-HUSAYN	SHIRAZ	06-16-83	K
HAQBIN, MR. KURUSH	SHIRAZ	06-16-83	K
ISHRAQI, MR. INAYATULLAH	SHIRAZ	06-16-83	K
SIYAVUSHI, MR. JAMSHID	SHIRAZ	06-16-83	K
YALDAI, MR. BAHRAM	SHIRAZ	06-16-83	K
DELVAND, MISS SHIRIN	SHIRAZ	06-18-83	K
ISHRAQI, MISS RUYA	SHIRAZ	06-18-83	K
ISHRAQI, MRS. IZZAT JANAMI	SHIRAZ	06-18-83	K

NAME	LOCATION	DATE	
MUQIMI, MRS. ZARRIN	SHIRAZ	06-18-83	K
NIRUMAND, MISS MAHSHID	SHIRAZ	06-18-83	K
SABIRI, MRS. SIMIN	SHIRAZ	06-18-83	K
SIYAVUSHI, MRS. TAHIRIH	SHIRAZ	06-18-83	K
THABIT, MRS. AKHTAR	SHIRAZ	06-18-83	K
YALDAI, MRS. NUSRAT	SHIRAZ	06-18-83	K
HUSHMAND, MR. SUHAYL	SHIRAZ	06-28-83	K
THABIT-SARVISTANI, MR.			
AHMAD ALI	SHIRAZ	06-30-83	P
ISHRAQI, MR. MUHAMMAD	TEHRAN	08-31-83	P
MUTAHHAR, MR.			
ABDUL-MAJID	ESFAHAN	09- -83	P
DIHQANI, MR. BAHMAN	MOHAMMADIYYEH	11-19-83	K
DIYAI, MR. NUSRATULLAH	BAFT	12-31-83	P
HAKIMAN, MR.			
RAHMATULLAH	KERMAN	01-11-84	K
RADAVI, MR. MUHSIN	NARMAK, NEAR TEHRAN	03- -84	K
SHAKIRI-HASANZADIH, MR.			
ABDUL-HUSAYN	TEHRAN	03- -84	P
LUFTI, MR. KAMRAN	NARMAK	04- -84	K
RAHIMIYAN, MR. RAHIM	NARMAK	04- -84	K
SABIRIYAN, MR. YADULLAH	TEHRAN	04- -84	K

SINCE 1978

149 BAHÁ'ÍS WERE KILLED

16 DISAPPEARED AND ARE PRESUMED KILLED

6 DIED IN PRISON

171

**EXTRACTS FROM AN ACCOUNT OF  
THE IMPRISONMENT OF BAHAI  
WOMEN SOME OF WHOM WERE  
HANGED IN SHIRAZ ON JUNE 18, 1983**

*(The writer, Olya Rubizadegan, a Baha'i from Shiraz, was in prison with other women including those who were martyred on June 18, 1983. Because she was the mother of a three-year-old child she was released and later succeeded in leaving Iran.)*

TEN DAYS later Mrs. *Fereshteh Nazeri (Anvari)* who was in prison with us, was called for investigation and returned after two hours in a pitiful condition. She was so weak I had to hold her arm, and I smelled alcohol. Quietly, because we were watched, I asked her what had happened. She said, "They made me walk down many steps toward the basement, where I heard the voice of people in pain. The blindfold was taken off, and what I saw filled me with terror. There were eight benches on which eight persons were tied with chains face down. They were being lashed with cable whips and severely tortured. I was so terrified that I became unconscious; and when I recovered, I found myself lying on the hospital bed. Again I was humiliated and was told, 'Now you can go; but, remember, we will see you again!' From this account I realized what was in store for us, and in the hands of what savages we were. . . ."

The following day I was called for investigation along with two other women. At the end of the steps, where we could hear the groaning of people being tortured, we were separated, and each one, accompanied by a person, was taken to a room for investigation. The person who was with me asked many questions and recorded the answers in my file: "What is your religion?" "I am a Baha'i." "Do you love your children?" "Yes, I do." "According to the Koran you are condemned to be executed unless you repent and come back to Islam! I will give you time to think it over! I am sure they have deceived you! You are misled!" "No! I have not been misled or deceived. According to the teachings of Baha'u'llah every person should

investigate the truth for himself. I have investigated the Baha'i Faith myself and accepted it. As a Baha'i, I believe in Islam and all the past religions. . . ."

In general, the conduct of the investigators was so rude and rough that it did not allow the friends to think about what to say. In the room for interrogation we could hear the cries of agony from the basement where women were being lashed. . . .

One of the investigators said to me, "You claim to be obedient to the laws of the country. The government of the Islamic Republic wants you to leave the Baha'i religion and return to Islam." I answered, "In accordance with articles 19 to 41 of the constitution of the Islamic Republic freedom of belief is recognized for all the people in Iran; hence it is not reasonable for the government to want me to give up my belief." He paused for a moment and said, "Suppose the government tried to force you to give up your belief; then what would you do?" I replied, "My religious belief is an inner knowledge I have found by independent investigation; I will not give it up under any circumstances. Our belief does no harm to the country as long as we obey the laws of the government of the Republic."

The investigator asked personal questions about myself and my husband, and about our employment in the Iranian Oil Co. I said I was discharged because I was a Baha'i, and my husband's pension was cut off for the same reason. He said, "We have looked up your record in the N.I.O.C.; you have been a good employee. Now, be reasonable and fair to yourself. Just say, 'I am not a Baha'i,' and I will see that you go back to your job, and the payment of your husband's pension will be resumed." My reply was, "Please don't ask me to tell a lie and be ashamed the rest of my life." When he realized I was steadfast in my belief, he admired my truthfulness and closed the interrogation. . . .

Thus, after being in the Army prison for thirty-six days for interrogation, I was transferred to Adelabad prison. . . .

In Adelabad we went through the second stage of our interrogation. Our identities and family details were recorded in a file, and when



they asked about our religion, we said we were Baha'is. The police officers who were fed up with the regime of Mullahs, exclaimed, "Isn't it funny! People's wives and daughters are imprisoned just because of their belief. . . ."

The judge left the room and returned with my three-and-a-half-year-old son, Payam. (It was customary for the families of those on trial to wait outside the court.) The minute Payam saw me, he threw himself in my arms, yelling, "Mama! Mama! Why have you stayed here? Why don't you come home? I know they have brought you from Adelabad prison! I will be a good boy!" I need not say how deeply touched I was with the way my poor child acted, and the way he had followed the events in his mother's life. The judge tried to pull him away from me, but Payam cried, "Sir! I want my Mama! Mama, you come with us!" The judge was confused and turned away, saying, "Will you get up and give the child to his father?" He had imagined that the love of a mother for her child might influence me to listen to him and recant to get my freedom. Not a chance!

Finally, the judge turned to me and said, "For the last time I warn you. Because you are active in Baha'i administration you are condemned to be executed unless you declare that you are not a member of the perverted sect." I replied, "I am definitely not a member of the perverted sect; I believe in one God and have faith in the sacred Baha'i religion!" "Are you prepared to be executed for your faith?" he said. "Yes, I am!" was my reply. He then called my husband and said, "Your wife is free on bail. Go and bring a real estate voucher and take her home."

*Mona Mahmudnezhad*, a sixteen-year-old girl, one day was summoned to the Court. The Religious Magistrate, after the usual insults and humiliation, said to her, "Your parents have deceived you; now you are condemned to be executed unless you repent and recant." Mona replied, "It is true I was born in a Baha'i family and learned about the Baha'i Faith from my parents, but it was my own investigation which proved to me the truth of the Baha'i message. My parents did not force me to be a Baha'i. . . ."

I embraced *Mrs. Zaerpur*, who after fifty-five

days in solitary prison, was brought to the general prison. She could hardly walk, so weak and sickly she had become. We entered the cell, and I asked Mrs. Zaerpur what had they done to her! She described in detail the events of her imprisonment and trial as follows:

She had her first trial four days after she was imprisoned. For three consecutive days she was summoned for interrogation and was asked many questions; but the answers she gave did not satisfy the investigator. Each day they took her down to the basement and lashed her in order that she give the information they wanted. . . .

As the result of repeated lashings, Mrs. Zaerpur was painfully injured and had sore spots all over her body, although she tried not to show it. On the first day she was lashed with fifty strokes of the whip, on the second day one hundred strokes, and on the third day seventy-four strokes, with cable whip, some on the soles of her feet and some on her back. The hundred strokes of the second day made her



*Mrs. Nosrat Yaldai*

lose consciousness before they took her back to her cell in prison. The sore spots on her body were so painful that she could not sleep for many nights. Her toes were bleeding and the toenails fell off as a result of injuries. In spite of all the suffering Mrs. Zaerpur never complained. She prayed all the time. She was the embodiment of spiritual strength and resignation to the Will of God, and a source of comfort to all of us. She had dedicated her life to the service of the Cause of God and finally gave up her life and was honored with the crown of martyrdom in His path.

Mrs. *Nosrat Yaldai* was called for investigation two days after her arrest. She was asked questions about her administrative duties and positions. They wanted her to confess to being a member of a local Spiritual Assembly and to give the names of all the Assembly members and other administrative bodies. Mrs. Yaldai, unwilling to involve other friends, refrained from giving the information they demanded. The following day she was taken to the basement and given fifty strokes on the soles of her feet, and fifty strokes on her back. Then they brought Mr. Mahmudnezhad, who advised her to give all the information. He said to her, "The situation is worse than you think. They already have got all the information; we have nothing to hide. We thought the Three Member Meetings were out of the question! On the day they brought Dr. Afnan, Mr. Hakimi, and myself in this very basement and lashed the three of us in front of each other, we considered it advisable to give all the facts. Now you do the same." She was taken back to the cell in a terrible condition, and a quarter of an hour later she was called again. The prison attendant said, "This woman is unconscious; she cannot walk." But the investigator did not mind and had her pulled into the interrogation room. This time they dragged all the information out of her about the administrative bodies in Shiraz. . . . One day I went in the bathroom with Mrs. Yaldai. I noticed that, after seventy days, the sore spots on her back and waist were swollen and a deep wound in the shape of, and caused by, the cable whip could be seen. . . .

Translated from the Persian

### EXTRACTS FROM AN ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND ACTIVITIES OF ZARRIN MOQIMI, ONE OF THE BAHAI' WOMEN HANGED IN SHIRAZ ON JUNE 18, 1983

. . . When Zarrin was taken to the religious magistrate to recant her Faith, and was told as usual either to recant or to be prepared for execution, she said in reply, "I have found the way to reality, and I am not prepared to give it away for any price. Therefore, I submit to the Court's verdict." On another occasion the judge asked Zarrin, "To what extent are you prepared to adhere to your belief?" Zarrin answered, "I hope to remain firm in my belief to the last moment." "But you must give up your belief!" retorted the judge. Zarrin, annoyed by the repetition of the same proposal, exclaimed, "Your honor, you have been conducting my trial for many days, and have asked the same question, and I have given you a definite and satisfactory answer. I don't think repeating the same thing is necessary!" But the judge rudely repeated the same proposal. Dear Zarrin started crying and with a loud voice said, "In what language do you want me to tell you? Why don't you leave me alone? My whole being is Baha'u'llah! My love is Baha'u'llah! My heart is dedicated to Baha'u'llah!" The infuriated judge shouted, "I will pull out your heart from your chest!" Zarrin replied, "Then my heart will call and cry out, 'Baha'u'llah! Baha'u'llah!'" The judge, moved by this display of sentiment, left the room.

#### *Zarrin's Martyrdom*

AFTER ZARRIN'S martyrdom, dear Mother described the event for me over the phone: "Saturday, June 18, 1983, I went to visit Zarrin as usual, taking fresh fruits with me. It was raining, and the weather was quite warm. At the visiting time Zarrin was brought behind the glass partition, and we started to talk. Her countenance seemed to have changed; she said to me, "Mother, please pray for me and implore God to give me perseverance!" She did not say good-bye to me when leaving, because she did not want to see me saddened. Zarrin had always told me not to hope for



Zarrin Moqimi

her freedom, but it did not occur to me that this was our last meeting. The friends (Baha'is) had been urged to recant for the last time, and most probably they would be executed. Visiting time was over, and I returned home. The following day, Sunday, June 19, early in the morning I found out that ten women prisoners had been hanged during the night. I ran out of the house to inquire from the friends; in the street I met three friends. With tearful eyes they showed me a list; then I realized Zarrin was also martyred. I ran toward Adelabad prison, moaning and crying. This was the place most of our time had been spent the last eight months. I was allowed to go into the cold room. What I went through that day, and what I saw in that historic moment, I cannot describe. I entered the cold room. O, my God! I saw ten angels lying motionless next to each other. I knew all of them; I had been in the same prison with them. Mother and daughter were together. All had a pair of pants and a summer blouse on. Some of them had their chador (long robe) tied around their waist; others had it thrown on the floor. What force kept me on my feet and breathing I don't know! I looked at all

the ten angels, and found Zarrin among them reposed; I embraced her cold body, put my cheek on her delicate and cold cheek, and kissed the mark of rope on her lovely neck on behalf of all of you (Father, who was in prison; myself; and my brother, out of the country). Her face looked natural and composed."

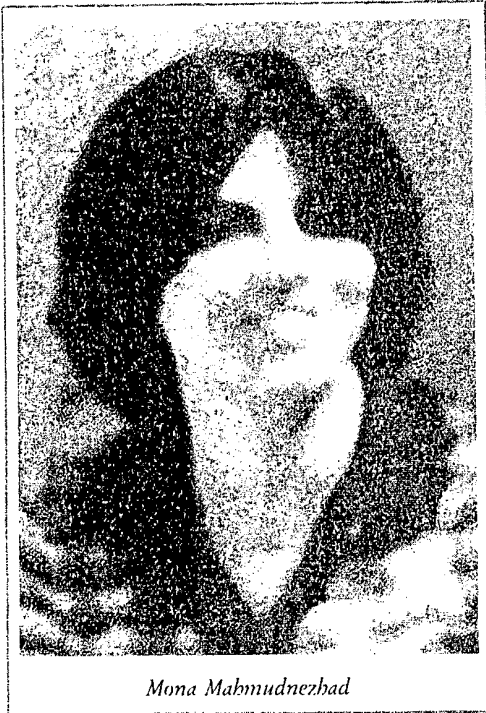
Translated from the Persian

**EXTRACT FROM AN ACCOUNT CONCERNING THE INTERROGATION OF MONA MAHMUDNEZHAD, ONE OF THE TEN BAHAI WOMEN HANGED IN SHIRAZ ON JUNE 18, 1983**

*(The writer, Mrs. Olya Ruhizadegan, was Mona's fellow prisoner but was released and later succeeded in leaving the country.)*

MONA was another young girl eighteen years of age when martyred. She was a teacher of Baha'i children's classes and served on the Three Members Board and was arrested with her father, Yadollah Mahmudnezhad.

Twice the order for Mona's release was issued, but at the third stage in her trial the religious magistrate, Mr. Qazai, after insulting and humiliating her, said, "Your father and mother have deceived and misled you." In reply Mona said, "Your honor, it is true that I learned about the Baha'i Faith from my parents, but I have done my own reasoning. In the Baha'i Faith one adheres to religion after investigation, not by imitation. You have many of our books; you can read and find out for yourself. My father and mother did not insist on my accepting their belief; neither did they force me to become a Baha'i. If the religious magistrate thinks I should abandon my belief, I will never do so, and prefer submitting to the order of execution." The religious magistrate was astounded and said, "Young girl, what do you know about religion?" Mona exclaimed, "Your honor, I was brought here from the classroom in school; I have been in prison and going through trials for three months. What better proof of my religious certitude than my perseverance and steadfastness in the Faith? It is this Faith that



*Mona Mahmudnezhad*

gives me confidence to go through this trial in your presence. . . ." The religious magistrate, impressed by Mona's sincerity, asked her to say a prayer. Mona put away the file and, with the usual respect and humbleness, recited a prayer by 'Abdu'l-Baha: "O kind Lord, Thou art kinder to me than I am to myself. . . ." The religious magistrate remained silent for a while, then said to Mona, "What harm did you find in Islam that you have turned to Bahaism?" Mona's answer was: "The foundation of all religions is one. From time to time, according to the exigencies of time and place, God sends His Messenger to renew religion and guide the people in the right path. The Baha'i religion upholds the truth in Islam, but if by Islam you mean the prevailing animosity, murder, and bloodshed in the country, a sample of which I have witnessed in prison, that is the reason I have chosen to be a Baha'i."

Mona's answer was the subject of conversation among the friends for quite a while in prison. How did Mona dare to talk to the religious magistrate in this way?

Translated from the Persian

**EXTRACT FROM A LETTER WRITTEN BY MRS. OLYA RUHIZADEGAN ABOUT THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COURT'S VERDICT IN THE CASE OF THE BAHAI WOMEN HANGED IN SHIRAZ ON JUNE 18, 1983**

THE DAY the court's verdict of execution was issued and conveyed to the friends in prison, can you imagine how they reacted to it? Let me give you an example: Mrs. Avaregan is a fifty-five-year-old woman who was arrested the same night with Zarrin (Moqimi). She is still in prison. She was kept in solitary confinement thirty-five days, and because of the foul air in the prison cell she fainted twice; they had to apply intravenous infusions to cure her. On the day she was summoned to the court for trial she still had the i.v. on her arm. They pulled it out and made her walk to go through all the stages of trial. Finally, when the religious magistrate said to her, "The verdict for you is execution; you have only one chance—to recant and be freed," Mrs. Avaregan replied, "I am a Baha'i and firm in my belief; I am not ready to recant at any price. I respect the court's verdict, but you, the religious magistrate sitting on the throne of justice of Imam Ali. . . ." The infuriated magistrate said, "Yes, I am sitting on this chair and want to send you to the lowest abyss so that your sin may be wiped out!" Mrs. Avaregan said, "For the time being you have cured my ailment." That night when Mrs. Avaregan returned to prison, she was quite well, as though she had never been ill. She laughed and cried out, "The magistrate has told me I am to be executed; he thinks I am afraid of execution!"

Translated from the Persian

**EXTRACT FROM AN ACCOUNT OF THE ARREST, IMPRISONMENT, AND TORTURE OF MR. ALI AKBAR ABBASIAN, AN EMPLOYEE OF SADERAT (EXPORT) BANK. JUNE 1982.**

ON JUNE 21, 1982, Mr. Abbasian and five other Baha'i employees of the bank were asked to re-



*Grave of the ten women martyred in Shiraz on June 18, 1983*

port to the central office. They were ordered to proceed to the Revolutionary Court accompanied by members of the Islamic Society of the Bank. They were told that since they were Baha'is the religious magistrate had to issue the order for their discharge.

They were blindfolded before they reached Evin prison, where the interrogator, a man called Tului, met them with the usual insults and the accusation of being Zionists. Abbasian objected, saying, "I am not a Zionist." He said, "I am a Baha'i." Thereupon the interrogator slapped him on the face and beat him with hand and fist and repeatedly kicked him. The others were also beaten. Then with two pointed rods, perhaps two pencils, the interrogator poked the blindfold into Abbasian's eyes and, after beating him again, ordered all of them taken to General prison. On June 27, 1982, Mr. Abbasian was summoned to the court; and the interrogator, the same Tului, passed on to him sheets of paper with questions printed on them and threatened him with severe punishment if he wrote falsehoods; at the same time he stood over his head and beat him repeatedly on the neck and shoulders, causing pain and nervous discomfort.

After the questionnaire was answered and

the beating stopped, the interrogator demanded that Abbasian recant the Baha'i Faith and name the members of certain administrative bodies in the Baha'i community whom they accused of sending spies out of the country.

When the interrogator met with resistance from Abbasian, he, accompanied by several guards, proceeded to hurl him down against the hard surface of a bench, causing his forehead and jaw to be severely injured and to bleed (the effect of the injury remained for several months and was felt while eating). Then with something like a wire Abbasian's feet were tied to the edge of the bench so tightly that it broke the skin and left a hollow bruise, which after seven months is still visible and not quite healed. His hands were pulled forward and tied to the wall or something else. He was now lying on his abdomen with hands and feet tied up, and the soles of his feet turned upward. Tului ordered the guards to start lashing and to continue until Abbasian recanted and gave the names of committee members or died. The lashing was done with a whip made of cable wire about two centimeters in diameter. The blows were aimed at the five toes of each foot so that each toe received its share of the total number of three hundred blows. Mr. Abbasian,

whose face and mouth were covered with a blanket so that his screams might not be heard, and realizing the intensity of his torture, turned in his heart to the Blessed Beauty (Baha'u'llah) and prayed. . . . When the lashing was finished, Abbasian, with injured head and feet covered with blood, was led into prison. Here the friends, with the limited facilities at their disposal, tried to bandage his wounds and alleviate his pain. The following day (June 28) again he heard his name called on the loud-speaker and was told to go to the interrogation room. The same questions were posed, and when he gave the same answers, he was returned to prison.

On July 30, 1982, the Baha'i employees of the bank, including Abbasian, were summoned to the court for trial. Abbasian was accused on the following counts:

1. being a member of the heretic sect of Bahaism
2. being a spy for Israel
3. making a trip to Israel
4. sending spies to different parts of the world
5. getting money from the bank through Hoveida
6. teaching the Baha'i religion in the bank and on duty

After Abbasian refuted every one of the above accusations, the file was declared incomplete by the judge, and the defendant was returned to prison.

On August 2 he was summoned to the court a second time. This time the judge was a different person, and all the previous accusations were repeated and again were refuted by Abbasian. Finally, the judge asked if he was ready to recant the Baha'i Faith. Abbasian's reply was an emphatic refusal, and he was returned to prison.

In prison, with the help of other friends, Abbasian attended to the treatment of his wounds, but six of his toenails dropped off after a while due to ecchymosis and made walking very painful and difficult for a long time.

The final verdict of the court in his case was announced as follows:

1. six months in prison
2. permanent discharge from the bank
3. payment of his debt to the bank

On December 30, 1982, when the bank receipt for payment of his debt by Abbasian's family was presented, he was released on bail.

Translated from the Persian

# The Eshraghis of Shiraz

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SAID ESHRAGHI

My name is Said Eshraghi. I am an Iranian Baha'i who has resided in the United States for the last six years. I currently live in Nacogdoches, Texas, where I work as director of operations of a small chain of restaurants. I appear before this Subcommittee to tell the story of the persecution of my family, three members of which have been martyred for their beliefs. My story is not unique. But it may throw some light on what is happening to the Baha'is in Iran.

AT 5:00 O'CLOCK in the morning on June 17, 1983, I had a strange phone call from Australia. It was my brother. He said, "Good morning. How are you?" I said I was fine and asked him why he was calling so early. He said he just wanted to see how I was doing and asked if I had heard anything from home. I said, "No." He said, "Well, I have congratulations." I said, "What are you talking about?" He said, "Our father was martyred." I think I was still asleep when he said that, and I said, "What are you talking about?" He said, "Wake up! Go put some water on your face, and wake up. Our father has gone to God."

For about five or ten minutes I didn't know what to do. I had two finches in a cage. The first thing I remember was feeling that I needed to let the finches go. I opened the cage and let them go. Then I called my sister in Iran. She wasn't home. But another member of my family in my parents' home told me, "Your Dad was executed yesterday." That was on June 16, 1983.

During those few days I was in a state of shock. We had a small memorial service for my Dad at our house on June 18, 1983. The next morning, June 19, 1983, I had another phone call from my brother in Australia. He said, "I

would like to congratulate you one more time, brother." I said, "What are you talking about, brother?" He said, "Our Mom joined Dad." "Well," I said, "at least now he is not alone." Then he said—and he was crying—"Well, I am going to congratulate you one more time. Our sister has gone with them, so they are not alone. They are all together."

Those events added a new dimension to my life. Now I had the three dearest members of my family executed for the Cause of God.

Let me tell you a little bit about my family—what they are doing and who they are. I have a brother named Vahid, who lives in Australia. I have a sister named Nahid. She is in Nigeria. I had two sisters in Iran, one named Roya and the other named Rosita. My father was an officer of the National Oil Company in Iran. My mother was a housewife.

I left Iran before the revolution, as did my brother and my sister Nahid. But my two little sisters were still in Iran. During and after the revolution I kept hearing news about the persecution of the Baha'is in Iran. First it started in Shiraz. I don't know how long ago it was. It probably was in 1980 right after the revolution. A mob destroyed about two hundred houses and businesses that belonged to the Baha'is. They burned some of the houses and demolished everything. They took away what everybody had because they were Baha'is. The news kept coming that my family and other Baha'is were in danger. The National Spiritual Assembly of Iran was executed. Other Baha'is all over Iran were also being executed. I never thought that such things would happen one day to me, that I would be someone who would get hurt from the revolutionary government.

On November 29, 1982, my father Enaya-

tollah Eshraghi; my mother, Ezzat; and my sister Roya were arrested. They were taken to prison by the authority of the government in Shiraz. They were arrested at 8:00 P.M. Government officials came to the house and asked them to go with the officials for questioning. That night, besides my parents and my sister, forty-five other Baha'is were arrested in Shiraz. Probably thirty-five more Baha'is were arrested that night and the next night and were put in jail. For a long time we didn't have any information about what went on. What were the charges? Why were eighty-five Baha'is in prison? Nobody would tell.

And even when they started to put all the Baha'is on trial, nobody knew what the trial was all about except that my father and my

mother and my sister were in a trial. Nobody else was allowed to be in the court or the courtroom.

That was the time I started calling back to my home and talking to my sister Rosie about the things that were happening. I know a few things. A lady who was in prison with my mother but was later released sent me a letter and wrote some things in the letter.

During the trial my sister asked the judge if she could talk to my Dad for a few minutes. She hadn't seen or touched my Dad even for a minute during the past six months. The judge said, "Well, you may go and talk to your Dad." So my sister Roya, who was in a women's prison, saw my Dad for the first time. They were in a room, and she hugged my Dad and told



*Said Eshraghi, Baha'i witness at Congressional hearing*



him, "Dad, don't worry about me and Mom. We are fine." Anything that a father and daughter would say to each other, they said, "I love you. I miss you so much." Things like that.

The judge told my sister, "All you and your Dad have to do is deny your faith and simply become Muslims. Just tell them you are not Baha'i. I'll let you go. I'll let your Mom and your Dad go. I would even let your Dad have his retirement money." Before he went to prison, my Dad's retirement benefit was cut because he was Baha'i. The judge even told my sister Roya that he would let her continue her education at the university. She had been thrown out of the University of Shiraz because she was a Baha'i. Of course, my family didn't want to deny their belief. During the time that they were in prison, they were constantly asked to deny their faith, and of course they didn't.

I don't know much about the trial and what happened in the courtroom. Nobody was allowed to go to the court. We don't know what they discussed, but as far as I know the charges against my father were that he was a spy for Israel because he had gone to Israel once as a Baha'i pilgrim, and the charges against my mother were that she was my Dad's wife. My sister was a teacher at the Sunday school for Baha'is. The charges were that she taught the Baha'i Faith. The officials gave my family four chances to recant their faith. They had a tape recorder and a piece of paper and a pencil that they would take to the prison. They would tell my Dad first, "You must recant your faith, and if you do, you will be released." The same was done to my Mom and my sister. None of them wanted to recant their faith.

June 15, I think, was the last day my sister Rosita, who was seventeen years old, went to the prison to visit my Dad. With her was her fiancée and our cousin. The purpose of the meeting was for my sister to get my Dad's permission to marry her fiancée. Of course, my Dad agreed and told them to go ahead and get engaged. My brother-in-law said to my father, "Mr. Eshraghi, we are sorry that you are not going to be at the ceremony." My Dad smiled and said, "Well, if I am not going to be there, my spirit will be there for sure." My cousin

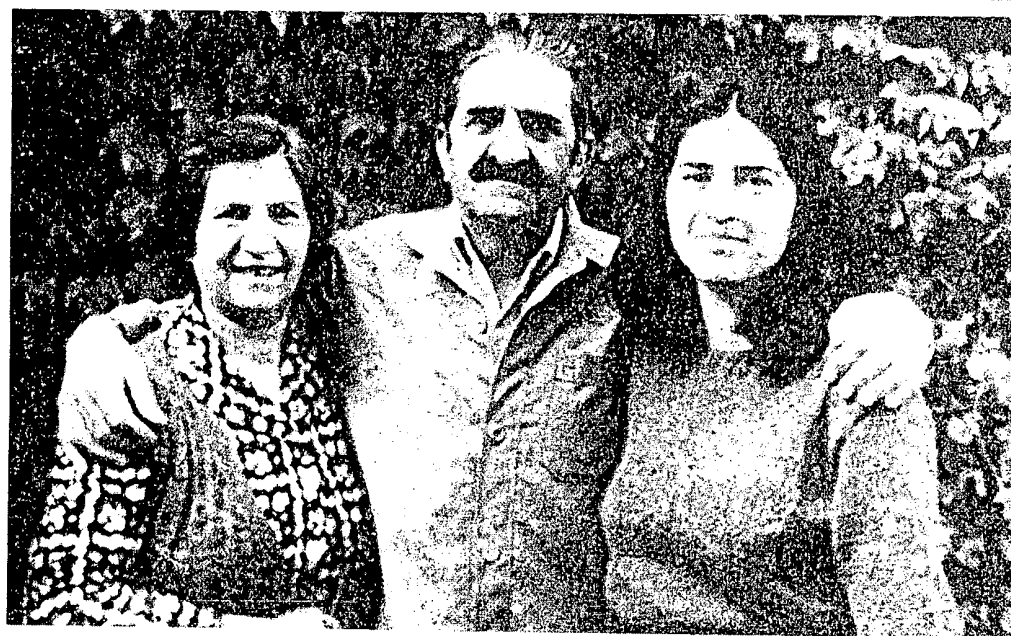
talked to my Dad for a few minutes. My Dad told her that he was waiting for the court to decide his case. Dad told her that he would not recant his faith. Apparently the judge was in the prison, because my Dad told her, "He is a nice man because he let you come in because prisoners are only allowed to have visits from the immediate members of the family." My cousin was not considered an immediate member of the family. The next day, June 16, 1983—I don't know what time—my father and six other Baha'is were executed. On that same day my sister Rosita got engaged, and as my Dad was telling her, his spirit for sure was at the engagement ceremony.

On June 17, my sister got the news that six Baha'is had been executed and that their bodies were in the morgue. She went to the morgue. The person in charge wouldn't let anyone go in, but my sister begged for about thirty minutes, and he finally said, "Okay, well, why don't you go look." She went in and saw my Dad. Later on we found out that when the names of my Dad and Dr. Afnan were called, they raced each other, each wishing to be the first to be executed. That amazed everyone because it showed the authorities that the Baha'is were dying, that they were sacrificing themselves for the Cause of God.

On June 18, the day after my sister went to the morgue and saw the body of my father, she was to go to the women's prison to see my mother and my sister. She went there and told Mom what happened to Dad. My sister dropped a few tears, and then she said, "Well, that's his destiny." My Mom simply said, "I wish I were in his place. I wish I could sacrifice myself for him." Then my Mom told my sister Rosie that she knew that something like that would come up. She said, "I think it is going to be the same thing for me and probably for Roya because we won't recant our faith either. It will be the same for all of us."

Shortly after the visiting hours they took all the ladies, including the young ladies—I think Mona Mahmudnezad was only seventeen years old.

The next day my sister Rosie found out about the executions, and so she went to the



*Ezzat Eshraghi, Enayatollah Eshraghi, and Roya Eshraghi*

morgue. She just wanted to know if my mother and sister were among the people who had been executed. The man at the morgue asked, "What do you want today?" She said, "I think I have some more people in there." He said, "Didn't you have enough? Your Dad was here yesterday." He probably felt sorry for my sister, and he let her go in, and she found the bodies of the ten ladies all over the floor.

The first one she found was my sister's body. She could not find my mother's body. She looked for about five more minutes and finally found it. She saw an old lady whose face had almost turned black. That was my Mom. My sister cried on my Mom's body, and she said, "Thank you, Mom. I am proud of you. I am proud for you." The man in charge of the morgue came and said, "Who is this?" and my sister said, "This is my Mom." "Come here," she told him, "I want to show you my sister. Here is my sister. Look, this is my sister, and this is my Dad." The man must have been shocked to see somebody who had lost her Mom and Dad and sister in two days. He told

her, "Go on home. Don't stay here. It is enough."

The next day my relatives and my sister went to the morgue to pick up bodies, but they did not release the bodies. They told them that the government would bury the bodies. Nobody saw how they buried them, but one of the guards apparently said that they buried the bodies in the Baha'i cemetery in Shiraz and that to bury all sixteen Baha'is didn't take them more than twenty minutes. Apparently they had a bulldozer dig a hole, and they just dropped the bodies in the hole and covered them with dirt.

Of course, whatever happened to the bodies is not important. What is important is the people in prison right now—those people who are still suffering. They don't have jobs. Their kids cannot get an education because they are Baha'is. Those are the important people. That is why I am here. I am trying to establish some kind of public support for the Baha'is who live under pressure right now in Iran. I hope you all can help.

During the past two months I have heard more news. First, the authorities confiscated our house in Shiraz, and when my sister went to them—she said, “I am seventeen and one-half years old and single. You executed my father, my mother, and my sister, and now you are taking my home away from me. What should I do? Should I die?” The government officials at first tried to cooperate and said, “We are sorry to hear that. We sure didn’t want to take your house away.” But apparently after a few times, when my sister went to the courts and the judge, the judge said, “Well, since you are Baha’i, the only thing we can do for you is to rent a room somewhere else. Not in your home. Your home belongs to the government now. It doesn’t belong to you anymore. We can rent a room for you until you get married. Once you marry, you have to leave the room, and you won’t be able to live there anymore.” My sister left, and the only thing they could say was, “Well, somebody will take care of you.”

Rosie is eighteen, a kid, and once a week she goes to the prison to see other relatives. It is hard on her. She has been going to the jail to see her family ever since she was sixteen.

**EXTRACTS FROM A LETTER, CONTAINING PASSAGES FROM A DIARY, DATED 16 SEPTEMBER 1983, FROM ROSITA ESHRAGHI TO HER BROTHER SAID ESHRAGHI AND HIS FAMILY ABOUT THE ARREST, IMPRISONMENT, AND EXECUTION OF THEIR PARENTS AND THEIR SISTER IN SHIRAZ IN JUNE 1983**

ON MONDAY, 8 Azar 1361 (29 November 1982), about a year after the arrest and three-day imprisonment of our family in the Guards prison of Shiraz, which we discussed at length on Roya’s birthday, we returned home around 8 P.M. from uncle’s home because father kept saying, “I’m worried; burglars have no doubt broken into our home.”

It was 8:30 when the door bell rang. Three armed men, revolutionary guards, entered; searched everywhere and put some books, a portrait of ‘Abdu’l-Baha, and the family album, which they had found, in two sacks;

made a list of them; and had us sign the list. Then using a list with many names on it they called out the names of Enayatollah Eshraghi, Ezzat Janami Eshraghi, and Roya Eshraghi. I was very unhappy that they did not call my name and will never forget the spark of happiness that appeared in Roya’s eyes when her name was called. Dad was in a hurry to go and said to Mother, “Hurry up! The gentlemen are waiting.” Mother was worried, and kept rubbing her hands together, and made last-minute recommendations. Roya ran upstairs happily to get her clothes ready. I cannot describe or forget that night. . . .

The next morning we received the news that about forty-five Baha’is had been arrested that same night in more or less the same manner by the revolutionary guards and taken to the Guards prison, located in the southeastern corner of Shiraz. . . .

On 13 Azar (4 December) telegrams were sent to the authorities appealing to them on behalf of the prisoners. The telegrams remained unanswered. We also took some fruit for the prisoners, but the officials did not accept it, attempting thus to demoralize us. . . .

On 4 Day 1361 (25 December 1982) the Guards prison opened its doors to the relatives of the prisoners, and Rosita was able to visit her beloved mother and sister. . . . She described the occasion in these words, “After about a month I succeeded in seeing Mother and Roya. . . . They were both pale, and in their eyes there was concern and fear for my sake, but there was nothing to do. I tried to reassure them. But as a result of the interrogations their fear was natural. At any rate it was a bad day, because after the long period of waiting I did not expect such scenes. From then on I lived with the hope of seeing them every Saturday and Dad on Wednesdays. . . .

“Thank you God that I was finally able to see him. Would that I could be in his place.” On 8 Day 1361 I was able to see him with his growth of beard and his smiling face. He broke down and shed a few tears when he saw auntie, and I wept when I saw his face and his weakness. . . .

The next week also Mother and Roya were

visited on Saturday and Father on Wednesday. On 18 Day 1361 (8 January 1983) Mother and Roya were transferred to Adelabad prison, and Father was transferred there on 22 Day. From the conversations during these visits it appeared that the preliminary investigations were completed because they had set a bail of 10,000,000 rials (approximately \$100,000) for Father, but he said, "I don't want you to do such a thing. They have arrested us together, and we must be freed together. . . ."

Wednesday, the 29th Day of 1361, was rainy, and when we went to visit the prisoners, we had our umbrellas open to protect us. But the guard who was taking us to the visitors' room did not let us keep our umbrellas open because the drops of rain that fell from our umbrellas, he said, would make others "unclean." So we were soaked when we reached the visitors' room. Looking at each other we burst out laughing. . . .

*Khabar*, the daily paper published in Shiraz, printed the death sentences of twenty-two Bahá'is on 23 Bahman 1361 (12 February 1983). The next day families of the prisoners went to see the Imam Jom'á and the Governor of Fars Province to see if the news was authentic, but the officials all denied it. They were very angry that such a story had been publicized within the country and abroad. . . .

Following the publication of this news the families of the prisoners went to Tehran in groups to meet the judicial authorities and appeal on behalf of their loved ones. Rosita also went to Tehran with a number of other friends (for a few days) and in this short trip met the representative of Shiraz in the Parliament, the members of the judicial council, and the Prosecutor General, who all denied the news—more or less. . . .

Once again on 22 Isfand 1361 (12 March 1983) the hands of the oppressors in Shiraz were drenched in the blood of the innocent and meek in the path of God. Three dearly loved friends adorned the gallows: Mr. Yadollah Mahmudnezhad, an old friend of the Eshraghis; Mr. Vafai; and Mrs. Zaerpur. We all wondered about the morale of the prisoners and the way we should behave. This was the

first of our good-byes with them.

Taraneh, the eldest daughter of Mr. Mahmudnezhad, was with me when we went to visit Dad. . . . When he saw her he was about to weep, but he controlled himself and asked if they had been buried. . . . It was during this visit that Dad said: "Anyway I said good-bye today because I may not be here the next time you come." Then he told me to greet everyone on his behalf and to be content with what God has wanted for us. . . . My throat was tight, but I followed his example and controlled myself. Dad asked about Said, Nahid, and Vahid. When the visit was over, he raised his arms and sent me a kiss and as usual strode out of the room before everyone else.

Until the following Saturday the ladies did not know who the two men were who had been executed; each was afraid that her loved one was killed. . . . Anyway, that Saturday was the turn of Mrs. Eshraghi, Roya, and the other ladies to say their farewells. . . .

After my birthday on 7 Ordibehesht (27 April 1983) I went to see Dad, and my dear Dad had not forgotten my birthday. I was happy and surprised because at home he was against celebrating birthdays. I said, "You did not forget!" and he said, "No. In three of my letters I wished you a happy birthday, but I guess you did not get them. . . ."

During this time Mr. Eshraghi was able to see Mrs. Eshraghi and Roya only once; that was when the prosecutor had gathered them all in one place to "guide" them and give them a last chance (to recant). At the end of the meeting he allowed the prisoners to visit with their immediate family. . . .

Our last visit with Mr. Eshraghi was on 25 Khordad (15 June 1983) when we informed him of our engagement, and he was so happy that he had tears in his eyes. He told us, "Don't be sad. I hope you will be happy. If we are not with you, our spirits will be with you. . . ." The next day, 26 Khordad, 16 June, when we were getting ready for the engagement party, about 4 P.M., they called Mr. Eshraghi and five others on the pretext of going to court, although everyone knew that on Thursdays there was no court, and took them to the Ab-

dollah Mesgar Base, known as the Polo Field, for execution.

Saturday, 28 Khordad, around 9 A.M. we received the news from one of the Baha'i friends. . . . We later went to the medical examiner's office to see if they would release the bodies to us for burial. They refused. We then asked to see the bodies. They did not want to do even that. Finally, through an old acquaintance and our insistence the immediate family were given a few minutes to view the bodies.

The door of the morgue was opened. . . . The bodies were placed in two rows. . . . I recognized Dad's body from a distance. Because I had never seen a dead body, and in the unfamiliar surrounding I was finding my father, I was disoriented and did not know what was happening to me. As I walked, my foot caught on one of the bodies, and I fell. His body was cold, and his skin was hard. When I reached Dad's body, I sat down and kept saying, "Oh, Baha'u'llah! Is this my father?" and I was weeping. When I kissed Dad, he was stiff, the skin on his face would not move at my touch. I caressed his face and could not believe it. His face and body were swollen so that the trace of the noose did not show. He had stuck out his chest as though he went determined. . . . He had a sweet smile on his face. I was trembling when I left the morgue. . . .

Saturday, 28 Khordad (18 June), was also the day for our visit to the women prisoners. . . . When they entered the visitors' room, they were happy and laughing. I tried to hold my tears back. Roya pointed to my ring and congratulated me, and I cried. She asked what the matter was before the phones (over which the prisoners, who were separated by glass partitions, talked) could be connected, and I made her understand that Dad had been executed. She was bewildered and asked me if I was serious, and I nodded. Tears came to her eyes, and with an angelic smile she put her hand to her head and said, "Praised be God." I was just watching in a daze. Mother noticed Roya and asked her what had happened. She put her hand on Mother's shoulders and told her. . . . Mother turned to me and said, "Don't worry." I could not believe this was my Mother. The

phones were connected, and she asked me when it happened, and I said Thursday. She said, "I knew it, and I have already shed my tears. I dreamed that Dad and I were somewhere together. We will be going soon, today or tomorrow. That is why we have come here. You should not be sad. I wish you happiness." I just wept, for myself of course. My Mother did not shed one drop of tear. . . . I then gestured to Roya that I had seen Dad (his body) and told her that he was smiling. We promised that we would follow his example and be strong and keep smiling. She said that [earlier] they had already taken Mother to be executed and at that time Roya had thought that Dad was going to be executed with her. So she said she had detached herself from them at that time. . . . When the time was up and we were leaving and we said good-bye, everyone was saying, "Look at them; well, this may be the last time we see them." I was weeping, and Roya told me with a smile, "Don't cry; you promised."

IMMEDIATELY after the visit two of the women were called to the prison office and released. Later ten others were called, and everyone thought they would also be released, but they were wrong. All ten were put on a minibuss and taken directly to the Polo Field and hanged. The bodies were delivered to the morgue at 10 P.M.

The driver who took these pure and guiltless souls to be massacred has recounted: "It did not seem at all that these ladies were to be executed. I first thought that they were going to be released because they were so happy and laughing. But when I stopped for inspection at the prison gate, I realized that I was to take them for execution. They were laughing and chanting prayers all the way."

Sunday morning when we went to the morgue to receive the men's bodies, we discovered that ten women had been executed the night before. . . . We only learned that Roya was among them, and Rosita was worried that if her Mother was spared it would be very hard on her. . . . When we arrived home, it was crowded with people. . . . Half an hour later the phone rang, and we learned that Mother

also was among them. . . . We went to the morgue again, and upon our insistence they allowed the relations to see the bodies. . . . It was frightening and yet a proud occasion. The faces had changed generally. I recognized Roya from her clothes. . . . Her left hand was on her forehead as though she was asleep. . . . The blindfold was now on her forehead. Her face was a little swollen and blue, and the trace of the noose was quite clear. . . . Her body was cold but still soft. I kissed her and kept saying, "Thank you. Thank you, sister." Then I got up to look for Mother, but I could not find her. The people I had seen for seven months in prison I could not now recognize. I saw an old lady with hair almost completely white. I asked myself, "Who is this? We had no one like this." Then I looked at her clothing. She had a nice scarf around her neck. "My God! This is my

mommy, and this is the scarf I brought her!" I sat down, kissed her, and put my hands on her shoulders. I thanked her and took her hand. . . . When I was bent over her the official of the morgue came and asked what relation of mine she was. I said, "This is my Mom. Come and see my sister." I took him to see Roya. He knew that yesterday I had (come to see my father. He told me) to leave and we all left.

It was about noon when they took the sixteen bodies by ambulance to the Baha'i cemetery and threw the bodies, dressed the way they were, into the graves that they had already prepared and filled the graves. Later they disturbed the area of the graves so no one can tell where the graves are or which is whose grave. But what difference does it make? They were all love and light, and they have all gone in the same direction.

## America's Reactions

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WILMA M. BRADY

My name is Wilma M. Brady. I am vice-president for Development at Spelman College in Atlanta, vice-chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States, and one member of the second generation of four generations of an American Baha'i family.

I WAS BORN in southern Illinois and lived my first years in that state on the land that my forebears homesteaded in 1848 after fleeing from slavery. In 1936 my family moved west to Phoenix, Arizona, where my oldest sister, a college student, heard of the Baha'i Faith. Attracted to its teachings on the elimination of all prejudices, the equality of men and women, universal education, and a plan for world peace, my sister and my mother were the first family members to become Baha'is. I, being the next to the youngest child, started my religious training in the Baha'i Faith at that time.

In the 1940s my family moved to Los Angeles where the family's home was maintained until my parents' deaths in the early 1970s. It was in Los Angeles that the rest of the family members became Baha'is.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to describe the American Baha'i community and then make some comments on the reactions of that community to the persecutions of the Baha'is in Iran.

Since the beginning of the American Baha'i community some ninety years ago, Baha'is who were members of prominent and wealthy families have joined with Baha'is who were skilled and unskilled workers, farmers, housewives, and business and professional people to pursue the goal common to all Baha'is—the unity of the human race.

Baha'is live in every state in the union. They come from a great variety of religious and eth-

nic backgrounds. Among the 100,000 American Baha'is are represented more than fifty Indian tribes. Over 30 percent of this community is black. The four women and five men who serve on the community's national governing body, the National Spiritual Assembly, reflect its rich diversity—one is Asian, one is a native American, three are black, and four are white.

Initially, the news of the attacks on the Iranian Baha'i community was perceived by many American Baha'is, especially those not deeply read in history or international affairs, those who did not know the nature of the Iranian revolutionary movement, with a degree of incredulous confusion. They were aware of the peaceful and nonpolitical nature of the Iranian Baha'i community since they, themselves, were believers in the same principles of the unity of mankind, human brotherhood without distinction of race or class, and respect for all religions and for all people.

Therefore, when, in the fall of 1978, the American Baha'is heard the news of the desecration of the Baha'i cemeteries, the looting and burning of Baha'i homes, the demolition of Baha'i holy places, and the beatings and murders of their Iranian coreligionists, they thought these attacks were incidents of mob violence and misunderstandings in a country in the throes of revolution. Moreover, not wishing to embarrass the government of Iran, and hoping that the initial attacks on the Baha'is were the result of mob violence, the American Baha'is (and Baha'is throughout the world) did not wish to publicize these attacks. But very soon after the Islamic revolutionary government took charge of Iran and began to set in place its official priorities, it became clear to the American Baha'i community that there was no misunderstanding—no confusion. The

attacks on the members of the Baha'i Faith, on their homes and families, on their businesses, on their institutions and holy places, were well planned and systematic and represented deep-seated prejudices and hatreds cultivated by the Shiite clergy over many, many decades.

Mr. Chairman, permit me to say a word of my own personal reaction to the persecution of the Baha'is in Iran. I have never been to Iran. Until 1978 my knowledge of that country was similar to that of most American Baha'is. I knew that Iran was the country where our Faith originated. I was aware of earlier attacks on the Iranian Baha'is, who were, and still are, viewed as renegades in that Moslem culture—a culture in which religion and government are not viewed as separate and distinct parts of the

life of the community.

To be perfectly candid, I cannot understand. I have been raised in a free country, and I react violently against injustice. I have inherited the legacy of my people, black Americans whose history is one of discrimination, prejudice, and the continuing struggle for civil rights. In my own life I have witnessed segregated schools, crosses burned on front lawns, and public accommodations in which there hung signs saying "For Whites Only." Although I was quite young, the painful memories are there. My children are products of the turbulent sixties. As a family we joined in the nonviolent struggle to rid out American society of the stifling prejudice and bigotry our forebears suffered.

Now, all of a sudden, my coreligionists,



*Wilma M. Brady, Baha'i witness  
at Congressional hearing*



members of my universal family, are being taken back to medieval darkness in which all of the most treasured beliefs about the freedom to live have been cruelly stripped from their persons and their community—solely because of their religious beliefs. I feel an old, deep, and very personal pain.

It was the shocked and anguished American Baha'is, not those suffering in Iran, who urged their National Assembly to approach our government and the press about this urgent matter. Out of its own despair and deep sense of frustration and in response to the American Baha'i community, the National Assembly launched a concerted effort to keep government officials and agencies and the media informed as reports of persecutions mounted.

We believed, and had enough evidence to confirm us in our views, that the government of Iran was not entirely deaf to the voices of foreign governments or of international public opinion.

The hearing held by this Subcommittee two years ago did much to shape that opinion. Both before and after the adoption of the Concurrent Resolution No. 73 by the two Houses of the Congress, many representatives and senators made statements protesting the arrests, disappearances, and killings of Baha'is in Iran. The *Congressional Record* shows clearly the concern of its distinguished members for the plight of Iran's Baha'is and for the absence of elementary human rights in that strife-torn land.

The Department of State has consistently shown sympathy and understanding. Mr. Elliott Abrams, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, has made statements before this Subcommittee and to the press on the condition of the Iranian Baha'is. The Bureau he heads included information on the persecution of the Baha'is in "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1983" submitted to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

We are grateful for the support our government gave the Baha'i issue in the United Nations Commission on Human Rights where

Ambassador Richard Schifter assumed a strong position and, together with the representatives of a number of other nations, forged a resolution to appoint a special representative of the Commission to study the human rights situation in Iran and to present his conclusions to the next session of the Human Rights Commission.

We are equally gratified by the decision of the State Department to extend to Iranians who fled their country to save their lives and were stranded abroad additional processing priorities that would enable them to enter the United States. The thorny issue of refugees was handled by the Assistant Secretary of State James N. Purcell, Jr., and his staff with much sympathy and good will. Ambassador H. Eugene Douglas, Coordinator for Refugee Affairs, has been invariably helpful and encouraging. His knowledge of the issues and his determined efforts in behalf of refugees have won our admiration.

To facilitate the movement of Baha'i refugees the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada cooperated in sending two representatives to various cities in Europe and the Middle East. They obtained for us valuable information on the needs of the refugees, established closer contact with the offices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and with governments concerned, and brought much needed hope and assurance to people who have been cruelly uprooted and are full of justified fear. It should be noted that American embassies and consulates everywhere extended to our representatives many courtesies and greatly helped in making their mission a success.

The American Baha'i community has, during the last four years, absorbed close to ten thousand Iranian Baha'is. We have made and continue to make every effort to help them build for themselves a new home. Exile is always a bitter experience. We are trying to make it less painful.

It is particularly significant that the president of the United States on 22 May 1983 publicly appealed to the government of Iran on be-

half of twenty-two Baha'is who had been condemned to death in Shiraz. Ayatollah Khomeini felt compelled to answer the president's appeal through the media. President Reagan made another statement concerning the Baha'is on 9 December 1983, the eve of Human Rights Day.

The two presidential statements, the text of the Congressional Resolution No. 73, interviews with American Baha'is, press editorials, as well as news items and commentaries, have been regularly broadcast over the Voice of America in many languages, including Persian, thereby emphasizing that the Islamic regime cannot do its work of murder in silence, that the world knows and recoils in horror from the inhumanity perpetrated by the clerical rulers of Iran.

Our country's media have not ignored the tragic story. It is natural for us to feel that not enough attention has been paid to a tragedy that is unique in today's world—the killing of individuals for no other reason than religious convictions. Yet we acknowledge that the press, radio, and television have played an important role in informing the public and enlisting support for the Baha'is of Iran. The *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *U.S. News and World Report*, the *New Republic*, and literally hundreds of other newspapers and magazines have published editorials, news items, and features about the persecution of the Baha'is in Iran, about its individual victims, and, in many cases, about those who found refuge in America.

Broadcast media have contributed their share. All three major television networks have interviewed Baha'is. The American Broadcasting Company devoted a segment of its 20/20 show on 28 July 1983 to an examination of the treatment of the Baha'is in Iran. The program gave millions of viewers a graphic demonstration of the courage of the victims and of the inhumanity of their oppressors. In addition, the Public Broadcasting System has broadcast sev-

eral interviews with Baha'is as well as occasional news items.

Urged by a concerned citizenry, twenty state legislatures have adopted resolutions condemning Iran's Islamic regime for its inhumanity toward Baha'is. Many city governments also passed such resolutions, clearly demonstrating the grass-roots sympathy for the Baha'is.

Private organizations and individuals have also made their voices heard. Amnesty International has consistently followed developments and publicized acts of injustice and barbarity in Iran. The American Bar Association has urged its members to protest against the treatment of Iran's Baha'i lawyers, many of whom have been disbarred or imprisoned for their beliefs.

The American Baha'i community has not been alone in its efforts to tell the world this cruel tale of persecution. The Baha'is of Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, West Germany, Australia, the Netherlands, and other countries, have brought the persecution of the Baha'is in Iran to the attention of their governments and publics. Several parliaments have passed resolutions in favor of Baha'is. The press, particularly in Europe, has given the issue considerable coverage.

The results of all this activity cannot be easily gauged. However, there can be no doubt that the government of Iran has been put on notice. It knows that the world knows of the murders; the mock trials; the tortures; the discrimination inflicted upon men, women, and children whose only crime is the faith they hold in common with us and with so many others throughout the world—their belief in God, in the brotherhood of mankind, in the essential unity of religion, and in peace.

We, the American Baha'is, will make every effort to keep before the public the story of the suffering of our Iranian coreligionists. We have already witnessed the response of our fellow Americans and our government.

We appeal for continuing support so that the voice of this nation may always sound in defense of the persecuted and the oppressed.

## House Debate: Support for a Special People

FOLLOWING the testimony about the continued persecution of the Baha'is in Iran given on May 2, 1984, before the Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations of the Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the persecution of the members of the Baha'i religion in Iran by the government of Iran went before the House of Representatives. Below is the text of the concurrent resolution and of the debate on the resolution as it appears in the House of Representatives *Congressional Record* on May 22, 1984, pages H 4280-83—ED.

### EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING PERSECUTION OF MEMBERS OF BAHAI RELIGION IN IRAN BY GOVERNMENT OF IRAN

Mr. YATRON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Affairs be discharged from further consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 226) expressing the sense of the Congress regarding the persecution of members of the Baha'i religion in Iran by the Government of Iran, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

#### H. CON. RES. 226

Whereas more than one hundred and fifty members of the Baha'i faith have been brutally executed by Iranian authorities since the 1979 Islamic revolution;

Whereas many Baha'is in Iran have disappeared and others have been tortured, persecuted, and deprived of their fundamental rights to personal property and employment;

Whereas an edict issued by Iran's Prosecutor General on August 29, 1983, has far-reaching implications that threaten the lives of three hundred thousand Baha'is residing in Iran and places the future practice of Baha'ism in jeopardy by dismantling the administrative structure of the Baha'i religion; and

Whereas these actions for the first time establish an expressed national policy which lays the legal foundation for executions, arrests, the confiscation of property, denial of jobs and pensions, expulsion of Baha'i children from schools, and other pressures which may be brought to bear by Iranian authorities on the Baha'is: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring).* That the Congress—

(1) holds the Government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of all its nationals, including the Baha'is;

(2) condemns the recent decision taken by the Government of Iran to destroy the Baha'i faith by labeling as "criminal acts" all Baha'i teaching and organized religious activities, including the attempts by Baha'is to elect their own local and national leaders, to meet in assemblies, to communicate among themselves, and to work for volunteer committees; and

(3) calls upon the President—

(A) to work with appropriate foreign governments and the allies of the United States in forming an appeal to the Government of Iran concerning the Baha'is;

(B) to cooperate fully with the United Nations in its efforts on behalf of the Baha'is and to lead such efforts whenever it is possible and appropriate to do so; and

(C) to provide, and urge others to provide, for humanitarian assistance for those Baha'is who flee Iran.

Sec. 2. The Clerk of the House of Representatives shall transmit a copy of this concurrent resolution to the President.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentle-

man from Pennsylvania (Mr. YATRON) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. YATRON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. YATRON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YATRON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the gentleman from Illinois for originally sponsoring and authoring House Concurrent Resolution 226, legislation regarding the persecution of the Baha'is in Iran. This resolution condemns the Iranian Government's decision to destroy the Baha'i faith, and calls upon the President to work with foreign governments and our allies in formulating an appeal to the Government of Iran on behalf of the Baha'is.

The Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations, which I chair, has long recognized the severity of the situation facing the Baha'i community in Iran. In May of 1982 under the leadership of Mr. BONKER, the subcommittee conducted a hearing on the Baha'is in Iran. Just recently, on May 2, 1984 we held a second hearing on the persecution of the Baha'is in Iran. As a result of these hearings we were able to help call attention to the grievous problems of Iran's largest religious minority.

The Baha'i faith is not recognized in Iran, and Baha'is are deprived of their basic human rights. Members of this peace-loving community are the principal targets of the current regime. Over 170 prominent Baha'is have been executed since Khomeini came into power. The places of worship have been destroyed, their possessions have been confiscated, and their religion banned.

The Baha'is are not the only Iranians who must suffer. Executions of political or religious victims are an almost daily occurrence. Since 1979, according to Amnesty International, approximately 5,500 people have been summarily executed by the Iranian Government. Those citizens who have not lost their lives encounter restrictions of their basic freedoms—freedom of speech, political freedom, and freedom of religion. Countless numbers of Iranians sought

shelter from this tyranny in other countries.

Baha'is in Iran have always experienced tremendous pressure and persecution but they are being slaughtered by the Khomeini regime for adherence to their faith. For this reason, I urge my colleagues to support House Concurrent Resolution 226.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. YATRON. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. STARK. I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to associate myself with the remarks of the gentleman and urge the support of House Concurrent Resolution 226. The Baha'is have indeed been persecuted, tortured, and unjustly imprisoned in Iran for many years. The American people cannot sit back and witness this without raising a loud voice of objection.

I hope this will be a step in the direction of bringing justice to a peace-loving, gentle folk who deserve our concern. I appreciate both the gentlemen's concern and the gentleman from Illinois for introducing this resolution.

Mr. YATRON. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for the fine work that he has done and the leadership he has shown in this area.

Mr. LEACH of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. LEACH of Iowa asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEACH of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 226, expressing the sense of the Congress regarding the persecution of members of the Baha'i religion by the Islamic Republic of Iran.

I want to take this opportunity to commend the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. PORTER) for his leadership on this issue, as well as the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. YATRON) for pressing for expeditious floor action. In addition, it should be stressed that the Department of State "enthusiastically supports" the resolution.

Three weeks ago, on May 2, 1984, the Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations held a hearing on the "Reli-

gious Persecution of the Baha'is in Iran." The subcommittee heard eloquent testimony from representatives of the American Baha'i community indicating that some 20 more Baha'is have been executed since the resolution before us was drafted, bringing the total to date to over 170 victims. Included among those 170 victims were men, women, and teenage girls. Thousands of others have been arrested, tortured, and lost their jobs and property. Baha'i holy places have been confiscated and demolished. Members of the Baha'i religion are under constant pressure to recant their faith and embrace Islam in order to escape the horrors of persecution.

Two years ago, in May 1982, our subcommittee held a similar hearing on the persecution of the Baha'is. But as Judge James F. Nelson, chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States, recently noted: "It is heartbreaking that in the 2 years since this committee heard our initial testimony the situation in Iran has not improved." Judge Nelson went on to point out that in spite of pleas from government officials and parliaments as well as other prominent persons and organizations, the number of those executed had increased over that 2-year period and that whereas 150 were imprisoned in May 1982, today over 700 Baha'is are under detention.

One cannot help but conclude that the aim of the Iranian Government is the extirpation of the Baha'i faith from Iran, either by forced conversion of Baha'is to Shiite Islam or "extermination." The analogies between Iran today and Germany under Hitler are towering.

The acts of inhumanity and brutality that have been heaped upon members of a peaceful religion are incomprehensible to civilized humanity. Among those recently executed are 10 women including 3 teenage girls. The Revolutionary Guard tortures others in prison, whipping them with metal cables, pouring boiling water on their heads.

While there is some tentative glimmer of hope that worldwide protests against this persecution may have diminished the Iranian authorities' appetite for executions, the abuses

continue to occur and demand our unflagging efforts to bring all pressure possible to bear on that Government for its crimes. The law-abiding international community must continue to make clear to the Iranian Government—through national actions and efforts by international organizations like the UN Human Rights Commission—that it cannot escape full responsibility for its actions to eliminate the Baha'i faith.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that those Baha'is who remain in Iran and who live in the darkness of this terror will hear our words and know of our actions today.

Accordingly, I urge the unanimous support of my colleagues for this resolution as a symbol that the Islamic Republic of Iran cannot perpetrate an evil of this nature in silence. International protests may prove futile, but ignoring the plight of this gentle, committed people would be morally negligent.

The Baha'is are a very special people with a very special faith. They are special people because of the intellectual and personal depth of the convictions they hold. Their faith is special because it draws on so many religions and emphasizes, above everything else, tolerance.

This Congress by this resolution expresses the profoundest possible respect for the Baha'is and implicitly for all citizens of the world who have been persecuted for holding minority religious views.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. PORTER) whose resolution we are considering.

(Mr. PORTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I first want to commend the chairman of the Subcommittee on Human Rights, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, and the ranking minority member, the gentleman from Iowa, for their leadership on this issue, for their commitment to it, for their bringing the resolution to the floor, and for the excellent hearings that were held before the subcommittee on May 2, and the earlier hearings on religious persecution that were held under the chairmanship of Mr. BONKER of Washington.

I think it is particularly appropriate that we consider this resolution today. It was 140 years ago today that the Baha'i religion was founded in Persia, incorporating as it did the essential tenets of all organized religions and emphasizing the unity of mankind, world peace, world order, the social equality of all people, pacifism, and tolerance.

It is an ironic crime against all humanity that these gentle and peaceful people have been persecuted in their homeland through 140 years of history but especially since the rise to power of the murderous Khomeini regime.

Today also marks 1 year since President Reagan's historic appeal on behalf of the Baha'is, and I want to take a moment of the time of the House to quote from the President's letter of just a year ago.

"These individuals," the President said, "are not guilty of any political offense or crime, they have not plotted the overthrow of the regime, and they are not responsible for the deaths of anyone. They only wish to live in accordance with the dictates of their own consciences. I strongly urge other world leaders to join me in an appeal to the Ayatollah Khomeini and the rest of Iran's leadership not to implement the sentences that have been pronounced on these innocent people."

Mr. Speaker, what has happened since that time, during the year since the President appealed for restraints from the Ayatollah Khomeini? It has to be said that the situation in Iran has worsened and worsened appreciably. Iran is the only place on Earth today where people are being persecuted, tortured, and executed solely for their religious beliefs.

I ask the House to consider these recent reports from Iran and try to put ourselves in the position of the individual Baha'is toward whom this persecution has been directed: Since the beginning of the Islamic revolution in 1979, more than 300 residences of Baha'is have been plundered or set on fire, and the people have nowhere to turn for help. One hundred and seventy Baha'is, most of them prominent members of the Baha'i community, have been killed by a variety of methods, but principally through execution by firing squads and by

hangings.

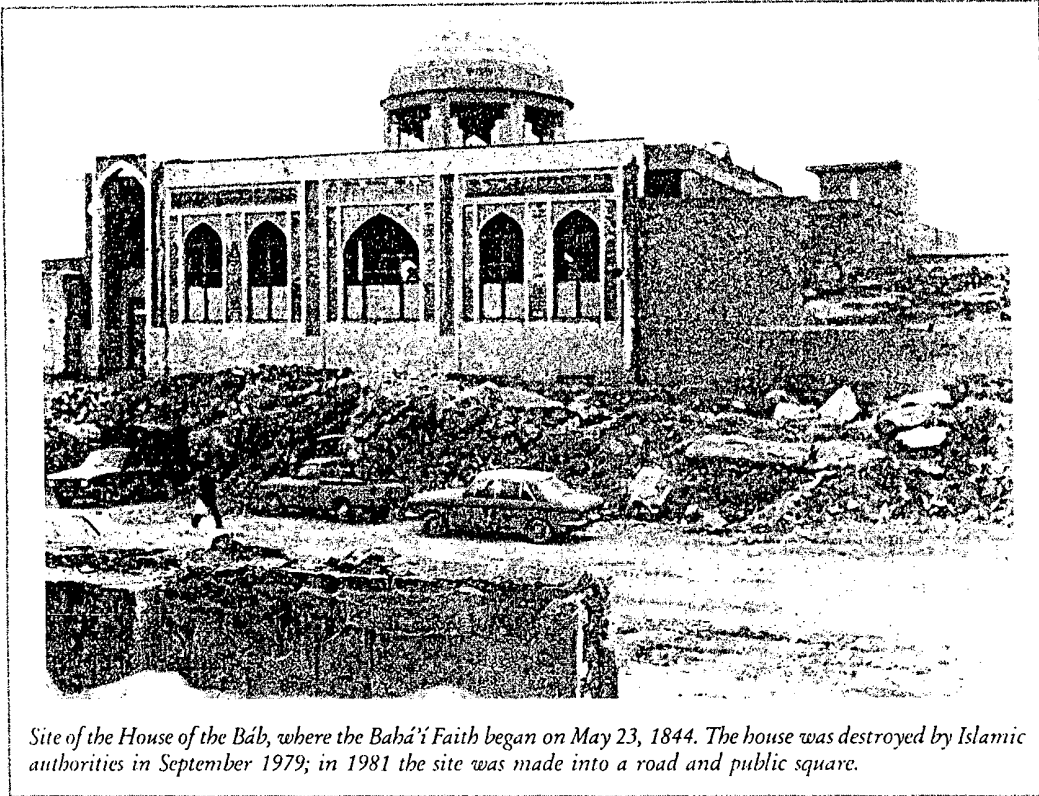
One woman lost her husband who was shot before a firing squad and then, as a widow, was demanded to pay the cost of the bullets for his execution. Three teenage girls were hanged whose only crime was a refusal to recant their religious beliefs.

In urban areas, properties belonging to hundreds of families have been seized, and in rural areas, orchards have been destroyed, farms and arable lands confiscated with no chance for redress. The Ministry of Works and Social Affairs of Iran formally instructed industrial and commercial institutions not to pay the salaries of Baha'is that were on their staffs. More than 10,000 Baha'is employed in government offices or in the private sector have been summarily discharged, their rights to pensions and other employment benefits simply revoked, and in many cases demands were made of them to return the salaries they had earned. Students have been dismissed from universities and other institutions of higher learning simply because they affirmed a belief in the Baha'i religion. In most cities and provinces, Baha'i children have been denied an education, the opportunity to attend school and to learn.

Some 700 Baha'is including men, women, and children are being held in various prisons today throughout Iran. For more than 9 months, visits to 40 Baha'i prisoners have been strictly prohibited by the authorities; no one knows what their fate is. In some prisons, Baha'i prisoners are undergoing relentless torture in an effort on the part of authorities to force them to admit to false charges of engaging in espionage and acting against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

For a period of months they have been subject to floggings of all parts of the body, particularly the legs and feet. Sometimes up to 400 strokes by wire cables have been administered to a single prisoner, and then that prisoner is forced to crawl back on his hands and knees to the darkness of his cell.

Prisoners are regularly whipped in the head and face with thick plastic tubes in some prisons, and similar procedures are used, to a lesser degree, in others. A number of these victims of



*Site of the House of the Báb, where the Bahá'í Faith began on May 23, 1844. The house was destroyed by Islamic authorities in September 1979; in 1981 the site was made into a road and public square.*

torture have lost their sight and hearing; others, their mental competence.

The bodies of four prisoners subjected to such treatment were seen being buried recently. It has been reported recently that three of the Baha'is broke under this torture and gave confessions that they were part of a CIA or Zionist plot against the regime. These confessions were reportedly videotaped for use as propaganda on Iranian TV. Lies, Mr. Speaker; all lies.

The Baha'is are unsafe in their own homes, which are entered at will, day or night, by revolutionary guards who harass the inhabitants, insulting them and threatening them and berating them, and if the Baha'i individual they are looking for is not present, they seize others as hostages, including women, and even children.

Recently a Baha'i woman gave birth and she was instantly slain by a fanatical Moslem mob, her child taken to be raised in the "true faith."

Whenever the head or some other important member of the family has been killed, and often when such a person has been imprisoned, those remaining behind have been forced from their homes and not permitted to take any belongings, even in the dead of winter, with them. They have no redress for these grievances.

Religious shrines have been destroyed. The place of the founding of the Baha'i faith was systematically torn down by the government. We can only imagine a government tearing down our church or temple and having to stand by helplessly, with no means of protest.

Recently four more Iranian Baha'is were executed. All had been tortured prior to their executions, and another died in prison as a result of his torture.

Last year the Prosecutor General of Iran issued an edict banning all Baha'i religious activity as criminal acts. Like the Nuremberg laws,

this edict establishes the so-called legal grounds for mass arrests and genocide, and that is what is occurring, Mr. Speaker—genocide. In response to this decree, elected leaders of the Baha'i faith in Iran did dissolve all Baha'i institutions there, citing obedience, as they always do, to the civil law of the land. But, Mr. Speaker, this has done nothing to prevent more torture, more persecution, and more executions.

I think it is important to call attention worldwide to the plight of the Baha'is. In this generation, we have witnessed other attempts at genocide—the Armenians, the Cambodians, 6 million Jews in World War II. The setting in Iran today resembles Nazi Germany during Hitler's rise to power, Mr. Speaker, and the world must speak out against it.

The purpose of the resolution is threefold. First, it holds the Government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of all its citizens, including the Baha'is. Second, it condemns the Prosecutor General's edict banning the Baha'is. And third, it calls upon the President of the United States to work in the United Nations and other forums with leaders of other countries to form a broad-based appeal to the Iranian Government.

Mr. Speaker, I know that it is impossible to fight murder and torture and genocide with resolutions, but we here in this free land sometimes forget that injustice toward anyone anywhere on this globe is in reality injustice toward each of us. We are all diminished by what is being done today in Iran.

Mr. Speaker, we debated a long time whether public exposure of this situation by Members of the Congress might jeopardize Baha'is in Iran even further. However, after several discussions with members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is in the United States, I now believe that calling attention to the plight of the Iranian Baha'is might help improve the atmosphere there and reduce the excesses.

The world must learn what is happening in Iran and bring the pressure of civilized opinion to bear on this barbaric situation. As Firuz Kazemzadeh, the Secretary of the Baha'i Assembly in America, a professor of Russian history

at Yale and a gentle and thoughtful man so representative of the adherents of this faith, said recently: "It is more difficult to kill, more difficult to torture, in broad daylight."

Mr. Speaker, House Concurrent Resolution 226 has 188 cosponsors, including many members of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus. It deserves not only enactment, but more importantly, that its concerns be brought to the attention of people all over the world. This resolution will not, in itself, change anything, but the people of this planet, united in their opposition to genocide in any form, can.

Mr. LEACH of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the gentleman from Illinois for a very profound statement.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CAMPBELL).

(Mr. CAMPBELL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CAMPBELL. I thank the gentleman for yielding. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution, and also to commend the gentleman from Illinois.

Members of the House of Representatives and indeed all of the United States view with alarm and revulsion the continued persecutions and repressions of the Baha'is by the Ayatollah Khomeini.

The Baha'i faith is represented by over 7,200 locations in the United States with a significant number in my own State of South Carolina. Since the 1979 revolution in Iran at least 150 members of the Baha'i faith have been executed, more than 550 believers have been imprisoned, and many more are missing. Thousands of Baha'is have lost their homes, jobs, and possessions; no child of Baha'i parentage has been allowed to attend school; and all places holy to the faith, properties, and cemeteries have been confiscated or destroyed. Most recently, the followers of Khomeini have banned all Baha'i organizations and worship services.

To those of us from a country founded on religious freedom, these actions are abhorrent. Though we may not all believe the same, we do all believe in the sanctity of life. Khomeini's senseless and brutal treatment of the Baha'is is



an affront to all peace-loving peoples, and I join my colleagues in condemning the actions of Khomeini and his thugs.

I hope that this resolution will focus light on these atrocities so that these murders and tortures may be lessened and the Baha'is may, in fact, live in peace.

• Mr. FASCELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 226, expressing the sense of the Congress regarding the persecution of members of the Baha'i religion in Iran by the Government of Iran.

At the outset, I would like to especially commend two Members for their energetic leadership on this issue—the Honorable JOHN PORTER, cochairman of the Human Rights Caucus and sponsor of the resolution, and the Honorable GUS YATRON, chairman of the Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations, whose subcommittee conducted hearings and considered the resolution. House Concurrent Resolution 226 has broad support in the House with cosponsorship of over 180 Members.

The persecution of the Baha'is in Iran is not a new occurrence—it has persisted throughout their 140 year history. Most unfortunately, the abuses have intensified to an intolerable degree since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Over 150, of the 300,000 Baha'is in Iran have been executed since that time. Estimates of the number of Baha'is incarcerated there range from 500 to over 700—many have been tortured, and some have died in prison. Even women and children among this pacifistic minority have been tormented and executed.

In an egregious disregard for the Baha'is, not

only did the Government officially ban the Baha'i religion in August 1983, but it has targeted these peace-loving people for extreme abuse. Baha'is have been fired from their jobs, denied their pensions, and had their property and businesses confiscated—even their religious shrines and cemeteries have been desecrated and destroyed. The basic tenets of the Baha'i beliefs—pacifism, social equality, and tolerance—make them particularly vulnerable to the merciless fanaticism directed against them.

Other religious minorities in Iran have also been subjected to persecution—Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians. The attacks against the Baha'is have been the most flagrant, however.

The resolution before us charges the Iranian Government with responsibility for respecting the rights of all its citizens, including the Baha'is; condemns that Government's decision to label all Baha'i activities as "criminal acts"; and calls on the President to work with other nations to appeal to Iran on behalf of the Baha'is, and to encourage cooperation with U.N. efforts, and to provide humanitarian assistance to Baha'is fleeing from Iran.

Mr. Speaker, as a humanitarian appeal to Iran to encourage its sensitivity toward the Baha'is, I urge the adoption of House Concurrent Resolution 226. •

Mr. LEACH of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. YATRON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## Senate Debate: Sending a Clear Signal

THE concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the U.S. Congress about the continued persecution of the Baha'is in Iran by the government in Iran, having been passed by the Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and by the House itself on May 22, 1984, went before the U.S. Senate in June. The following is the text of the debate in the Senate as it appears in the Senate *Congressional Record* on June 15, 1984, pages S 7367-71—ED.

### PERSECUTION OF BAHAI'S IN IRAN

Mr. BAKER. Mr. President, I send a concurrent resolution to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The concurrent resolution will be stated.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 226) expressing the sense of the Congress regarding the persecution of members of the Baha'i religion in Iran by the Government of Iran.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the Senate will proceed to its consideration.

Mr. PERCY. Mr. President, today the Senate votes on House Concurrent Resolution 226, condemning the persecution of the Baha'is in Iran. Last week the Foreign Relations Committee unanimously passed this resolution. Given the plight of the Baha'i community, I believe it is time for the full Senate again to go on record as objecting strenuously to the treatment of this peaceful religious minority. The House passed an identical resolution on May 22, and, together, our message will be strong.

Since the rise of the Ayatollah Khomeini in 1979, the Baha'i community in Iran has been

subjected to cruel and escalating persecution. Since the Khomeini government took power, 175 Baha'is have been executed for the crime of their faith, and many others continue to suffer systematic oppression and torture. According to Baha'i leaders in the United States, the persecution appears to be entering a new and sinister phase.

I know many Baha'i people because the Baha'i headquarters in the United States is located just two blocks from my house in Illinois. The Baha'i community in the United States fully supports this resolution. They believe that it is crucially important at this time to focus international attention on the severe situation for their coreligionists in Iran. By passing this resolution, the Senate will make public its absolute condemnation of Iran's persecution of the Baha'is.

Mr. MATHIAS. Mr. President, during this year's commemoration of Maryland's 350th anniversary, I have often been reminded that the first settlers of our State came to this country to establish a haven of religious toleration. Unfortunately, intolerance continues today in many places of the world.

The persecution of the Baha'is in Iran is a tragic case that calls for our support for House Concurrent Resolution 226, which condemns the Iranian Government's treatment of the Baha'is.

Since the Khomeini regime took power in 1979, the Government of Iran has embarked upon a conscious policy of persecuting those of the Baha'i faith in the country of its birth.

More than 175 Baha'is have been executed by the Khomeini regime. Many of those executed were elected leaders of Baha'i assemblies, the governing bodies of this religious faith, which has no clergy but elects its leaders

to direct the affairs of the community. Women and teenage girls have been hanged for their religious faith. Indeed, the proof that the persecution is based solely on religious differences is seen in the fact that almost all of those executed were offered their freedom, and restoration of jobs and possessions, if only they would renounce their faith and embrace Islam.

The administration has issued two public appeals on behalf of the Iranian Baha'i community, and continues to work in the United Nations Human Rights Commission to secure collective appeals against the actions of the Khomeini regime.

The results of these efforts have been modest. But it is my sincere hope that in passing this resolution today we will send a strong signal to the civilized world that we cannot tolerate mindless persecution of a community of innocent men and women.

Mrs. KASSEBAUM. Mr. President, the authors of this resolution should be commended for the leadership that they have exercised on this most important humanitarian issue. Nowhere is the repugnance of the radical regime in Iran more apparent than in its vicious and indefensible persecution, if not genocide, against the Baha'i people in that country. This is religious persecution in its most virulent form. Neither racial nor cultural differences distinguish Baha'i Iranians from their Shi'ite Moslem countrymen. It is purely on the basis of religious intolerance that Baha'is in Iran are persecuted, tortured and killed.

From time to time, history has witnessed the kind of intolerance and genocide that the present Iranian regime is visiting upon its own Baha'i population. However, when brutality of this type has been exposed to the world's eye, history also shows us that no regime that

engages in such abuses can last for long. This is why the authors of Senate Concurrent Resolution 86 deserve our praise. They are bringing ongoing abuses to our consciousness. They are providing the first necessary step to bring pressures to bear on the perpetrators of the practices we condemn.

In conclusion, Mr. President, let me state that I do not believe that this issue is a matter of exclusively Christian or Jewish concern against Moslems. In point of fact, this issue is of concern to all people of all religious faiths. Persecution against any one group affects us all, for it is all too easy for any of us to become the next victim if we only stand by while the rights of others are abused.

Mr. HEINZ. Mr. President, I am deeply gratified by the actions of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in bringing this resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 226, to the floor, and I urge all of my colleagues to join in condemning the Iranian Government for the continued persecution of the people of the Baha'i faith. This resolution is identical to Senate Concurrent Resolution 86 introduced by Senator PERCY and myself last November.

As the war between Iran and Iraq intensifies our attention is necessarily focused on that strategic yet volatile corner of the world. We must not, however, let that conflict divert our attention from an international tragedy which has befallen a small, peaceful religious minority in Iran—the Baha'is.

The rise of the Ayatollah Khomeini in the 1979 Islamic revolution initiated escalating hatred and hardship for the peaceful Baha'i community in Iran. Over 170 Baha'is—men, women, and even teenage girls—have been executed by the Khomeini regime, ostensibly on criminal charges. But in truth these innocent people

were publicly hanged because of their dedication to the Baha'i faith.

Members of the Baha'i community have been denied their basic human rights. Their religion is not recognized by the Khomeini regime, and every attempt is made to convert Baha'is to Islam through the threat of officially-sanctioned persecution. For refusing to embrace the religion of the ruling government, thousands have been arrested and tortured, losing their property and jobs. Holy sites have been confiscated and desecrated.

On May 2, 1984, the House Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations held a hearing on the "Religious Persecution of the Baha'is in Iran." The record of that hearing demonstrates the horror which is being inflicted upon the Baha'is of Iran. Since Senator PERCY and I introduced Senate Concurrent Resolution 86 on November 14, 1983, over 20 more individuals have been executed. Countless others have faced torture in order to elicit false confessions that they were members of the CIA or agents of Zionism who were attempting to overthrow the regime. In addition, the record reveals that some 700 Baha'is, including children, are being held in Iranian prisons. Because access to these victims is strictly limited by the regime, their fate is uncertain and precarious.

Mr. President, Senate Concurrent Resolution 86 calls attention to the tragic and unjust persecution of this religious minority. The resolution condemns the Khomeini regime's actions against the Baha'is and reaffirms our solidarity with the Baha'i people. The resolution also calls on the President to take an active role in persuading the Iranian Government to halt the destruction of this peaceful community.

I am pleased the 67 Members of the Senate are cosponsors of Senate Concurrent Resolution 86 and that it is supported by the State Department on behalf of the Reagan administration. In a recent letter to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, CHARLES PERCY, the State Department acknowledges that resolutions in multilateral bodies and in international media serve as a brake on the Iranian regime and prevent even more

egregious actions that might be taken out of the glare of world publicity.

Let me urge each of my Senate colleagues to add his or her support to this important resolution, House Concurrence Resolution 226. Together, this body can send a clear signal directly to the Iranian regime that we have noted and that we condemn these outrageous violations of internationally accepted standards of basic human rights.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to insert into the RECORD a recent Newsweek article, "Death Inside Khomeini's Jails," which is an eyewitness account of torture and execution in Iran.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

#### DEATH INSIDE KHOMEINI'S JAILS

Safely away from Ayatollah Khomeini's jails, a survivor sat in a London office last week describing the torments she had endured. She was a woman in her early 40s, a mother of three. She was also a Baha'i, a member of a religious faith that Iran's Islamic leaders consider a heresy. Since the overthrow of the shah, they have relentlessly persecuted the country's 300,000 Baha'is—arresting them, confiscating their property and, sometimes, when they refuse to recant their religion, executing them. To use the woman's name would jeopardize the lives of relatives still in Iran. But the story she told Newsweek's London bureau chief Tony Clifton seemed as credible as it was bleak. Excerpts:

I worked for the National Iranian Oil Co. in Shiraz. About two years ago I was taken before two mullahs who questioned me for four hours. They tried to convince me I should recant and convert to Islam. They told me that if I did not recant I would be dealt with according to "Islamic law." I said I could not. About 10 days later I was summoned again. They asked who my family and friends were and for the names of other Baha'is. One said, "Don't think you're just going to lose your job—from now on you'll be followed everywhere."

And then I was sacked, for being "a follower of the misleading sect of Baha'ism." Baha'is were not allowed to leave the country. But I didn't want to leave—I hadn't done anything wrong. At the end of 1982, four Revolutionary Guards came to our house and took me. My three-year-old boy ran after me crying, "I want my mummy!" A guard just threw him aside.

They drove me to the Sepah military prison in southern Shiraz. When we came to the courtyard they blindfolded me. I was led into a room and a voice said, "What's the charge?" and someone replied, "Baha'i." There seemed to be other men in the room and they cursed me: "Your father was a dog." "Your ancestors were animals." "You're a racial degenerate." This went on for two hours. Afterward,

I was taken to another room where a woman stripped me and searched me. Then I was taken to a cell.

The cell was about 10 feet square. It was in semi-darkness, lit only by two dirty windows in the ceiling. There were about 40 women of all ages in it, most of them Baha'is. But some were political prisoners. A small number were there for civil crimes. We were squeezed together standing up, and when we tried to sleep at night we had to lie on our sides, because if we lay on our backs or stomachs we took up too much room. I was there almost two months. During that time, women were taken out and tortured and then brought back. There was never a time when someone was not groaning or screaming or lying unconscious next to you.

I will always remember Nusrat Yaldoi, a Baha'i woman I knew. They tried to force her to recant, and the guards whipped her with wire cables. Because she was a woman they had covered her back with a cotton chador, because it would have been immodest for them to see her bare back. The wires had torn her back to shreds, so that you could see the bone, but they had also torn the chador to shreds and the pieces of rag had been whipped into the raw flesh on her back. They whipped her until she was unconscious and threw her in the cell. Then another group of guards came in and said they needed Yaldoi for her trial. We all said she couldn't be tried because she was unconscious. They just dragged her by the arms, with her feet trailing on the floor. Later she told us that when they were beating her they said they would stop if she would go on radio and television to publicly deny her faith and to say that the Baha'is spied for Israel. She was in the cell for 55 days without medical attention. Finally she was taken away and hanged with nine other women who had also refused to recant.

I was never tortured myself, but I was questioned endlessly, sometimes for 12 to 14 hours at a time. They tried to get me to reveal the whereabouts of other Baha'is and where Baha'i funds were hidden. Sometimes I would be blindfolded and stood against a wall, and suddenly the guards would cock their rifles as though they were about to shoot me. Once, they blindfolded me and took me downstairs to a room that must have been a torture chamber. I could hear someone being whipped, and could hear screams and groans. Someone said to me, "This will happen to you if you don't tell us what we want to know." Then one day I was taken into a courtroom. The guards had my three-year-old son. I hadn't seen him since they arrested me. They let him sit on my knee. One of the men said, "Here's your son. You can keep him with you, and have your home and pension back. All you have to do is recant. If you don't—we'll take you out and hang you." I still refused.

Torture: It was common practice to put pressure on you through your family. One day the prison

guards came for another Baha'i woman, a young hospital nurse from Shiraz named Tahirin Siyavashi. They told her that her husband, Jamshid, had recanted. When they brought him to see her, two guards had to support him because he couldn't walk: he had been whipped and his toenails pulled out. Jamshid told her that he had been condemned to death, but that he had not recanted and that she must not do so either. Two days later they hanged him.

Last year they hanged Tahirin Siyavashi too. The youngest of the nine Baha'i women hanged was Muna Mahmadijhad. She was 17. Her father had been tied face down on a bed and flogged for refusing to disclose the names of other Baha'is. He told her to cooperate with the authorities so that they would not beat her too. But of course she was so young she didn't know anything. So they hanged him, and they hanged her as well. She was only a high-school student and had never done any harm to anyone.

Then they released the survivor. She thinks she was freed because she was a high Baha'i official in Shiraz. "I think they believed that if they let me go, they could keep a watch on me and wait for me to lead them to our people who were in hiding." Instead, she made her way safely out of Iran. She still carries a photograph of Tahirin Siyavashi. "The last thing she said to me was, 'Go and tell everyone what they're doing to us.' And so I'm telling you, now."

Mr. PELL. Mr. President, the resolution before us, House Concurrent Resolution 226, concerns the plight of the Baha'is in Iran. Without a doubt, the treatment of the Baha'is is the most serious of many appalling human rights abuses in Iran today, and one of the most egregious human rights violations anywhere. I commend my colleague from Pennsylvania, Senator HEINZ, for offering this timely resolution and for his efforts to secure its passage.

The Khomeini regime has, in effect, made adherence to the Baha'i faith a crime. In August 1983, Iran's Revolutionary Prosecutor General effectively banned all Baha'i religious activity. In Iran, it is now a crime for the Baha'is to participate in a social welfare organization, to operate a business corporation, or to teach the faith, even by parents to children at home. Baha'i shrines and cemeteries have been desecrated and Baha'i women, whose marriages are not recognized by the regime, have been branded prostitutes.

Since Khomeini took power more than 170 Baha'is have been executed. The victims have

included men, women, and even children. Over 700 Baha'is are imprisoned in Iran today. Torture of the Baha'is—including the whipping of prisoners with metal cables, the pouring of boiling water on prisoners, and severe beatings—is commonplace.

We should harbor no illusions about the probable fate of Iran's Baha'is. I would like to quote a brief extract from an interview given by Hojjatol-Islam Qazi, a religious judge and president of the Revolutionary Court of Shiraz.

The Iranian nation has arisen in accordance with Koranic teachings and by the will of God has determined to establish the Government of God on earth. Therefore, it cannot tolerate the perverted Baha'is who are instruments of Satan and followers of the devil and of the super powers and their agents, such as the Universal House of Justice of Israel. It is absolutely certain that in the Islamic Republic of Iran there is no place whatsoever for Baha'is and Baha'ism.

Of the seriousness of the regime's intention to eliminate the Baha'is from Iran, there can be no doubt. Hojjatol-Islam Qazi's comments came as the Shiraz Court sentenced 20 Baha'is to death.

The treatment of the Baha'is in Iran is all too reminiscent of the treatment of the German Jews in the early stages of Hitler's Reich. If a full-scale genocide is to be avoided, the world community must keep international attention focused on Iran's treatment of the Baha'is. Resolutions, such as the one we are about to pass, are a useful tool in insuring that the vilest crime of all—genocide—does not occur in the dark.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, last year an Iranian Prosecutor General published an edict which defines as "criminal acts" the teaching and religious activities of the Baha'i faith, in effect outlawing the formal practice of the Baha'i religion and placing in jeopardy the employment, education, property and even the lives of the Baha'is themselves. This edict does not represent a departure from the established policies of the Khomeini government in Iran; it merely carries those policies forward, to establish a new framework for the oppression and persecution of persons of the Baha'i faith.

The policies of oppression and persecution are well documented. In the House of Repre-

sentatives, the Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations of the Foreign Affairs Committee held hearings in May 1982, and again in May of this year to document the tragic situation of the Baha'is. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is scheduled to receive further testimony in hearings on June 26.

We have learned from the bitter experience of this century that the persecution of a vulnerable people must not be ignored. The approximately 300,000 Baha'is now living in Iran are indeed vulnerable, and House Concurrent Resolution 226 speaks out in their defense by condemning the Iranian policies of persecution and calling for international cooperation on behalf of the Baha'is. As Elie Wiesel has so eloquently reminded us, the opposite of love is not hate but indifference. Our respect for human rights and human dignity, indeed our own self-respect as a free nation will not permit us to remain indifferent.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 226, regarding persecution of members of the Baha'i faith by the Government in Iran. Along with a majority of my colleagues, I am a cosponsor of this resolution, and I hope that the Senate will pass it in timely fashion.

The Baha'i faith was founded 140 years ago in Iran. While I am not myself any great expert on the finer points of religious doctrine, I think an outside observer would agree that the most striking feature of the Baha'i religion is the emphasis placed on tolerance. Live and let live. The road the Baha'is have faced has been a hard one, but they have stuck to that basic principle. That is why what is being done to them now is particularly ironic—and especially painful.

There are now some 300,000 Baha'is in Iran. Their very existence as an organized religion, the passage of their faith to their children, is illegal. Since 1979, 170 prominent Baha'is have been executed in Iran for their beliefs. Last August, Iran's Prosecutor General declared that all Baha'i teaching and organized religious activities were criminal activities. Revolutionary guards, the brown shirts of the Khomeini regime, have the authority to enter any Baha'i

home at will. More than 300 Baha'i homes have been destroyed.

Recently, Iran's Minister of Works and Social Affairs officially instructed commercial and industrial institutions not to pay the salaries of the Baha'is on their staff. More than 10,000 Baha'is have simply been dismissed, without warning, without justification; their incomes erased, their hopes wiped out. Baha'i students have been expelled from colleges and secondary schools because of their religion. And, in most places in Iran, it is impossible for a child of Baha'i parents to obtain even an elementary school education.

These statistics are accurate, but they are not the whole story. We have reliable accounts of the horrible truth. We have heard of the Baha'i woman whose husband was executed by firing squad—which then demanded payment to cover the cost of the bullets. We know about the Baha'i woman who gave birth and was killed by a fanatic mob, who took her child from the murdered mother to be raised according to Khomeini's brand of Islam—and we wonder at the fate of that child, what the future will hold. We know about the Baha'i prisoners who have died in custody, tortured to death because they refused to confess to fantastic crimes they did not commit. And we know what such confessions would be used for—justification for more persecution of the Baha'is, and the other luckless victims of Iran's Islamic Republic.

Mr. President, there is a word for this kind of wholesale atrocity. The word is "genocide." The August 1983 edict against the Baha'is reminds me of nothing so much as the Nuremberg laws of a half-century ago. We cannot allow this to go on without protest. We know that, at this time, there is little we can do to aid the Baha'is in Iran, but as Dr. Firuz Kazemzadeh, a distinguished constituent of mine, a Yale professor and the secretary of the Baha'is Assembly in America, has said, "It is more difficult to kill, more difficult to torture, in broad daylight."

That is why passage of House Concurrent Resolution 226 is so important. My good friend and colleague, Senator HEINZ and Congressmen YATRON, PORTER, STARK, and

LEACH as well, deserve credit for pressing this matter in Congress. We must shine the light on the persecution of the Baha'is. This resolution does three things: First, it states that Iran will be held responsible for the crimes against the Baha'is; second, it condemns the efforts of the Iranian Government to destroy the Baha'is by making their religious practices illegal; and third, it urges the President to work with the appropriate governments, and with the United Nations, to provide aid and comfort to the Baha'is, both those within Iran and those who have managed to escape. These are sound goals, and I urge my colleagues to support them by prompt passage of House Concurrent Resolution 226.

Mr. GLENN. Mr. President, as a cosponsor of Senate Concurrent Resolution 86, the Senate companion to House Concurrent Resolution 226, I join my colleagues in condemning Iran's persecution of the Baha'i religious minority. While the peaceful Baha'i community has been persecuted in Iran for well over a century, the current Iranian Government has fiercely rekindled its oppression of the Baha'is. Since the establishment of a fundamentalist, Shi'ite theocracy in Iran in 1979, well over a hundred Baha'is have been executed, several hundred have been imprisoned, and the safety and civil rights of the more than 300,000 Baha'is living in Iran have been seriously threatened. An ominous development is the Iranian Government's banning of Baha'i administrative institutions which paves the way for future arrests of thousands of individuals who serve on Baha'i spiritual assemblies. The Iranian Government has created conditions which threaten the very survival of the Baha'is faith in Iran.

Only a few months ago, the Congress committed itself to the establishment of a memorial here in the Nation's capital to serve as a reminder of the millions who perished in the Holocaust during World War II. The goal of this memorial was not only to remind us of this terrible era of persecution, but to serve as a warning to be vigilant against the persecution that continues in our own time. As citizens of the world's oldest democracy, we are committed to

the universal rights of the individual and specifically to the freedom to worship without fear of oppression. We are deeply committed to the belief that the Baha'is should have this same freedom.

While this resolution may do little to ease the persecution of the Baha'is in Iran, it would be unconscionable for the Congress to be silent in the face of this great injustice. We call upon the administration to work with our allies and all other members of the international community on behalf of the persecuted Baha'is of Iran.

• Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I want to take this opportunity to address an important human rights issue. The persecution of the Iranian Baha'is by the Khomeini regime is perhaps one of the worst human rights violations in the world today. I feel compelled to speak out against this persecution.

Not a week passes without an act of sheer barbarism and religious oppression occurring in Iran, and the Baha'is are a key target. Already, more than 60 people—storekeepers, artisans, teachers, government employees, doctors, a university professor—have been lynched by mobs, or executed by revolutionary firing squads. At least 190 people have been brutally murdered by the Iranian Government since the Government takeover in 1979. Hundreds of Baha'is have been dismissed from jobs; thousands more have lost their homes and possessions. More than 700 Baha'is have been imprisoned, charged by the Iranian Government with trumped up charges such as cooperation with Zionism, spying for imperialist powers, corrupting the Earth, and warring with God.

This persecution is based upon theological differences between the Shi'ite Muslims in control of Iran, and the Baha'is, an Islamic offshoot. The Baha'is, because of these differences, are considered heretical. Their religion is not even formally recognized in the Iranian constitution, as other non-Islamic religions are.

As this attitude conflicts with those established in our Constitution and is foreign to the American concept of human rights, steps have been taken by the U.S. Government to alert the rest of the world to the Baha'is' search for a

solution. The U.N. Human Rights Commission has passed four major resolutions concerning the persecution, and the United States has supported each one. The Voice of America has included mention of the persecution in its Persian language broadcasts. The Secretary of State and the President have issued statements calling attention to the persecution and requesting international support. The process has begun.

It is obvious that further action must be taken to combat this persecution. The 300,000 Baha'is in Iran are aware of this. The State Department and the President are aware of this. Congress has begun to act. On May 22 the House passed a resolution condemning this persecution and calling on the President to work with appropriate foreign governments in forming an appeal to the Khomeini regime. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has passed this measure, and I understand the Senate will take it up within the next week. Finally, the Foreign Relations Committee will be holding a hearing on June 26 which will address the plight of the Baha'is.

These efforts must continue. The Baha'is cannot be forgotten. Thank you, Mr. President.

#### BAHA'I PERSECUTION MUST STOP

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, I rise in support of this resolution condemning the persecution of the Baha'is in Iran. I have been a cosponsor of this measure in the Senate and a consistent critic of the Khomeini regime's treatment of the Baha'is. I urge my colleagues to join me today in support of this important measure.

The Baha'i religion has members in 152 independent nations. It was founded in the 19th century as an offshoot of Shi'ite Islam. This faith is not considered to be a branch of Islam today.

Baha'is represent the largest religious minority in Iran. Their 350,000 members make up slightly less than 1 percent of the Iranian population. Because of the relatively progressive ways of the Baha'is, they have come under severe persecution by Iranian authorities. They are often branded heretics and are condemned



for having ties with Israel and the West.

Since 1979, over 170 Baha'is have been executed because of their religious beliefs. Thousands more have been jailed, with approximately 700 in custody at this time. All organized Baha'i activities are labeled criminal acts and Baha'is who refuse to reject their religion for the ways of Islam are subject to execution.

In addition, thousands of Baha'is have been dismissed from their jobs because of their faith. Their children have been expelled from schools. Places of worship have been confiscated and homes destroyed.

Mr. President, the Baha'is of Iran have been systematically denied virtually all freedom and opportunity. By anyone's measure, their human rights continue to be trampled upon. In particular, their freedom of religion is effectively nonexistent. The Iranian Government must be convinced that these atrocities are unacceptable and cannot be tolerated. To this end, the U.S. Government—and, indeed, all governments of the world—should direct themselves. This action of the U.S. Congress should inspire other nations, many of whom have closer ties with Iranian authorities than does the United States, to increase pressure on Iranians with whom they do business to stop official and private atrocities against the Baha'is.

Mr. BOSCHWITZ. Mr. President, I am pleased to add my own sentiments to those of the members who have spoken before me today in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 86, expressing the sense of the Congress regarding the persecution of members of the Baha'i religion in Iran by the Government of Iran. It's easy to become jaded these days to the many examples we read and hear about of torture, persecution, and killings, but the situation faced by the Baha'i community is of a scope that makes some response a moral necessity.

Since the 1979 Islamic revolution, the Baha'i community has come under increasing pressure from the theocratic regime which rules that unfortunate country. The Baha'is have had to face an escalating series of personal hardships, hardships which are the result not of individual prejudice but of a systematic govern-

mental policy which has as its goal the elimination of this world religion, which the fundamentalists in Teheran consider a heretical sect.

Evidence of the governmental nature of the persecution which the Baha'is currently face is plentiful. Baha'i shrines and cemeteries have been violated, their property rights have been ignored or revoked, they are being systematically excluded from social services, and practice of their religion has been outlawed by the Prosecutor General.

More frighteningly, these measures have recently been supplemented by widespread killings. Hundreds have been executed, while countless others have been the victims of extrajudicial killing. Indeed, the situation has reached the point where, as the distinguished ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator PELL, has observed, the word "persecution" has arguably been supplanted by the word "genocide."

I recognize that, in the face of the monstrous horror which we confront here, our weapons seem pitifully inadequate. And yet I would urge the Senators not to underestimate the value of resolutions of this sort. As Prof. Firuz Kazemzadeh [Gah-zem-zah-day] has argued in urging action on this bill, "It is more difficult to kill, more difficult to torture in broad daylight."

Men love the darkness, Mr. President, because it hides their deeds. This amendment sheds light on the dark deeds of a despotic regime. I don't suggest that our responsibility ends there, but it certainly begins there. I ask, then, for the adoption of this beginning, a first step toward the return of some degree of light to the Baha'is in Iran.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 226) was considered and agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

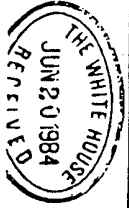
Mr. BAKER. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote by which the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

Mr. BYRD. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

## Ninety-eighth Congress of the United States of America

AT THE SECOND SESSION

*Begun and held at the City of Washington on Monday, the twenty-third day of January,  
one thousand nine hundred and eighty-four*

## Concurrent Resolution

Whereas more than one hundred and fifty members of the Baha'i faith have been brutally executed by Iranian authorities since the 1979 Islamic revolution;

Whereas many Baha'is in Iran have disappeared and others have been tortured, persecuted, and deprived of their fundamental rights to personal property and employment;

Whereas an edict issued by Iran's Prosecutor General on August 29, 1983, has far-reaching implications that threaten the lives of three hundred thousand Baha'is residing in Iran and places the future practice of Baha'ism in jeopardy by dismantling the administrative structure of the Baha'i religion; and

Whereas these actions for the first time establish an expressed national policy which lays the legal foundation for executions, arrests, the confiscation of property, denial of jobs and pensions, expulsion of Baha'i children from schools, and other pressures which may be brought to bear by Iranian authorities on the Baha'is: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),*  
That the Congress—

(1) holds the Government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of all its nationals, including the Baha'is;

(2) condemns the recent decision taken by the Government of Iran to destroy the Baha'i faith by labeling as "criminal acts" all Baha'i teaching and organized religious activities, including the attempts by Baha'is to elect their own local and national leaders, to meet in assemblies, to communicate among themselves, and to work for volunteer committees; and

(3) calls upon the President—

(A) to work with appropriate foreign governments and the allies of the United States in forming an appeal to the Government of Iran concerning the Baha'is;

(B) to cooperate fully with the United Nations in its efforts on behalf of the Baha'is and to lead such efforts whenever it is possible and appropriate to do so; and

(C) to provide, and urge others to provide, for humanitarian assistance for those Baha'is who flee Iran.

Sec. 2. The Clerk of the House of Representatives shall transmit a copy of this concurrent resolution to the President.

Attest:

*Benjamin Guthrie*  
Clerk of the House of Representatives.

Attest:

*William P. Hollibaugh*  
Secretary of the Senate.

[COPY]