

United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information
Press Section
United Nations, New York

Thirty-sixth General Assembly
Third Committee
35th Meeting (PM)



GA/SHC/2453
29 October 1981

THIRD COMMITTEE CONTINUES DEBATE ON FIVE HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS

Also Hears Introductory Statement on UN Human Rights Activities;
Eight Proposals on Human Rights Circulated Today

An introductory statement concerning United Nations activities in the field of human rights was made this afternoon in the Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) by K. F. Nyamekye, Deputy Director of the Division of Human Rights, as the Committee began consideration of this matter.

Following the last speaker in debate, SAID RAJAEI KHORASANI (Iran), in exercising the right of reply to a statement made by the United Kingdom yesterday, called the statement that his Government persecuted the Bahai'i a fallacious allegation. No single Bahai'i had been sued, put to trial, or persecuted in Iran. He quoted from an article of the Iranian constitution that recognized the right of religious minorities. However, he said, that had nothing to do with criminals who were accomplices of the Shah and who had plundered millions of dollars of public revenues and deposited them in foreign banks.

He said that the allegations of the United Kingdom against Iran were an excuse to undermine the Iranian revolution. He could remember when the United Kingdom's economy in the mid-1970s was broken and its garages were full of unsold automobiles. The Shah had bought thousands of them. All of a sudden Her Majesty's Government survived the crisis. In those days, many politicians could support their Bahai'i friends easily. But those days were over.

He stated that when the Bahai'i faith was brought to Iran it had a mission to divide the Muslims in the interests of the foreigners in the Middle East. It had not been strange to see all the Bahai'is around the Shah's throne; it was not strange to see the United Kingdom speak for them in the Committee. Why was it that the holy city of the Bahai'i was in occupied Palestine? he asked. In conclusion, he said that Iran did not persecute any innocent person upon the recommendation or advice of anybody or any resolution but on the basis of its Islamic principles.

RICHARD CURTIS FURLAND (United Kingdom), in exercise of the right of reply, reminded the representative of Iran that his delegation's statement yesterday had been delivered on behalf of the 10 member States of the European Community; he was thus unable to take full credit for it.

BP000437

COMPOSITE
FACSIMILE