

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT

7 November 1983

To all National Spiritual Assemblies

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Recent events in Iran following the banning of the Bahá'í administration indicate, unfortunately, the continuation of intense pressures against the defenseless Bahá'í community in that country. Many of these pressures are being exerted by the authorities in the hope that the Bahá'ís will recant their faith and trade their love of Bahá'u'lláh for the comfort and security which the authorities offer to them in exchange.

With great sadness the Universal House of Justice announces that many friends in prison are being tortured when they refuse to submit to the will of the authorities to deny their love for Bahá'u'lláh. In addition, while it is true that no Bahá'ís have been executed since the statement calling for the disbanding of the administration of the Faith was made by the Attorney-General on 29 August, it has been reported that on 19 September a Bahá'í farmer in the town of Khuy, Mr. Akbar Ḥaqíqí, died as a result of a beating by a mob instigated by the clergy. Moreover, at least 140 Bahá'ís have been arrested in all parts of the country following the Attorney-General's statement, 50 of whom were detained on 30 October in the Caspian Sea area. Although a number of the friends have been released, the total number of Bahá'ís still imprisoned in Iran, according to our records, stands at over 450.

Three believers who were advanced in age have died in prison and thus have joined the ranks of those who have laid down their lives in service to the Cause. They are:

Mr. Ḥusayn Nayyirí-Isfahání, 64 years old—imprisoned in Isfahán and died just as he was going into court for his trial on 29 November 1982.

Mr. Aḥmad-'Alí Thábit-Sarvistání, 67 years old—died in prison in Shiraz on 30 June 1983.

Mr. Muḥammad Ishráqí, 81 years old, an Auxiliary Board member—died in prison in Tehran on 31 August 1983.

Word has also recently been received that in the city of Dizfúl, a Bahá'í woman, Mrs. Írán Raḥimpúr (Khurmá'í), was executed on 12 May 1982 after giving birth to her child. The baby was taken away by the Muslims and his fate is unknown.

One of the most obvious examples of persecution and proof of the evil intention of the Iranian authorities to uproot the Faith in that land is the destruction and desecration of Bahá'í cemeteries. Recently there was an official advertisement in the newspapers in Iran indicating that the tombstones in the Bahá'í cemetery in Tehran were being put up for sale. Since all markers on the graves are apparently being eliminated, it is possible that no trace of the Bahá'í cemetery will remain in future....

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat