

have allegedly been confiscated and many, including the holiest Baha'i shrine, have been totally destroyed.

The Secretary General of the United Nations presented an interim report dated October 12, 1987, on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran. This report was prepared by Reynolds Galindo Fahl of El Salvador in accordance with Paragraph 6 of the Commission on Human Rights Resolution 1987/55 of March 11, 1987.

I want to quote some excerpts concerning the treatment of members of the Baha'i community as follows:

All the persons appearing before the special representative stated they had spent periods of various duration in prisons in Iran and consequently they described in detail the circumstances of their arrest, their interrogation methods, their trial and the conditions prevailing in the prisons in which they were held. Several of them affirmed that they had close relatives or acquaintances who were executed, or had themselves witnessed executions.

With regard to right to life I quote from page 7 as follows:

Mr. Javad Keshavas stated that he had witnessed numerous executions in Vakilabad Prison near Mashad. Among those whose execution he witnessed were a 16-year-old youth, Akbar Adalatian, and a woman together with her young son. Another youth from Mashad was executed in the prison by hanging from a crane.

With regard to the right to freedom from torture or cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment, I quote from page 7 as follows:

All the persons who appeared before the special representative alleged having been subjected to ill treatment and to physical and psychological torture.

Beating often started upon arrest. It was, however, during their interrogation that these persons allegedly suffered the most severe forms of torture, including flogging with cables on all parts of the body, denial of food and sleep, torture of one's spouse before one's eyes and mock executions.

With regard to the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and to freedom of expression I quote from page 12 as follows:

Baha'i cemeteries allegedly continued to be desecrated and closed. In many cities, including Tehran, Rasht, Tunikaban and others, the Baha'is had difficulty burying their dead.

The right to leave Iran legally was allegedly still denied to Baha'is who were allegedly required to recant their faith in order to obtain a passport and exit permit.

It is interesting to note that the Iranian Government has denied all the allegations in the 22-page report without specifically referring to any of them. As you can see from the excerpts of the interim report at the United Nations, the situation in Iran is urgent.

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Since 1979, an average of 700 Baha'i have been imprisoned annually. According to the most recent information, there are currently over 250 Baha'is imprisoned in Iran. Prison conditions are reported to be horrendous. Many prisoners are tortured physically and psychologically. They are all in grave danger.

Adjournment Debate

On September 28, 1987, in Tehran, two Baha'is, Amir-Husayn Nadiri and Ardishir Akhtari were executed. Both of these men were dismissed from their jobs and imprisoned in 1984 because of their religious beliefs. They are the most recent of over 200 Baha'is executed under the current regime for refusing to recant their religion.

On October 21, 1987, five Baha'is were arrested and imprisoned in Tehran. Their names have been added to a list of 12 others who are believed to be in imminent danger of execution.

Two of these men, Mr. Jamal Din Khanjani and Mr. Hasan Mahbubi were members of the former National Spiritual Assembly, the elected national governing body of the Baha'i community in Iran, which was banned by the Islamic regime in 1983.

The Baha'i followers are a tolerant, loving people who want to practice their faith without persecution. I want to quote some remarks written by Mr. Khuzayn of Hamadan from prison before his execution on June 14, 1981:

It is now 11 p.m. We have been transferred from the prison to the court premises. They are about to execute all seven of us. Praised be God, we are all in the utmost submission to His will and we are most content.

He went on to say:

I beseech your prayers. I hope that our insignificant blood will water the blessed tree of the cause of God, that the faith will soon gain its independence and the Baha'is of Iran their freedom, and that our future generations will be able to serve the cause with the greatest comfort.

I am pleased to report that this United Nations resolution condemning Iran, which was co-sponsored by us, was passed with a strong majority of the third committee. Fifty-eight members voted for the resolution. It is expected that the General Assembly will vote on this important resolution later this week.

There are over 20,000 members of the Baha'i faith in Canada and they have expressed their deep appreciation for the continued efforts of the Government on behalf of their sister community in Iran.

It is interesting to note that one-quarter of Canadian Baha'is are native Indians and Eskimos.

We must make every effort to ensure that all Baha'is in Iran are granted their full rights and urge that the 17 individuals' lives be spared. The discrimination, persecution and execution of the Baha'is solely for their religious beliefs must stop and Canada must continue to speak out vigorously to condemn the human rights violations occurring in Iran.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Guy Hudon (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to respond to this additional question. In fact, in my capacity of Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, one of the first *chargés d'affaires* I received happened to be the Iranian *chargé d'affaires*, who wanted to ask Canada to reopen its embassy in Teheran, which