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Friday, July 29, 1983

Iranian persecution, hangings

Halton Hills Baha'is outraged

The Baha'is of Halton Hills were both saddened and outraged this week by the news received from the Canadian Baha'i Headquarters that 10 Baha'i women, ages 18 to 54, have been hanged for their beliefs in their sister community of Iran.

Patsy Irving, Secretary, said: "We learned that the executions were carried out in secret late Saturday night, June 18, and followed closely on the hangings two days earlier of six prominent Baha'i men. Four of them were mothers, wives or daughters of the Baha'is executed two days earlier," she said. A fifth was the 18 year old daughter of a Baha'i executed on March 12th.

Ms. Irving said, "we were horrified by the fact that a whole group of innocent women had been so savagely treated, and that the authorities tried to keep the killings secret by making no public announcement, refusing to allow the families to receive the bodies for burial, or even to see them."

Ms. Irving said, "These shocking killings of young women represent an alarming escalation of the mullah's campaign of terror against the Baha'is which is now being focused on the women of the community. It shows the Iranian clergy's particular hatred of the principle of equality of men and women that is so central to Baha'i teachings."

The news from the



ROTARY CHIEF COMES CALLING

Rotarians had an honorary guest at their Monday directors' meeting. Chatting are (left to right) director Arend Roos, Georgetown Rotary

Club president Murray Thom, district governor Les Faludy, secretary Ralph Ursel, director Howard Briggs, treasurer David Page.

Baha'i headquarters had indicated that all 16 Baha'is were put to death because they had refused to recant their Faith. The ten women had been subjected to brutal interrogations in prison and warned that if they did not sign a prepared statement denying their beliefs and converting to Islam they would be killed. The reason originally given for their arrest was that they had been holding for Baha'i children in their community who have been expelled from Iran's schools as "unclean infidels". Don Weaver, vice-chairman, reported that "a tragedy of appalling dimensions is building up in Iran. Even

more tragic is the fact that the clergy there are using the faith of Islam as a cloak for these crimes against humanity."

The judge who sent these women and girls to their deaths warned recently in the government-controlled press of Iran that these killings were only the beginning. He said "Before it is too late, the Baha'is must recant... Otherwise the day will soon come when the Islamic Nation will, God willing, fulfill the prayer mentioned in the Quran: 'Lord, leave not one single family of infidels on the earth'. He is typical of the Iranian clergy who believe that the Baha'i teachings of equality

of men and women, world mindedness, and independent inquiry are a "satanic conspiracy" against their Islamic state.

The Baha'is in this country feel that it is especially important for Canadian Muslims to speak out in conscience against these crimes carried out in the name of Islam and to protect it from the irreparable damage to its reputation all over the world. The Baha'i Faith accords recognition and reverence to all the great religions including Islam and teaches that they are all, in their essence, inspired by one God.

These hangings have brought the total number of Baha'is officially shot or hanged by the regime to 155. They arouse grave concern for the fate of some 200 other Baha'is imprisoned around the country. In addition, 10,000 Baha'is are now homeless, their properties destroyed or confiscated by the authorities.

The world-wide Baha'i community has been deeply gratified and encouraged by the many concerned statements urging the Iranian regime to cease its systematic persecution of the Baha'is, that have come from the United Nations, the European Parliament, and Humanitarian organizations and from national and local governments of all kinds.

Canadian Baha'is are particularly proud of the record of actions taken by the Canadian Parliament and government in being the first to speak out in

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Closed Monday

The Herald business office will be closed Monday, August 1. However, the reporting staff will be working to receive any submitted copy for the holiday Monday.

Theatre reunion

Theatre Aurora, formerly Aurora Drama Workshop and Musical Theatre Society, is celebrating its 25th year during the 1983-84 season.

The group would like to hear from past members who might be living in the Halton Hills area.

A program of special events and a reunion are planned. For more information call (416) 727-3669, or write to Theatre Aurora, Box 332, Aurora, Ontario L4G 3H4.

Variety Club days

A heart-shaped cannister at Canada's Wonderland was put there to collect pennies for needy children.

Aug. 13 and 14 are Variety Club days at Wonderland and the pennies will help needy children receive a special donation from Canada's Wonderland.



DOUBLE ANNIVERSARY

Two sisters celebrated a double wedding anniversary July 16. Georgetown's Ted and Ruth Roberts, and Don and Gertrude Moyer of Collingwood celebrated their fortieth anniversary at the Bob Rumble Centre in Toronto. Over 200 friends and relatives joined in the afternoon reception and 60 guests sat down to an evening dinner. Mrs. Roberts and Mrs. Moyer are Clark sisters who happened to get engaged at the same time and decided to make it a double wedding.

(Photo submitted)

Recreation Report

Correction

There was an error in the paddleboat and canoe rentals story at Fairy Lake published in the Herald's July 20 edition. The rentals are from 12 noon until 3 p.m. Monday to Friday. However, the rentals during the weekend are from 11 a.m. until 8 p.m.

Windsurf instruction

The Recreation and Parks Department has openings for those wishing to register for windsurfing lessons at Fairy Lake in Acton.

The Ontario Sailing School will be providing the lessons starting Wednesday, August 3, 1983. They will run from Wednesday to Friday from 1:30 - 4:30 p.m. daily.

This course is based on the National Learn to Board Sail Proficiency Standards and students will receive certification for the level achieved.

Whether you have windsurfed before or not we encourage you to sign up for this 6 hour course. The fee for the program is \$40 and you may register today at either Recreation Office, 40 Mill Street, Acton or 25 James Street, Georgetown.

For more information call the Recreation Department at 877-5185, ext. 19, 60.

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