

[PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

[Translator's notes appear in square brackets]

[Personal information has been **redacted**.]

[Emblem]

Ministry of the Interior,
Office of the Governor General of the Eighth Province;
Governorate of Rafsanjan

[Date: 20 Mehr 1331 (12 October 1952)]

[Number: 102]

Confidential, Eyes only

The Office of the Governor General of the Eighth Province

Further to coded telegram number M/91, we convey that on the morning of 15 Mehr 1331 [7 October 1952] those accused of the incident of demolition of the assembly [building] of the Baha'is of Hasanabad Village were sent to court by the Gendarmerie [station]. There were two complainants and eight accused. Their interrogation lasted until the afternoon and ended when an order [of criminal charges] was issued. While the accused were being dispatched, and even during the interrogation, no signs indicating reactions by the residents were observed. But between the hours of 1:00 and 2:00 in the afternoon a crowd gathered in front of the court and started a demonstration. The police chief was informed. After 2:00 p.m., the demonstrations intensified, and some demonstrators entered the court demanding the release of the accused. They entered the room of the head of court and forcibly took parts of the files from the head of court and took the accused out. The orders issued were: two or three to give an undertaking, two to introduce surety, and the rest to provide bail [for their release]. The police chief, who was present on location, invited the residents to keep calm and order, but he did not inform the Governorate. Later, he continued the same ineffective action.

At 2:30 in the afternoon, when the chief of the Gendarmerie became aware of the situation, he personally informed the Governorate and sought guidance for intervention. I ordered the commander of the Gendarmerie to disperse the crowd in a peaceful manner, to prevent harsh reactions. Since reports indicated that there was a strong religious sentiment amongst the crowd, I was certain that if the intervention was made by force, causing injury and murder, even if it ended the disturbance, it would cause the expansion of the scope of enmity and would end in more killings and carnage. It could [potentially] even spread immediately to the adjacent cities and could appear in a more major and dangerous way.

Therefore, I saw the only remedy in [putting] the clergy in charge of preventing the crowd from further attacks; because at that same moment, I was informed by the Telephone [Call] Centre that the crowd in front of the court had moved and rushed towards the Baha'i neighbourhoods. Therefore, I

immediately called the preacher, Mr. Ansari, to rush to the location and stop the crowd by whatever means possible. I even threatened him. I also called Mr. Seyyed Jalal Hejri, who is [a member] of the clergy, to accompany Mr. Ansari. Mr. Ansari went to the location of the crowd in the company of Mr. Agah's children, in whose house he was staying. By the time Mr. Hejri got there, the crowd had been dispersed—his delay had been due to the fact that his turban was not ready. By the time of Mr. Ansari's arrival, a large group had entered the Baha'i assembly [building] and burned their furniture, while the rest of the crowd had demolished the adjacent bathhouse which belonged to the Baha'is, and were going towards the homes of Baha'is when Mr. Ansari and the commander of the Gendarmerie dispersed them and prevented their attack on the houses of the Baha'is.

Certainly, if Mr. Ansari had arrived a few minutes later, several houses would have been demolished and a number of individuals would have been injured or killed. And if any of the Muslims were killed or injured, the lives and belongings of Baha'is would have been wasted. After the crowd had been turned back from the Baha'i neighbourhoods, a group of people rushed to the Baha'i cemetery, called "Golestan", located five kilometres away from the city. When the commander of the Gendarmerie became aware of that, he went towards the cemetery on a bus with Mr. Ansari. Since they did not know the road, they were forced to walk part of the way. When they got there, the roof of the mortuary had been burned, a grave had been destroyed, the body of a child had been pulled out and several empty coffins had been burned. Perhaps they were intending to burn the body, when the commander of the Gendarmerie and Mr. Ansari expelled them from the cemetery and saved the life of the cemetery's custodian.

Obviously, in such cases, the police intelligence system must work well to be informed of any circumstances, to prevent formation of such gatherings before they happen. Even though I had issued strict orders to the police chief and Intelligence officers at the security committee to watch the situation carefully and obtain news of any propaganda or activities [illegible] necessary previous information was not obtained. They even neglected to inform the Governorate after gathering the residents. Obviously, prevention would have been much easier at the beginning of the matter.

These are the details of the course of events. But as to what caused this incident, although I was away on holidays for a long time, and have recently returned to Rafsanjan, I believe that, other than invisible out-of-area influences, the following—if not the main reasons—were effective and instigating causes:

1. Electoral disputes
2. Municipal elections and campaign activities of groups to be elected to the Council
3. Arrival of Mr. Ansari, preacher from Qom
4. Damages to financial and spiritual benefits of those who are Ansari's rivals
5. Those who have major criminal cases in court and are afraid of the consequences (because it has been heard that the intention of those who attacked the court was to destroy some files)

Obviously, consideration of the identity of the leaders of the crowd and those who entered the courtroom or forced people to close shops in the bazaar, and certainty of their connection to certain parties, groups and families, will shed light on the dark spots and reveal the truths of the matter. What appeared to be the cause of this incident was the celebrations of the Baha'is on the second or third day

of Moharram, and the prosecution of the perpetrators of the Hasanabad incident. The instigators used this as an excuse and pretext to [goad] the simple-minded people to riot, and encouraged their elements to lead them in sabotage. I discussed this issue with Major Kamran, the officer dispatched from the Kerman Police Force. He is conducting a secret investigation to discover the truth and identify the main instigators and masterminds.

Governorate of Rafsanjan

102 – 20 Mehr 1331 [12 October 1952]; presented for the information of the Ministry of the Interior, following the coded telegram number 91 – 15 Mehr 1331 [7 October 1952]
Governor of Rafsanjan, Bani Eghbal [signature]

[Handwritten Note 1:] To be sent to the relevant office following (registration?) 30 Mehr 1331 [22 October 1952]

[Handwritten Note 2] Law Enforcement Office

[Handwritten Note 3:] Urgent, Please attach the record. 3 Aban 1331 [25 October 1952]

[Stamp:] registered in confidential record book of the Ministry of the Interior, number 10213, date: 3 Aban 1331 [25 October 1952]