

[PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

[Translator's notes appear in square brackets.]

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

[The excerpt below is from the section of the article that pertains to the Baha'i Faith]

[Newspaper:] Neday-e Edalat

[Date:] Saturday, 26 Mordad 1323 [17 August 1944]

[Issue No.]: 49

The Riot of Shahroud

A few days ago, everyone read in the newspapers that a riot had happened in Shahroud, and as a result, the head of the Shahroud tobacco company [department] and several others had been tragically killed. The heads of government departments have also fled with their families...

What was the cause of this riot? The political conflicts? Famine and high food prices? No, none of these...

They say that the religious differences and the same unfortunate disputes between the Heydari and Nemati [sects] !! have resurfaced. In a century whose prominent features are enlightenment and freedom of conscience, such events are the cause of deep passivity and regret amongst the "patriotic" and "enlightened" classes. First of all, we announce that we consider the Baha'i religion to be a baseless and absurd religion. However, at the same time, is not freedom of opinion and conscience the first advantage and result of a democratic government? And are not these tragic events contrary to the Constitution and to the obvious detriment of the dignity and reputation of our country? It is obvious that the government law enforcement officers are primarily responsible for such unfortunate incidents, and we expect their immediate punishment. With the support of all classes and intellectuals, we will fight with all our might against any reactionary and regressive movements...

Since government has not issued any notice in this regard, we cannot comment correctly on the causes and consequences of this incident. Therefore, we ask the following questions of the prime minister and the ministry of interior and expect them to provide us enough explanations to quell the thoughts:

1. In addition to the governor general and the head of the police department who are responsible for such incidents, as it was rumoured a few days before the incident, the head of the police department ordered the tobacco company's director to leave the city, which shows that not only had the [head of the] police been informed of this matter, but he deliberately did not prevent the riot from occurring and was in contact with the perpetrators of the incident.
2. Who were the perpetrators of this scandal and what action has been taken so far by the government, especially the judicial authorities, to punish them?

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