

**[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:] Iran Times International

[Date:] 11 Khordad 1380 [1 June 2001]

[Issue No.:] 1542

[Page:] 3

One of the American Organizations Described Religious Freedom in Iran as “Insignificant”

Washington – Iran Times News Service:

An American organization, in its annual report, described religious freedom in Iran, especially with regard to the religious minorities that are not recognized by the Constitution and those who have changed their religion from Islam to other religions, as “insignificant”...

...The report also mentions the countries of Iran, China, Russia, North Korea, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam. Regarding Iran, it is written that, “The Constitution of the Islamic Republic has placed Twelfth Imam Shi'ism as the official religion and the members of the Baha'i religion are exposed to the worst types of religious persecution. The Islamic Republic not only does not officially recognize the Baha'ist belief, but also considers it a political organization affiliated with the shah's regime. [It is against the] Islamic Revolution and spies for foreign countries such as Israel. Even followers of the Zoroastrian, Christian and Jewish religions, though [they] are officially recognized [by the Constitution], are subject to much discrimination. The leaders of the Sunni sect say the Islamic Republic mistreats the followers of that sect and limits the performance of their religious ceremonies. A number of Shi'a clergy who are not in agreement with the Islamic Republic also become repressed by the government.

In the report, it was stated that the Department of State of the United States of America considers improvement of religious freedom and observing human rights as one of the conditions for lifting the sanctions against the Islamic Republic. The U.S. government is seriously pressuring the government of the Islamic Republic to compel this government to respect religious freedom, and recommends to the European countries and its other allies to “put pressure” on the government of the Islamic Republic in the matter of religious freedom. The “Voice of America” radio broadcast has also put special emphasis on matters related to religious freedom in its Persian programme. The government of [the United States of] America, in the UN human rights resolutions, has implicated the government of the Islamic Republic for the blatant violation of religious freedoms...