

The condition of the Bábís in Acre, where their leader [‘Abdu’l-Bahá] resides, is improving significantly each day, and from all corners of Iran people come to visit him and bring with them the collected funds. In a similar manner, on behalf of the same leader, representatives are sent to all towns of Iran. To consider this situation unworthy of attention [by the Iranian government] and not exert appropriate influence is unwise, and gradually this problem will become intractable. The solution is not in imprisoning, beating, or slaying them, as an increase in application of such remedies would worsen the situation.

What comes to the mind of this servant is that first the exalted government should appoint a Christian agent with a salary, as a Muslim agent of any kind will attract attention, or, because of greed, will become one of them and a propagator of their thoughts. This agent should be instructed to attract their interest and to infiltrate their confidential activities. He should report the names and details and, where possible, a picture of anyone from Iran who arrives there [Acre] to the Foreign Ministry and the Embassy [in Istanbul].

And, in like manner, the Embassy should follow in secret those returning from Acre by using Russian agents until they reach the border, and from there by using the border agents and governors who should determine the whereabouts of the emissaries of the leader of Bábís and other details about them. After they are identified, a few of the learned tulláb [seminary students] should find ways to engage them in conversation and, without showing that they are aware of their beliefs, through wise and informed exhortations, rescue them from the false path [that is, convert them to Islam]. In certain instances, when necessary, police and authorities are to stop their activities.

At any rate, such persons [the Bahá’ís], should, wherever they are, be identified and be known to the general population. In addition, should other measures also be necessary, the government authorities should issue appropriate instructions to governors, as otherwise one does not know with what sort of people one is associating.

As their number increases day by day, surely in time this will result in great mischief.

[signed] Mahmúd.

[Written on the back of the envelope] From the Office of the Foreign Minister: This report is to be presented to the most holy threshold of the King of Kings.

[In the hand of Muzaffari’ d-Dín Sháh]: By the reasons known to his honor Atábak-i A‘zam [the Prime Minister] we should not pursue this matter and to the degree possible must remain silent.

Notes

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The text reprinted in Payám Bahá'í incorrectly translates Shavvál 1318 A.H.
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