



Five black women who have made significant contributions to American life will receive an achievement award sponsored by the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW). The award, designed by renowned black sculptor Elizabeth Catlett, will be given at the 50th Anniversary Convention of the NCNW to be held at the Capital Hyatt

Regency Hotel in Washington, D.C. on November 16, 1985. Pictured (left to right) are Dorothy I. Height, NCNW President, Terry Fassburg, and sculptor Elizabeth Catlett, creator of the award. Affiliates and community based sections of NCNW will nominate women for the award.

Iranian Student Explains Conditions

by Robert Lothian

An Iranian engineering student studying at Portland State says that things are getting so bad in Iran under the fundamentalist Khomeini regime that people are sometimes flogged for smiling.

The man used a pseudonym, Bahman, to protect himself and his family (who remain in Iran). Bahman, 27, said he came to the U.S. just before the successful 1978 insurrection that ended the Shah's rule, to study electrical engineering.

He had been active in the revolutionary student movement in Tehran. Due to shut-downs of the educational system, it is difficult to obtain a higher education in Iran, he said.

Bahman said he keeps in touch with the situation in Iran through communications with family and friends.

He said that Khomeini and his followers seek to transplant a Medieval and tribal mentality into modern Iran by imposing their version of Islamic Law.

"What they really want is complete conformity with their ideology. You can't seem very happy in the streets, and all music is considered sacrilegious. It's a dismal hell," he said.

"Absolutely nothing could describe the tragedy that our people are going through right now." Women cannot let so much as a streak of hair show under their mandatory veils, and men

cannot even roll up their shirtsleeves, according to Bahman. The Revolutionary Guards patrol neighborhoods and can invade homes at any time. Transgressions of "Islamic Law" are cause for the Guards to haul people in for interrogation.

Torture is routine, he said, and public hangings occur at least once a week.

"When it's a crime to laugh on certain occasions, you can imagine what it's like to actively oppose the government. For political prisoners it's like the Nazi concentration camps."

Women political prisoners are considered prostitutes and slaves, which justifies methodical rape and torture by their guards, he said. "All these inhumanities and atrocities are really sanctified by Khomeini and others. These people consider their acts very redemptive, for the benefit of Islam."

Bahman said that in many ways, Khomeini is worse than the Shah. "That shows what kind of animal we are dealing with. People like Jerry Falwell and Jesse Helms would be like social reformers compared to those people in Iran."

Khomeini seemed like a savior at the time of the revolution because of his steadfastness against the Shah, said Bahman. He described the revo-

lution as the best stage of his and millions of Iranians' lives. "It was violent, but also joyous. It was like coming out of a long illness."

"But nobody in their wildest imaginations could have dreamed of such an eventuality as what Khomeini has become."

An ominous aspect of the Khomeini regime in an international context, he said, is that it destabilizes the Persian Gulf area, where flows the life blood of Japan and the West. That could provide an excuse for U.S. military involvement or a nuclear confrontation.

Bahman said that in spite of all the problems, he wants to go back and help rebuild his country's ravaged economy. About 1,000 Iranian exiles live in Portland out of about one mil-

lion worldwide, according to Bahman.

Bahman and other exiles have formed the Committee in Solidarity With the People of Iran. The committee is working for a United Nations negotiated settlement of the Iran-Iraq war, an end to the Khomeini regime, and restoration of human and civil rights.

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