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Table talks

Notes taken by Louis Gregory

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from the notes of Emeric Sala taken ~~from~~ the presence of Shoghi Effendi 1938 at Haifa Palestine.

He was with the Guardian for five days! "Whatever He wills becomes an accomplished fact". "He has no will of his own". He has no desire of his own". "There is nothing personal about him/He expects us to forget ourselves". His guidance is based upon the same Faith upon which our loyalty rests. His authority and our obedience/guarantee the unity of the World Order of Baha'u'llah. *my* notes are not the exact words of the Guardian. They cannot be quoted as such. I will only try to express his views as ~~as~~ I understand them. "Approximations".

His chief function is to guard the unity of the Baha'i Faith. Interpretation of the Writings is vested in him as a means to that end. He has the sole right to determine what is interpretation and what legislation. He can change his own judgement/should he find it necessary. Future/Guardians will re-interpret the writings as at present interpreted by Shoghi Effendi. Even the Dispensation will be re-written. Each Guardian is guided as to the exigency of time and circumstances. In that sense ~~he is limited~~ his interpretation is limited to the understanding of the people he ~~is~~ is addressing.

He receives sufficient guidance to interpret what is required. Translation of the writings is also interpretation. Two pillars of administration: Guardianship and Universal House of Justice. Both are under unerring guidance. The local and national are not infallible, though they command the same authority ~~by~~ within their respective jurisdictions.

Years 1957-1963 indicate the lesser peace. The Most Great Peace with the ~~reception~~ universal recognition of Baha'u'llah will not come in the 20th century.

There is no system of economics. We have only general principles. The system will develop as the need arises. We cannot compare, much

less identify, the Baha'i Commonwealth of the future with any of the existing forms of government. It is not reformed capitalism alth we do uphold private property. The differance between capitalism and socialism does not rest upon the issue of property, but on the quest-ion of the ownership and the control of the means of production . Baha'u'llah does not answer this directly. It will be settled by the International House of Justice.

Tendency toward stereotype thinking among American Baha'is is true, but temporary. Each Baha'i Group should develop its own peculiar distinctions and through this diversity of characteristics the whole Baha'i world will be enriched. The present censorship of Baha'i writ ers is also temporary. Freedom of ~~thought~~ speech and thought will be maintained in the Baha'i World Order. This does not mean license.

We may pray to God direct if we have the right consepction of God. We may pray to Baha'U'llah etc if our consepction is the right one. Praying is like asking . If we ask long enough , earnestly for the right thing we will get an answer .Esslemont Book is translated into 33 languages , "idden Words 14 , Some Answered Questions 4, If at any time there were men on earth there were Manifestations.

Question The Baha'i system is a political institution ?
 Answer. Yes, but we do not stress this.

Free and original thinking should be encouraged . We should ~~far~~ the justice of God , and love His mercy. Fear alone is not enough.

Q. Do you always see the wisdom of your own decisions? Ans. Not necessarily . Even Abdu'lBaha's ~~Baha's~~ interpretation seemed con-trary to his (Shoghi Effendi's) reason sometimes.

Q. Your interpretation is not every aspect of the truth?
 Ans. No, it is not . Q. What you say is relatively true?

Ans. Yes, but we must accept the aspect given for the time.

Q. Is guidance better than inspiration ? Ans. Yes . Inspiration may come ~~come~~ from the ego. while guidance comes only to those who

are free from self. Baha'i Faith: Two Prophets, Bab and Baha'u'llah . Two Orders N Abdu'l Baha, an Order (2) Administrative Order, with two pillars. These two are absolutely indispensable to each other. As to statements of Abdu'l Baha . He was not a lawyer. He did not speak as one. His Writings need to be codified and classified. Form of the Writings need not be perfect but substance must be. The Master's form was not perfect.

To have faith and maintain it one must nourish it constantly as the sap nourishes the tree in order that it will not dry out--- ^{by} prayer , meditation , study, observation, and conscious activity (service).

Greenland will become green , the climate will change. The Administration is enough perfected for the present. We in the West are tempted to continue making laws and regulations . We must restrain this, and concentrate upon teaching. Teaching now is the most important thing . Outside ornamentation of the Temple is a necessity ; interior is a luxury . The latter should be left to the next Baha'i century for completion. Centennial gatherings may be held in the Temple. Reading of prayers and meditations ^{revealed} by other Great Prophets should be encouraged in the Temple.

Most striking difference between the Papacy and the Guardianship is that the former has both the power ~~of~~ of interpretation and legislation while the latter has only the power of interpretation.

Mohammedan Dispensation brought patriotism . There is nothing in the teachings about the control of the means of production . The future will decide . Three-fold Baha'i Unity (1) of the Prophets (2) of mankind (3) Unity of God. The Master and Baha'u'llah both confirmed the immaculate conception. It is true but we do not stress it. Horace Holly in Green Acre ~~attributed~~ referred to words attributed to the Master. "Communism should have been stamped out the moment it appeared." It does not seem to be authentic Shoghi Effendi said he did not know exactly.

Quest. In spirit are all the Guardians the same? A. Yes , all are under the same power of unerring Guidance.

Q. Is Revelation interpretation? Ans. Yes Guardians' differ from the Prophets ' interpretation. The latter receive theirs direct from God.. The former from the Prophets.

Q. Is perfect justice impossible? Ans. Yes Q. Does this mean that the International House of Justice will not give perfect justice ? They will have the unerring Guidance of God..

Q. Between two camps of right and left which will win? @. Neither. Did you ever say or write anything in the capacity of Guardian , realizing afterwards that it was a mistake? @ns. Not in the interpretation of the Teachings. Q. Does infallibility mean perfection?

Ans. No.. (at a later date Shoghi Effendi said the future Guardians may not all be saints but that will not deter them from receiving the unerring guidance of God. I do not mean that Shoghi Effendi implied that he is a saint.

Baha'u'llah said that drinking should be forbidden for 800 years. (it may be longer) He was very definite in his statements regarding this. Q. Will the Guardian come to America? He does not know .

It depends upon the friends , if he feels the urge from them. To teach faith a story , an episode , an act may be sufficient. Canadians should be very proud of Marian Jack.. Her work should be increasingly appreciated. A child should be restrained , a youth curbed, the old supported. Q. Faith without reason is

superstition? Ans. Yes, but the faith that supercedes reason is not superstition.

Non-attendance at Unity Feasts does not disqualify for membership in the Baha'i Community.

Unity in essentials; Diversity in non-essentials. It is the right of the Universal House of Justice to decide which is which.

The period of engagement is 90 days. If the marriage does not take place within that time the marriage must be annulled. . This law is enforced in the East only. Faith should make us obey spontaneously.. There is nothing in the Writings about birth control.

The Guardian does not wait for inspiration. He works and while working it comes in a continual flow.

The Guardians will always be chosen from the family of Baha'u'llah.

The Afnans will have no special privileges.

19 equals unity; 19 years make a cycle; 19 cycles make 361 years a great cycle.

between not the Sun, but when the ax-
cends it is as if the rays of the Sun
were directly upon us.

There is a tendency to introduce new mys-
teries into the Cause, & this should not be
done, for there are quite enough mysteries as
there are.

Blavie is either wholesome or corrupt & fans-
tastic in relation to the Cause carried on for.
Excesses should be avoided.

We must expect trials & tests. The power of effort
affects the complexion of the Holy Spirit. There
is the main spring of all effort. Individuals
should be left free to act as he feels fit. There
is no difference in the right of the individual
& that of the Bahai's. Justice is above all.

Herrigel gave great advice in Germany, but
later he nullified it by violation.

Americans think to much of personalities.
Principles should be above personalities.

Heller does not have the sense of ~~responsibility~~
Blavie was not a man of principle.

Hilborn was the greatest man of his generation,
Blavie had a principle but it was wrong & he
carried it out vigorously.
Lord Stuyvesant had no principle.

Notes taken in the presence of Shoghi Effendi
by Mrs May Maxwell & Mrs Bates - August 1958.

The Question said: Prejudice is all
comprising (standing in the way) of the suc-
cessful teaching of the Bahai's. Different
prejudices in different countries, such as
class prejudice in England, race prejudices
in Germany. In Austria it is political
which is the strongest. The Questions have
seen a great Empire, & are very broad, but
however they are small country. They re-
cent being included in the German Empire
is material for they do not politically free.
In America it is the subtle believers who
have struggled in their relation to the world,
in England class prejudice is predominant,
the upper classes wish to remain as they are,
where in the world - religious prejudice exists,
& the believers must overcome all of these prejudices.

The Question spoke of the new class
Booth & mentioned with apparent pleasure
that Queen Maud had again written of the
fact to it, that she had returned to

Bahá'í'lláh said, the coming of the Father meant the return of the Son in the Station of the Father. And that we must be very careful in explaining that Station - God - cannot be contained in the form of man. The coming of Bahá'í'lláh means the coming of the Father Spirit to a world rapidly growing into maturity - ahead - out the world is still like a young man, not lead to do things - to accomplish more. A young man, on the threshold of maturity - hence the world is restless, feeling its maturity, also coming of age.

The American believers have a tendency to confuse the Station of the Father, Bahá'í'lláh and the Prophet. They often speak of Abdul Baha as the Prophet. The Báb was - first a Prophet & second a forerunner of the Cause of Bahá'í'lláh. Abdul Baha was the sole Interpreter of the Teachings of the Center of the Covenant. He was not a Prophet nor a Buraikan. His Station was unique - it never before had existed in religious history. On another occasion the Buraikan said: The Master was a Prophet-Saint. There is an element of mystery about Him. If the Cause did not have mystery - it would be a man made.

Religion. Abdul Baha's Station is a Mystery. The Buraikan was not a Manipulation, but we do not know what he was.

Bahá'í'lláh did not mutilate the National Assemblies. Abdul Baha filled in some gaps left by Bahá'í'lláh, naturally he could not lay down every detail.

Not a single verse of the Qyran ever be changed by the Universal House of Justice until another Manipulation appears.

At present there are only nine persons on the local & national Assemblies, but in the future there will be more.

Some are primary - Others are secondary. In regard to the Law in the Station - Bahá'í'lláh abrogated, confirmed, modified & affirmed some.

Also see was only a Reformer.

Deeatis came to Palestine - Bahá'í'lláh called him the Prince of Philosophy, for he learned the principles of philosophy, the essential points of Philosophy of Social. Philosophy is based on the - Legions (Sabbat of Wisdom) While the Manifestation is living among us, he is like a cloud