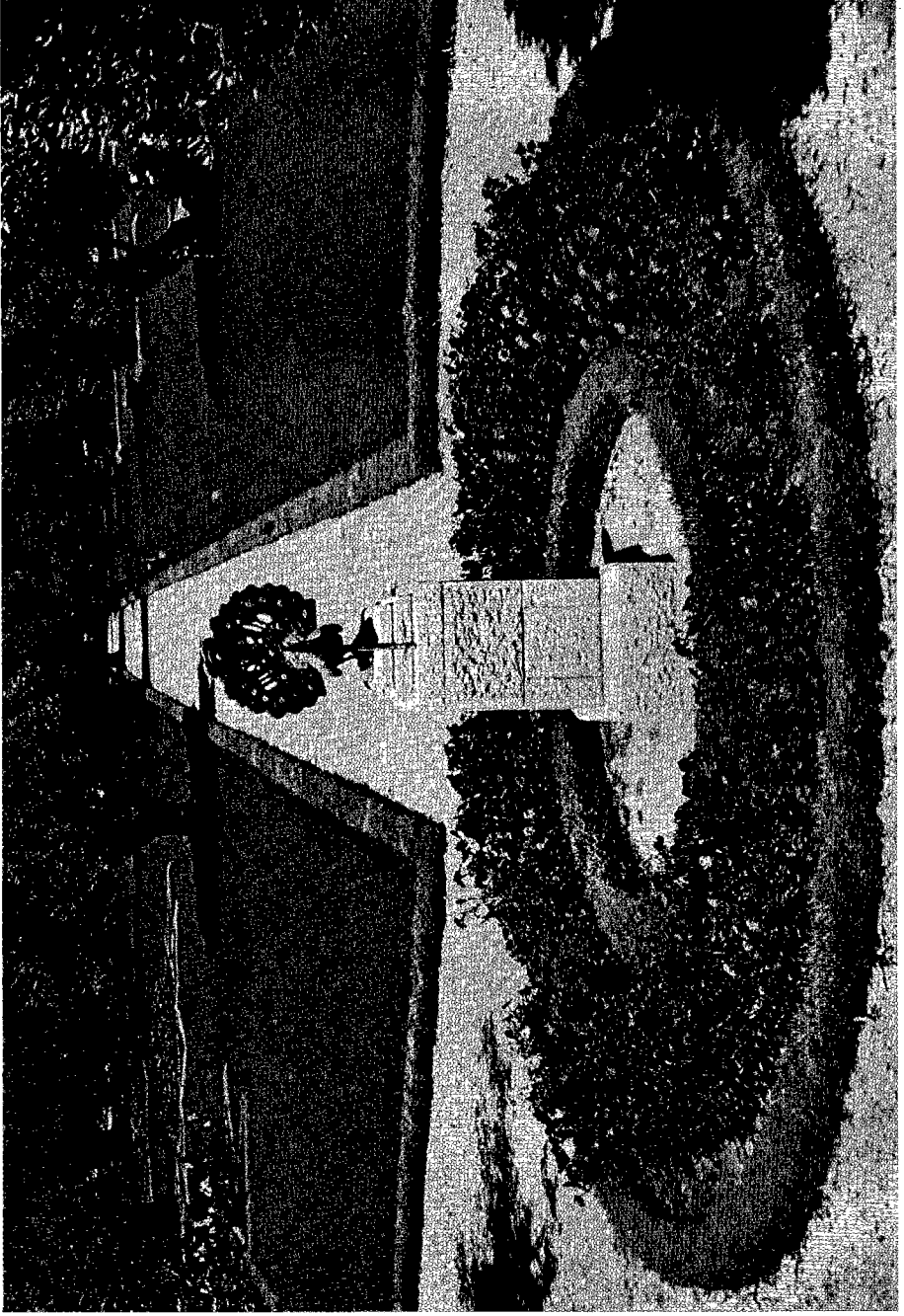


THE
BAHÁ'Í
WORLD
1973-1976

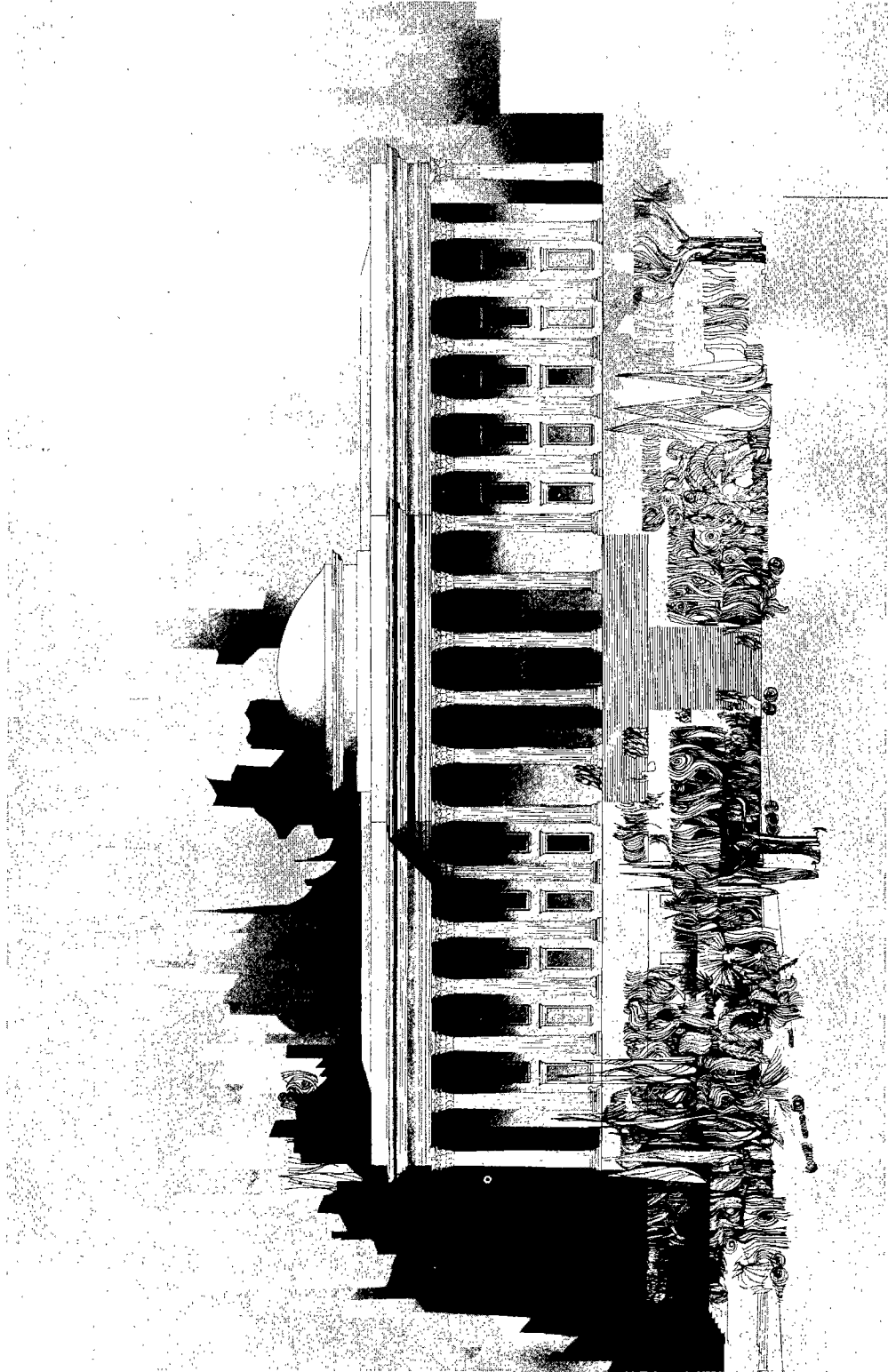
THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD

VOLUME XVI

130, 131, 132 and 133
OF THE BAHÁ'Í ERA
1973-1976



Partial view of olive grove in the fourth quadrant of the gardens at Bahji



Architect's impression of the seat of the Universal House of Justice



THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD

AN INTERNATIONAL RECORD

*Prepared under the supervision of
The Universal House of Justice*

VOLUME XVI

130, 131, 132 and 133
OF THE BAHÁ'Í ERA
1973-1976

BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTRE
HAIFA
1978

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NOTE: The spelling of the Oriental words and proper names used in this volume of *The Bahá'í World* is according to the system of transliteration established at one of the International Oriental Congresses.

ISBN 0 85398 075 6

*Printed in Great Britain
at the University Press, Oxford
by Eric Buckley
Printer to the University*

PREFACE

THE successive volumes of *The Bahá'í World* have come to be anticipated by Bahá'ís as the record of their own collective endeavours on behalf of their Faith, of the establishment and development of its administrative order throughout the world and as the source of data, both historical and statistical, relating to the rise of that Faith during its formative age.

By librarians and students *The Bahá'í World* is becoming ever more widely known as a source of authentic information about the aims, tenets, history, activities, organization and growth of the Bahá'í Faith. The editors therefore have always in mind the preservation of an even balance between the presentation of material of supreme interest to believers and of a fair and objective picture to enquirers. In this they are guided by the policy of Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, who directed the compilation of the successive volumes from I to XII covering the years 1925 to 1954. The first volume, known as *Bahá'í Year Book*, was in fact a one-year survey; the next seven volumes were biennial, terminating in 1940; volume IX recorded the four years from 1940 to 1944; volume X was again biennial and volumes XI and XII presented the periods 1946 to 1950 and 1950 to 1954 respectively. All these volumes were published in the United States under the aegis of the National Spiritual Assembly, volume I being compiled by an editorial committee of American Bahá'ís, and the remainder by an international board of editors, all under the supervision of the Guardian of the Faith. Volume XIII, which recorded the passing of the Guardian and the course and completion of his Ten Year Crusade, covered the entire period from 1954 to 1963 and was produced under the supervision of the Universal House of Justice, which thenceforth assumed responsibility for publication. Volumes XIV and XV covered the years 1963 to 1968 and 1968 to 1973 respectively.

This volume, XVI, records the establishment at the World Centre in June 1973 of the International Teaching Centre, one of the world administrative institutions of the Faith to be located on Mount Carmel in the vicinity of the Shrine of the Báb, sets out the details of the Five Year Plan launched by the Universal House of Justice at Riḍván 1974, and chronicles the continued expansion and consolidation, to Riḍván 1976, of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

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INTRODUCTION

AIMS AND PURPOSES OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

DAVID HOFMAN

RELIGION has two objectives, the regeneration of men and the advancement of mankind. *All men have been created to carry forward an ever advancing civilization* proclaims Bahá'u'lláh, and *The purpose of the one true God, exalted be His glory, in revealing Himself unto men is to lay bare those gems that lie hidden within the mine of their true and inmost selves.*

These aims of religion, universal and eternal, nevertheless have been conditioned to the capacities of each age or dispensation and the great religions of the past have developed their social orders within generally definable times and areas. Judaism, for instance, attained its peak under Solomon and was confined, before the dispersion, to the Near East; Zoroastrianism remained Persian until the Arab conquest and the settlement of a remnant in Western India; Christianity became the religion of European civilization; the building of the nation state undertaken by Islám remained a Muslim experiment until feudal Europe learned the lesson and its city states gave way to and adopted the more advanced order. It has remained for the Bahá'í religion to declare and promote the cause of world order—the *sine qua non* of its existence—and to disclose the concomitant unities of religion, of mankind and of historical purpose. 'Unity of family, of tribe, of city-state, and nation have been successively attempted and fully established. World unity is the goal towards which a harassed humanity is striving. Nation-building has come to an end. The anarchy inherent in state sovereignty is moving towards a climax. A world, growing to maturity, must abandon this fetish, recognize the oneness and wholeness of human relationships, and establish once for all the machinery

that can best incarnate this fundamental principle of its life.¹

Religion sees the course of history as an organic process, moving towards the full realization of all the potentialities implanted in man. The vicissitudes, the great advances, the hiatuses it regards as the natural unfoldment of that process just as the succession of bud, leaf, flower and fruit is the natural unfoldment in the life of a tree; or infancy, childhood, youth and maturity in that of a man. Indeed, Bahá'í scripture explains, the process is the same. The sun is the effective agent in the organic life of the earth; religion in that of humanity. *The Sun of Truth is the Word of God upon which depends the education of those who are endowed with the power of understanding and of utterance.*² The creative Word, revealed in each stage of human progress by a Manifestation of God, and conditioned to the requirements of the time, is the effective agent in the long, single process of humanity's development from infancy to World Order. This truth is enshrined in all revealed religion although it needs the illumination of Bahá'u'lláh's revelation to enable men to perceive it. 'The first picture presented in the Bible is that of human unity in its simplest form; that of a single family. The last picture is that of a unity manifold and universal in which all kindreds and tongues and peoples and nations are gathered into one and unified in the enjoyment of a common worship, a common happiness, a common glory.

'The great problem which, according to the Bible, confronts the human race in its progress is that of advancing from the barest, baldest unity

¹ Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, *The Unfoldment of World Civilization*. ² Bahá'u'lláh, *Daryáy-i-Dánish*.

through a long experience of multiplying diversities till ultimately a balance between the two principles is struck, poise is gained and the two forces of variety and unity are blended in a multiple, highly developed world fellowship, the perfection of whose union was hardly suggested in the primitive simplicity of early man.¹

This spiritual view of evolution is the constant theme of religion. Each revelation refers to the past, looks forward to the future and concentrates upon the immediate need for spiritual regeneration and enlightenment. The Prophet evokes in human hearts a sacrificial love which transcends self-interest and causes the early believers to dedicate themselves entirely to the practice and diffusion of the new message. As it spreads it works like leaven in society, reforming its morals, uplifting its vision and promoting a greater diffusion of love in social action.

'World history at its core and in its essence is the story of the spiritual evolution of mankind. From this all other activities of man proceed and round it all other activities revolve.'²

Unlike the revelations of the past, the Bahá'í revelation releases not only the creative Word necessary to the renewal of spiritual vitality in the human spirit, but embodies that divine energy in an administrative order capable of bringing within its shade all the diversified ethnic groups and myriad types of the human race, who may find within its wide embrace a full, happy and purposeful life. Bahá'í activity therefore is directed not only, as in the past, to the spreading of the Word, but to the establishment of the fabric of that Order which, enshrined within the creative Word itself, becomes the chief instrument for the further diffusion and social application of the Divine Message. This World Order, which the Bahá'í Faith exists to establish, is none other than that long-promised Kingdom in which peace, justice and brotherhood shall prevail universally and 'the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.'³ The establishment of this World Order is dependent upon the regeneration of mankind which must turn again to God and recognize His purpose. The two aims of religion are, therefore, interacting and interdependent.

Such a world-shaking transformation cannot

be brought about by any movement of reform, however disinterested, nor by any unaided human effort. Modern man has turned away from God, and bereft of his traditional sanctions, has inevitably wrecked his old order which, in truth, is lamentably inadequate to modern conditions and is not susceptible of repair. *Soon*, is Bahá'u'lláh's prophetic view of our day, *will the present-day order be rolled up, and a new one spread out in its stead*. Likewise, *The signs of impending convulsions and chaos can now be discerned, inasmuch as the prevailing order appears to be lamentably defective*.

The current aim of religion, embodied in the aims and purposes of the Bahá'í Faith, is the promotion of the next stage in the organic process of human evolution—the coming of age of the human race. The achievement of this maturity will be attested by the unification of mankind and the federation of the world in a single, all-embracing world society of human brotherhood. But great objectives are reached by dedicated pursuit of the preliminary and intermediate stages of the task, without ever losing sight of the ultimate goal, and this has been and is now the occupation of the Bahá'í world community—the completion within specified times of specified goals. These teaching plans to which the Bahá'ís eagerly devote their lives do far more than simply increase the size and consolidation of that world community. They are devised and launched by the head of the Faith—the Guardian and now the Universal House of Justice—and are therefore conceived from a global view, directed to the immediate needs of the great objective, conservative of the community's resources, world-wide in scale permitting the organic development of each part according to its stage of growth but with due regard for the needs of the whole, fostering intensively the unity, the international co-operation, the diversification of the ethnic, religious and social backgrounds of its increasing membership and developing new resources for the next step forward.

It should be noted that none of these plans is isolated in aim or conception but all are directed towards the implementation of three great charters, enshrined in Bahá'í sacred Writings, which authorize and guide the expansion of the Faith and the development of its institutions. In past Dispensations the command to 'spread the Gospel' has been general and unspecified. It was the

¹ George Townshend, *The Heart of the Gospel*, 1939.

² *ibid.* ³ Habakkuk 2:14

inspired guidance of the beloved Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith which disclosed to a spiritually delighted and grateful community yet another of the unique features of this Dispensation in the specific guidance given in these three charters for the implementation of this eternal command.

Bahá'u'lláh's *Tablet of Carmel* is the charter for the development of the Bahá'í World Centre in the twin cities of 'Akká and Haifa, the site of its most sacred Shrines—the tombs of the twin Prophets and of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Centre of the Covenant—its monuments and gardens, and of its 'world-shaking, world-embracing, world-directing administrative institutions'.¹

The *Will and Testament* of 'Abdu'l-Bahá is the charter for the development of the administrative order of the Faith. In this majestic document, the child of 'that mystic intercourse between Him Who communicated the generating influence of His divine Purpose and the One Who was its vehicle and chosen recipient,'² are delineated the structure of the administrative order, its *modus operandi*, its main institutions, the chain of authority, the source of guidance and the position of every believer *vis-à-vis* the Covenant. It has been well called the 'Charter of the New World Order of Bahá'u'lláh'.

The *Tablets of the Divine Plan*, a series of fourteen letters written by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the believers of the United States and Canada, some addressed to the entire company of believers in the North American continent and others to those in named geographical areas of that continent, constitute the charter for teaching the Faith throughout the world. 'Abdu'l-Bahá names the places, the people to whom teachers must go, the conditions under which they must travel and settle and He reveals several prayers for those who undertake this all-important task.

All the international plans of the Faith launched so far have set specific goals aimed at implementing these three charters and it is incontrovertibly apparent that never in any preceding Dispensation has the command to spread the Word of God been given, in the sacred text, such explicit guidance and detailed objectives.

As the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh increases in size

and influence other aims and objectives become apparent and possible of pursuit. The relationship with agencies, institutions and authorities of the non-Bahá'í world becomes an important consideration once the community emerges from obscurity, and has led to public relations programmes and the development of closer association with the United Nations. The Bahá'í International Community is accredited as a non-governmental agency with consultative status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and in various ways to other agencies of the United Nations. The fostering of this relationship has been the goal of all international plans so far, and is visualized as a continuing process. There are other objectives related to the special characteristics of Bahá'í life which become more and more important as the Faith grows and engages greater and greater public attention. They affect Bahá'í individuals, communities and institutions alike. These objectives fall into two groups—those concerned specifically with standards of conduct and those which relate to special Bahá'í practices.

The standards of conduct enjoined by the Prophet are invariably different from and sometimes diametrically opposed to the generally accepted ones of His day. High standards of conduct are, throughout Bahá'í scripture, constantly upheld and urged upon the believers, but the Guardian of the Faith in an essay written in 1938 addressed to the believers in the United States and Canada laid great stress upon the 'spiritual prerequisites . . . which constitute the bedrock on which . . . all teaching plans . . . must ultimately rest . . .'³ He writes of ' . . . a high sense of moral rectitude in their social and administrative activities, absolute chastity in their individual lives, and complete freedom from prejudice in their dealings with peoples of a different race, class, creed or colour.'⁴ In his expansion of this theme he declared that 'This rectitude of conduct, with its implications of justice, equity, truthfulness, honesty, fair-mindedness, reliability, and trustworthiness, must distinguish every phase of the life of the Bahá'í community.'⁵ A chaste and holy life must be made the controlling principle in the behaviour and conduct of all Bahá'ís, both in

¹ Shoghi Effendi, *The Spiritual Potencies of That Consecrated Spot*.

² Shoghi Effendi, *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh*.

³ Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*.

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ *ibid.*

their social relationships with the members of their own community, and in their contacts with the world at large.¹ It requires total abstinence from all alcoholic drinks, from opium, and from similar habit-forming drugs. It condemns the prostitution of art and of literature, the practices of nudism and of companionate marriage, infidelity in marital relationships, and all manner of promiscuity, of easy familiarity, and of sexual vices.² As to racial prejudice, the corrosion of which, for well nigh a century, has bitten into the fibre, and attacked the whole social structure of American society, it should be regarded as constituting the most vital and challenging issue confronting the Bahá'í community [of that country] at the present stage of its evolution.³

The regeneration of men—the first objective of religion mentioned in this essay—is therefore seen as the prime objective of the Bahá'í Faith. Membership in the Faith is drawn from that society which permits and indulges itself in all those corrupt, immoral and prejudiced activities which Bahá'ís are required to renounce, and since the Faith is steadily but persistently growing in numbers there is reason to hope that slowly but surely a regeneration will take place.

Further, these Bahá'í standards of conduct are not for individuals alone. They must be the hallmark of Bahá'í institutions and communities. 'Such a rectitude of conduct,' wrote the Guardian, 'must manifest itself, with ever-increasing potency, in every verdict which the elected representatives of the Bahá'í community, in whatever capacity they may find themselves, may be called upon to pronounce. It must be constantly reflected in the business dealings of all its members, in their domestic lives, in all manner of employment, and in any service they may, in the future, render their government or people.'⁴ It must be made the hallmark of that numerically small, yet intensely dynamic and highly responsible body of the elected national representatives of every Bahá'í community, which constitutes the sustaining pillar, and the sole instrument for the election in every community, of that Universal House whose very name and title, as ordained by Bahá'u'lláh, symbolizes that rectitude of conduct which is its highest mission to safeguard and enforce.⁵

The attitudes deriving from such standards, and from all the varied teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, must pervade all Bahá'í communities and imbue them with distinctive characteristics which can be recognized, amid the welter of opposing or mutually uninterested groups and factions into which modern society is disintegrating, as easily as the features of an individual in a crowd.

Those special Bahá'í practices which will inevitably characterize the Bahá'í community, are the regular observance of its Holy Days and Festivals, the abstention from work on nine such days during the year, the observance by all members of the community of the annual fast, of the laws governing marriage and divorce, of daily prayer, of the invariable practice of consultation in all affairs of life, and particularly by the regular observance of the Nineteen Day Feast. The habitual practice of such laws and ordinances is an objective pursued by all Bahá'ís and Bahá'í families.

It is seen that the aims and purposes of the Bahá'í Faith may be stated as the raising up of a world-wide community recruited from every race, nation, colour, religious and social background known on the planet, inspired, united and regenerated by the spiritual teachings and love of Bahá'u'lláh, dedicated to the building of that New World Order which 'may well be regarded as the brightest emanation'⁶ of His mind and is none other than the long hoped for, Christ-promised Kingdom of God on earth. To prepare men for the gifts of that Kingdom—peace, brotherhood, spirituality—and to raise its very fabric in the world, are the immediate and long-time objectives of the Bahá'í Faith.

The energies of the Bahá'ís therefore, in pursuance of these aims, flow in three major channels: individual spiritual development, conveying the message of Bahá'u'lláh to others, and developing the pattern of world society embodied in the Bahá'í administrative order. All these activities derive from the sacred text and it is the unique feature of the Bahá'í revelation that whereas the first two are common to all revealed religions it is only Bahá'u'lláh Who creates the institutions and reveals the laws, delineates the social order and establishes the principles of the civilization to which His revelation will give rise. Neither Moses nor Christ, Muḥammad, Buddha,

¹ Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*.

² *ibid.*

³ *ibid.* ⁴ *ibid.* ⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 213.

Zoroaster or Krishna did this, although They all foretold that it would be done by Him Who would take the government upon His shoulders and establish the Kingdom in peace and righteousness.

None of the traditional motives operates to create the Bahá'í community, neither former associations, political or economic identity of interest, racial or patriotic grouping. Only the recognition and love of Bahá'u'lláh brings into close relatedness and co-operative action people from every human background, of all types of character and personality, divergent and diversified interest. Through their brotherhood in Bahá'u'lláh the old crystallized forms of human divisiveness to which they formerly belonged, whether of class, race, religion, occupation, temperament or degree of civilization lose their rigidity and eventually disintegrate. The growing Bahá'í community on the other hand is essentially based on love, is a brotherhood, a family, each member delighting in the diversity of its membership, welcoming the former pariah or outcast as a new flower in the garden, each as proud of his humanity as was ever the former chauvinist of his country.

Within such a community the sun of Bahá'u'lláh's revelation can evoke new morals, new attitudes, new conventions, new hopes and visions, all enshrined within the text of the revelation itself and which provide the spiritual atmosphere and distinctive culture of the new day. Such a community, as it grows, becomes more and more a true social order, providing a soil to human life, a climate for its best development, an arena for the practice of its highest aspirations, and a beacon light to attract and guide the disillusioned, spiritually impoverished, frenetic and frustrated peoples of the earth.

The energies of this new culture, guided and conserved to the service of human welfare by the agencies of Bahá'u'lláh's World Order will result in the proliferation of new arts and sciences, new social and economic relationships, new educational methods and a general accession of well-being and felicity. The vision of the Bahá'í Faith, though glorious, is a practical one, and the number of its dedicated promoters grows with increasing speed. It is summarized in the following words by the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith in his essay *The Unfolding of World Civilization*:

'The unity of the human race, as envisaged by

Bahá'u'lláh, implies the establishment of a world commonwealth in which all nations, races, creeds and classes are closely and permanently united, and in which the autonomy of its state members and the personal freedom and initiative of the individuals that compose them are definitely and completely safeguarded. This commonwealth must, as far as we can visualize it, consist of a world legislature, whose members will, as the trustees of the whole of mankind, ultimately control the entire resources of all the component nations, and will enact such laws as shall be required to regulate the life, satisfy the needs and adjust the relationships of all races and peoples. A world executive, backed by an international Force, will carry out the decisions arrived at, and apply the laws enacted by, this world legislature, and will safeguard the organic unity of the whole commonwealth. A world tribunal will adjudicate and deliver its compulsory and final verdict in all and any disputes that may arise between the various elements constituting this universal system. A mechanism of world inter-communication will be devised, embracing the whole planet, freed from national hindrances and restrictions, and functioning with marvellous swiftness and perfect regularity. A world metropolis will act as the nerve centre of a world civilization, the focus towards which the unifying forces of life will converge and from which its energizing influences will radiate. A world language will either be invented or chosen from among the existing languages and will be taught in the schools of all the federated nations as an auxiliary to their mother tongue. A world script, a world literature, a uniform and universal system of currency, of weights and measures, will simplify and facilitate intercourse and understanding among the nations and races of mankind. In such a world society, science and religion, the two most potent forces in human life, will be reconciled, will co-operate, and will harmoniously develop. The press will, under such a system, while giving full scope to the expression of the diversified views and convictions of mankind, cease to be mischievously manipulated by vested interests, whether private or public, and will be liberated from the influence of contending governments and peoples. The economic resources of the world will be organized, its sources of raw materials will be tapped and fully utilized, its markets will be co-ordinated and

developed, and the distribution of its products will be equitably regulated.

'National rivalries, hatred, and intrigues will cease, and racial animosity and prejudice will be replaced by racial amity, understanding and co-operation. The causes of religious strife will be permanently removed, economic barriers and restrictions will be completely abolished, and the inordinate distinction between classes will be obliterated. Destitution on the one hand, and gross accumulation of ownership on the other, will disappear. The enormous energy dissipated and wasted on war, whether economic or political, will be consecrated to such ends as will extend the range of human inventions and technical development, to the increase of the productivity of mankind, to the extermination of disease, to the extension of scientific research, to the raising of the standard of physical health, to the sharpening and refine-

ment of the human brain, to the exploitation of the unused and unsuspected resources of the planet, to the prolongation of human life, and to the furtherance of any other agency that can stimulate the intellectual, the moral, and spiritual life of the entire human race.

'A world federal system, ruling the whole earth and exercising unchallengeable authority over its unimaginably vast resources, blending and embodying the ideals of both the East and West, liberated from the curse of war and its miseries, and bent on the exploitation of all the available sources of energy on the surface of the planet, a system in which Force is made the servant of Justice, whose life is sustained by its universal recognition of one God and by its allegiance to one common Revelation—such is the goal towards which humanity, impelled by the unifying forces of life, is moving.'

PART ONE
THE BAHÁ'Í REVELATION

I

EXCERPTS FROM THE BAHÁ'Í SACRED WRITINGS

1. BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

The remembrance of God and His praise, and the glory of God and His splendour, rest upon Thee, O Thou Who art His Beauty! I bear witness that the eye of creation hath never gazed upon one wronged like Thee. Thou wast immersed all the days of Thy life beneath an ocean of tribulations. At one time Thou wast in chains and fetters; at another Thou wast threatened by the sword of Thine enemies. Yet, despite all this, Thou didst enjoin upon all men to observe what had been prescribed unto Thee by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

The Tablet of Visitation

SOME PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH ABOUT HIS SUFFERINGS, TRANSLATED BY SHOGHI EFFENDI

A. FROM TABLETS

He Who is the Lord of the seen and unseen is now manifest unto all men. His blessed Self hath been afflicted with such harm that if all the seas, visible and invisible, were turned into ink, and all that dwell in the kingdom into pens, and all that are in the heavens and all that are on earth into scribes, they would, of a certainty, be powerless to record it.

Noah's flood is but the measure of the tears I have shed, and Abraham's fire an ebullition of My soul. Jacob's grief is but a reflection of My sorrows, and Job's afflictions a fraction of my calamity.¹

The wrongs which I suffer have blotted out the wrongs suffered by My First Name (*the Báb*) from the Tablet of creation.

Wert thou to hear with Mine ear, thou wouldst hear how 'Ali (*the Báb*) bewaileth Me in the presence of the Glorious Companion, and how Muḥammad weepeth over Me in the all-highest Horizon, and how the Spirit (*Jesus*) beateth Himself upon the head in the heaven of My decree, by reason of what hath befallen this Wronged One at the hands of every impious sinner.

All this generation could offer Us were wounds from its darts, and the only cup it proffered to Our lips was the cup of its venom. On Our neck We still bear the scar of chains, and upon Our body are imprinted the evidences of an unyielding cruelty.

Before Me riseth up the Serpent of wrath with jaws stretched to engulf Me, and behind Me stalketh the lion of anger intent on tearing Me in pieces, and above Me, O My Well-Beloved, are

¹ From 'Qaṣīdiy-i-Varqá'īyyih', an ode revealed during Bahá'u'lláh's retirement to Sulaymáníyyih.

the clouds of Thy decree, raining upon Me the showers of tribulations, whilst beneath Me are fixed the spears of misfortune, ready to wound My limbs and My body.

... Couldst thou be told what hath befallen the Ancient Beauty, thou wouldst flee into the wilderness, and weep with a great weeping. In thy grief, thou wouldst smite thyself on the head, and cry out as one stung by the sting of the adder . . .

By the righteousness of God! Every morning I arose from My bed, I discovered the hosts of countless afflictions massed behind My door; and every night when I lay down, lo! My heart was torn with agony at what it had suffered from the fiendish cruelty of its foes. With every piece of bread the Ancient Beauty breaketh is coupled the assault of a fresh affliction, and with every drop He drinketh is mixed the bitterness of the most woeful of trials. He is preceded in every step He taketh by an army of unforeseen calamities, while in His rear follow legions of agonizing sorrows.

Such is My plight, wert thou to ponder it in thine heart. Let not, however, thy soul grieve over that which God hath rained down upon Us. Merge thy will in His pleasure, for We have, at no time, desired anything whatsoever except His Will, and have welcomed each one of His irrevocable decrees. Let thine heart be patient, and be thou not dismayed. Follow not in the way of them that are sorely agitated.

During the days I lay in the prison of Tíhrán, though the galling weight of the chains and the stench-filled air allowed Me but little sleep, still in those infrequent moments of slumber I felt as if something flowed from the crown of My head over My breast, even as a mighty torrent that precipitateth itself upon the earth from the summit of a lofty mountain. Every limb of My body would, as a result, be set afire. At such moments My tongue recited what no man could bear to hear.

While engulfed in tribulations I heard a most wondrous, a most sweet voice, calling above My

head.¹ Turning My face, I beheld a Maiden—the embodiment of the remembrance of the name of My Lord—suspended in the air before Me. So rejoiced was she in her very soul that her countenance shone with the ornament of the good-pleasure of God, and her cheeks glowed with the brightness of the All-Merciful. Betwixt earth and heaven she was raising a call which captivated the hearts and minds of men. She was imparting to both My inward and outer being tidings which rejoiced My soul, and the souls of God's honoured servants. Pointing with her finger unto My head, she addressed all who are in heaven and all who are on earth, saying: 'By God! This is the Best-Beloved of the worlds, and yet ye comprehend not. This is the Beauty of God amongst you, and the power of His sovereignty within you, could ye but understand. This is the Mystery of God and His Treasure, the Cause of God and His glory unto all who are in the kingdoms of Revelation and of creation, if ye be of them that perceive.'

O Maryam! From the Land of T̄á (*Tíhrán*), after countless afflictions, We reached 'Iráq, at the bidding of the Tyrant of Persia, where, after the fetters of Our foes, We were afflicted with the perfidy of Our friends. God knoweth what befell Me thereafter! I have borne what no man, be he of the past or of the future, hath borne or will bear.

Oceans of sadness have surged over Me, a drop of which no soul could bear to drink. Such is My grief that My soul hath well nigh departed from My body. Give ear, O Kamál! to the voice of this lowly, this forsaken ant, that hath hid itself in its hole, and whose desire is to depart from your midst, and vanish from your sight, by reason of that which the hands of men have wrought. God, verily, hath been witness between Me and His servants. Woe is Me, woe is Me! . . . All that I have seen from the day on which I first drank the pure milk from the breast

¹ In His *Súratu'l-Haykal* (the *Súrih* of the Temple) He thus describes those breathless moments when the Maiden, symbolizing the *Most Great Spirit* proclaimed His mission to the entire creation' (during His imprisonment in the *Siyáh-Chál* in Tíhrán). Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 101.

of My mother until this moment hath been effaced from My memory, in consequence of that which the hands of the people have committed.¹

I roamed the wilderness² of resignation travelling in such wise that in My exile every eye wept sore over Me, and all created things shed tears of blood because of My anguish. The birds of the air were My companions and the beasts of the field My associates.

From Our eyes there rained tears of anguish, and in Our bleeding heart there surged an ocean of agonizing pain. Many a night We had no food for sustenance, and many a day Our body found no rest. By Him Who hath My being between His hands! notwithstanding these showers of afflictions and unceasing calamities, Our soul was wrapt in blissful joy, and Our whole being evinced an ineffable gladness . . . Alone, We communed with Our spirit, oblivious of the world and all that is therein.³

I saw⁴ the Prophets and the Messengers gather and seat themselves around Me, moaning, weeping and loudly lamenting. Amazed, I enquired of them the reason, whereupon their lamentation and weeping waxed greater, and they said unto Me: 'We weep for Thee, O Most Great Mystery, O Tabernacle of Immortality!' They wept with such a weeping that I too wept with them. Thereupon the Concourse on high addressed Me saying: ' . . . Erelong shalt Thou behold with Thine own eyes what no Prophet hath beheld. . . . Be patient, be patient.' . . . They continued addressing Me the whole night until the approach of dawn.

The cruelties inflicted by My oppressors have bowed Me down, and turned My hair white. Shouldst thou present thyself before My throne, thou wouldst fail to recognize the Ancient Beauty, for the freshness of His countenance is altered and its brightness hath faded, by reason of the oppression of the infidels. I swear by God! His heart, His soul, and His vitals are melted!⁵

By God! No spot is left on My body that hath not been touched by the spears of thy machinations . . . Thou hast perpetrated against thy Brother what no man hath perpetrated against another . . . What hath proceeded from thy pen hath caused the Countenances of Glory to be prostrated upon the dust, hath rent in twain the Veil of Grandeur in the Sublime Paradise, and lacerated the hearts of the favoured ones established upon the loftiest seats.⁶

O *Khalíl!* God beareth Me witness. Though My Pen be still moving on My Tablet, yet, in its very heart, it weepeth and is sore distressed. The lamp burning before the Throne, likewise, weepeth and groaneth by reason of the things which the Ancient Beauty hath suffered at the hands of them who are but a creation of His Will. God, Himself, knoweth and testifieth to the truth of My words. No man that hath purged his ear from the loud clamour of the infidels, and inclined it to all created things, can fail to hear the voice of their lamentation and weeping over the trouble that hath befallen Us at the hands of those of Our servants that have disbelieved in, and rebelled against, Us. Thus have We disclosed to thee a glimmer of the woes that have come upon Us, that thou mayest be made aware of Our sufferings, and patiently endure thy sorrows.

Twenty years have passed, O kings, during which We have, each day, tasted the agony of a fresh tribulation. No one of them that were

¹ From *Lawh-i-Kullu't-Ta'ám*, revealed prior to Bahá'u'lláh's withdrawal to Sulaymáníyyih.

² Sulaymáníyyih.

³ Revealed during the period of Bahá'u'lláh's withdrawal to Sulaymáníyyih.

⁴ In a dream during the last years of Bahá'u'lláh's sojourn in Baghdád. See *God Passes By*, p. 147.

⁵ A detailed commentary on the circumstances which gave rise to this anguished statement appears in *God Passes By*, chapter x.

⁶ *ibid.*

before Us hath endured the things We have endured. Would that ye could perceive it! They that rose up against Us have put us to death, have shed Our blood, have plundered Our property, and violated Our honour. Though aware of most of Our afflictions, ye, nevertheless, have failed to stay the hand of the aggressor.

The day is approaching when God will have raised up a people who will call to remembrance Our days, who will tell the tale of Our trials, who will demand the restitution of Our rights from them that, without a tittle of evidence, have treated Us with manifest injustice. God, assuredly, dominateth the lives of them that wronged Us, and is well aware of their doings. He will, most certainly, lay hold on them for their sins. He, verily, is the fiercest of avengers.

I swear by God, O King! It is not My wish to make My plaint to thee against them that persecute Me. I only plead My grief and My sorrow to God, Who hath created Me and them, Who well knoweth our state and Who watcheth over all things. My wish is to warn them of the consequences of their actions, if perchance they might desist from treating others as they have treated Me, and be of them that heed My warning.

The tribulations that have touched Us, the destitution from which We suffer, the various troubles with which We are encompassed, shall all pass away, as shall pass away the pleasures in which they delight and the affluence they enjoy. This is the truth which no man on earth can reject. The days in which We have been compelled to dwell in the dust will soon be ended, as will the days in which they occupied the seats of honour. God shall, assuredly, judge with truth between Us and them, and He, verily, is the best of judges.

We render thanks unto God for whatsoever hath befallen Us, and We patiently endure the things He hath ordained in the past or will ordain in the future. In Him have I placed My trust; and into His hands have I committed My Cause. He will, certainly, repay all them that endure with patience and put their confidence in Him. His is the creation and its empire. He

exalteth whom He will, and whom He will He doth abase. He shall not be asked of His doings. He, verily, is the All-Glorious, the Almighty.

Let thine ear be attentive, O King, to the words We have addressed to thee. Let the oppressor desist from his tyranny, and cut off the perpetrators of injustice from among them that profess thy faith. By the righteousness of God! The tribulations We have sustained are such that any pen that recounteth them cannot but be overwhelmed with anguish. No one of them that truly believe and uphold the unity of God can bear the burden of their recital. So great have been Our sufferings that even the eyes of Our enemies have wept over Us, and beyond them those of every discerning person. And to all these trials have We been subjected, in spite of Our action in approaching thee, and in bidding the people to enter beneath thy shadow, that thou mightest be a stronghold unto them that believe in and uphold the unity of God.

I have seen, O *Sháh*, in the path of God what eye hath not seen nor ear heard. . . . How numerous the tribulations which have rained, and will soon rain, upon Me! I advance with My face set towards Him Who is the Almighty, the All-Bounteous, whilst behind Me glideth the serpent. Mine eyes have rained down tears until My bed is drenched. I sorrow not for Myself, however. By God! Mine head yearneth for the spear out of love for its Lord. I never passed a tree, but Mine heart addressed it saying: 'O would that thou wert cut down in My name, and My body crucified upon thee, in the path of My Lord!' . . . By God! Though weariness lay Me low, and hunger consume Me, and the bare rock be My bed, and My fellows the beasts of the field, I will not complain, but will endure patiently as those endued with constancy and firmness have endured patiently, through the power of God, the Eternal King and Creator of the nations, and will render thanks unto God under all conditions. We pray that, out of His bounty—exalted be He—He may release, through this imprisonment, the necks of men from chains and fetters, and cause them to turn, with sincere faces, towards His Face, Who is the Mighty, the Bounteous. Ready is He to answer whosoever calleth upon Him, and nigh is He unto such as commune with Him.

Hearken unto My voice that calleth from My prison, that it may acquaint thee with the things that have befallen My Beauty, at the hands of them that are the manifestations of My glory, and that thou mayest perceive how great hath been My patience, notwithstanding My might, and how immense My forbearance, notwithstanding My power. By My life! Couldst thou but know the things sent down by My Pen, and discover the treasures of My Cause, and the pearls of My mysteries which lie hid in the seas of My names and in the goblets of My Words, thou wouldst for longing after His glorious and sublime Kingdom, lay down thy life in the path of God. Know thou that though My body be beneath the swords of My foes, and My limbs be beset with incalculable afflictions, yet My spirit is filled with a gladness with which all the joys of the earth can never compare.

Ponder a while on the woes and afflictions which this Prisoner hath sustained. I have, all the days of My life, been at the mercy of Mine enemies, and have suffered each day, in the path of the love of God, a fresh tribulation. I have patiently endured until the fame of the Cause of God was spread abroad on the earth.

... Consider this wronged One. Though the clearest proofs attest the truth of His Cause; though the prophecies He, in an unmistakable language, hath made have been fulfilled; though, in spite of His not being accounted among the learned, His being unschooled and inexperienced in the disputations current among the divines, He hath rained upon men the showers of His manifold and Divinely-inspired knowledge; yet, behold how this generation hath rejected His authority, and rebelled against Him! He hath, during the greater part of His life, been sore-tried in the clutches of His enemies. His sufferings have now reached their culmination in this afflictive Prison,¹ into which His oppressors have so unjustly thrown Him. God grant that, with a penetrating vision and radiant heart, thou mayest observe the things that have come to pass and are now happening, and, pondering them in thine heart, mayest

recognize that which most men have, in this Day, failed to perceive.

None knoweth what befell Us, except God, the Almighty, the All-Knowing . . . From the foundation of the world until the present day a cruelty such as this² hath neither been seen nor heard of.

Know thou, moreover, that We have been cast into an afflictive Prison, and are encompassed with the hosts of tyranny, as a result of what the hands of the infidels have wrought. Such is the gladness, however, which the Youth hath tasted that no earthly joy can compare unto it. By God! The harm He suffereth at the hands of the oppressor can never grieve His heart, nor can He be saddened by the ascendancy of such as have repudiated His truth.

Say: Tribulation is a horizon unto My Revelation. The day star of grace shineth above it, and sheddeth a light which neither the clouds of men's idle fancy nor the vain imaginations of the aggressor can obscure.

Follow thou the footsteps of thy Lord, and remember His servants even as He doth remember thee, undeterred by either the clamour of the heedless ones or the sword of the enemy. . . . Spread abroad the sweet savours of thy Lord, and hesitate not, though it be for less than a moment, in the service of His Cause. The day is approaching when the victory of thy Lord, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Bountiful, will be proclaimed.

O Aḥmad! Forget not My bounties while I am absent. Remember My days during thy days, and My distress and banishment in this remote prison. And be thou so steadfast in My love that thy heart shall not waver, even if the swords of the enemies rain blows upon thee and all the heavens and the earth arise against thee.

If tribulation touch thee for My sake, call thou to mind My ills and troubles, and re-

¹ 'Akká.

² Reference is to the tribulations endured by Bahá'u'lláh during His imprisonment in 'Akká.

member My banishment and imprisonment. Thus do We devolve on thee what hath descended upon Us from Him Who is the All-Glorious, the All-Wise.

The Ancient Beauty hath consented to be bound with chains that mankind may be released from its bondage, and hath accepted to be made a prisoner within this most mighty Stronghold that the whole world may attain unto true liberty. He hath drained to its dregs the cup of sorrow, that all the peoples of the earth may attain unto abiding joy, and be filled with gladness. This is of the mercy of your Lord, the Compassionate, the Most Merciful. We have accepted to be abased, O believers in the Unity of God, that ye may be exalted, and have suffered manifold afflictions, that ye might prosper and flourish. He Who hath come to build anew the whole world, behold, how they that have joined partners with God have forced Him to dwell within the most desolate of cities!¹

Say: We have accepted to be tried by ills and troubles, that ye may sanctify yourselves from all earthly defilements. Why, then, refuse ye to ponder Our purpose in your hearts? By the righteousness of God! Whoso will reflect upon the tribulations We have suffered, his soul will assuredly melt away with sorrow. Thy Lord Himself beareth witness to the truth of My words. We have sustained the weight of all calamities to sanctify you from all earthly corruption, and ye are yet indifferent.

God is my witness! Had it not been in conflict with that which the Tablets of God have decreed, I would have gladly kissed the hands of whosoever attempted to shed my blood in the path of the Well-Beloved. I would, moreover, have bestowed upon him a share of such worldly goods as God had allowed me to possess, even though he who perpetrated this act would have provoked the wrath of the Almighty, incurred His malediction, and deserved to be tormented throughout the eternity of God, the All-Possessing, the Equitable, the All-Wise.

Let every man observe and meditate on the conduct of this wronged One. We have, ever since the dawn of this Revelation until the present time, refused either to hide Ourselves from Our enemies, or to withdraw from the companionship of Our friends. Though encompassed with a myriad griefs and afflictions, We have, with mighty confidence, summoned the peoples of the earth to the Day-Spring of Glory. The Pen of the Most High is disinclined to recount, in this connection, the woes it hath suffered. To reveal them would, no doubt, plunge into sorrow the favoured among the faithful, they that truly uphold the unity of God and are wholly devoted to His Cause. He, verily, speaketh the truth, and is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing. Our life hath, for the most part, been spent in the midst of Our enemies. Witness how We are, at present, living in a nest of serpents.

As My tribulations multiplied, so did My love for God and for His Cause increase, in such wise that all that befell Me from the hosts of the wayward was powerless to deter Me from My purpose. Should they hide Me away in the depths of the earth, yet would they find Me riding aloft on the clouds, and calling out unto God, the Lord of strength and of might. I have offered Myself up in the way of God, and I yearn after tribulations in My love for Him, and for the sake of His good-pleasure. Unto this bear witness the woes which now afflict Me, the like of which no other man hath suffered. Every single hair of Mine head calleth out that which the Burning Bush uttered on Sinai, and each vein of My body invoceth God and saith: 'O would I had been severed in Thy path, so that the world might be quickened, and all its peoples be united!' Thus hath it been decreed by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Informed.

Know ye that I am afraid of none except God. In none but Him have I placed My trust; to none will I cleave but Him, and wish for naught except the thing He hath wished for Me. This, indeed, is My heart's desire, did ye but know it. I have offered up My soul and My body as a sacrifice for God, the Lord of all worlds. Whoso hath known God shall know none but Him, and

¹ 'Akká.

he that feareth God shall be afraid of no one except Him, though the powers of the whole earth rise up and be arrayed against him. I speak naught except at His bidding, and follow not, through the power of God and His might, except His truth. He, verily, shall recompense the truthful.

By Him Who is the Truth! I fear no tribulation in His path, nor any affliction in My love for Him. Verily God hath made adversity as a morning dew upon His green pasture, and a wick for His lamp which lighteth earth and heaven.

I swear by the beauty of the Well-Beloved! This is the Mercy that hath encompassed the entire creation, the Day whereon the grace of God hath permeated and pervaded all things. The living waters of My mercy, O 'Alí, are fast pouring down, and Mine heart is melting with the heat of My tenderness and love. At no time have I been able to reconcile Myself to the afflictions befalling My loved ones, or to any trouble that could becloud the joy of their hearts.

Every time My name 'the All-Merciful' was told that one of My lovers had breathed a word that runneth counter to My wish, it repaired, grief-stricken and disconsolate to its abode; and whenever My name 'the Concealer' discovered that one of My followers had inflicted any shame or humiliation on his neighbour, it, likewise, turned back chagrined and sorrowful to its retreats of glory, and there wept and mourned with a sore lamentation. And whenever My name 'the Ever-Forgiving' perceived that any one of My friends had committed any transgression, it cried out in its great distress, and, overcome with anguish, fell upon the dust, and was borne away by a company of the invisible angels to its habitation in the realms above.

By Myself, the True One, O 'Alí! The fire that hath inflamed the heart of Bahá is fiercer than the fire that gloweth in thine heart, and His lamentation louder than thy lamentation. Every time the sin committed by any one amongst them was breathed in the Court of His Presence,

the Ancient Beauty would be so filled with shame as to wish He could hide the glory of His countenance from the eyes of all men, for He hath, at all times, fixed His gaze on their fidelity, and observed its essential requisites.

I sorrow not for the burden of My imprisonment. Neither do I grieve over My abasement, or the tribulation I suffer at the hands of Mine enemies. By My life! They are My glory, a glory wherewith God hath adorned His own Self. Would that ye know it!

The shame I was made to bear hath uncovered the glory with which the whole of creation had been invested, and through the cruelties I have endured, the Day-Star of Justice hath manifested itself, and shed its splendour upon men.

My sorrows are for those who have involved themselves in their corrupt passions, and claim to be associated with the Faith of God, the Gracious, the All-Praised.

It behoveth the people of Bahá to die to the world and all that is therein, to be so detached from all earthly things that the inmates of Paradise may inhale from their garment the sweet smelling savour of sanctity, that all the peoples of the earth may recognize in their faces the brightness of the All-Merciful, and that through them may be spread abroad the signs and tokens of God, the Almighty, the All-Wise. They that have tarnished the fair name of the Cause of God, by following the things of the flesh—these are in palpable error!

To whatever place We may be banished, however great the tribulation We may suffer, they who are the people of God must, with fixed resolve and perfect confidence, keep their eyes directed towards the Day-Spring of Glory, and be busied in whatever may be conducive to the betterment of the world and the education of its peoples. All that hath befallen Us in the past hath advanced the interests of Our Revelation and blazoned its fame; and all that may befall Us in the future will have a like result. Cling ye, with your inmost hearts, to the Cause of God, a Cause that hath been sent down by Him Who is the Ordainer, the All-Wise. We have, with the utmost kindness and mercy, summoned and directed all peoples and nations to that which shall truly profit them.

B. FROM PRAYERS AND MEDITATIONS

My God, My Master, My Desire! . . . Thou hast created this atom of dust through the consummate power of Thy might, and nurtured Him with Thine hands which none can chain up. . . . Thou hast destined for Him trials and tribulations which no tongue can describe, nor any of Thy Tablets adequately recount. The throat Thou didst accustom to the touch of silk Thou hast, in the end, clasped with strong chains, and the body Thou didst ease with brocades and velvets Thou hast at last subjected to the abasement of a dungeon. Thy decree hath shackled Me with unnumbered fetters, and cast about My neck chains that none can sunder. A number of years have passed during which afflictions have, like showers of mercy, rained upon Me. . . . How many the nights during which the weight of chains and fetters allowed Me no rest, and how numerous the days during which peace and tranquillity were denied Me, by reason of that wherewith the hands and tongues of men have afflicted Me! Both bread and water which Thou hast, through Thy all-embracing mercy, allowed unto the beasts of the field, they have, for a time, forbidden unto this servant, and the things they refused to inflict upon such as have seceded from Thy Cause, the same have they suffered to be inflicted upon Me, until, finally, Thy decree was irrevocably fixed, and Thy behest summoned this servant to depart out of Persia, accompanied by a number of frail-bodied men and children of tender age, at this time when the cold is so intense that one cannot even speak, and ice and snow so abundant that it is impossible to move.

. . . Thou knowest, and seest, and hearest, O my Lord, that before every tree I am moved to lift up my voice to Thee, and before every stone I am impelled to sigh and lament. Hath it been Thy purpose in creating me, O my God, to touch me with tribulation, or to enable me to manifest Thy Cause in the kingdom of Thy creation?

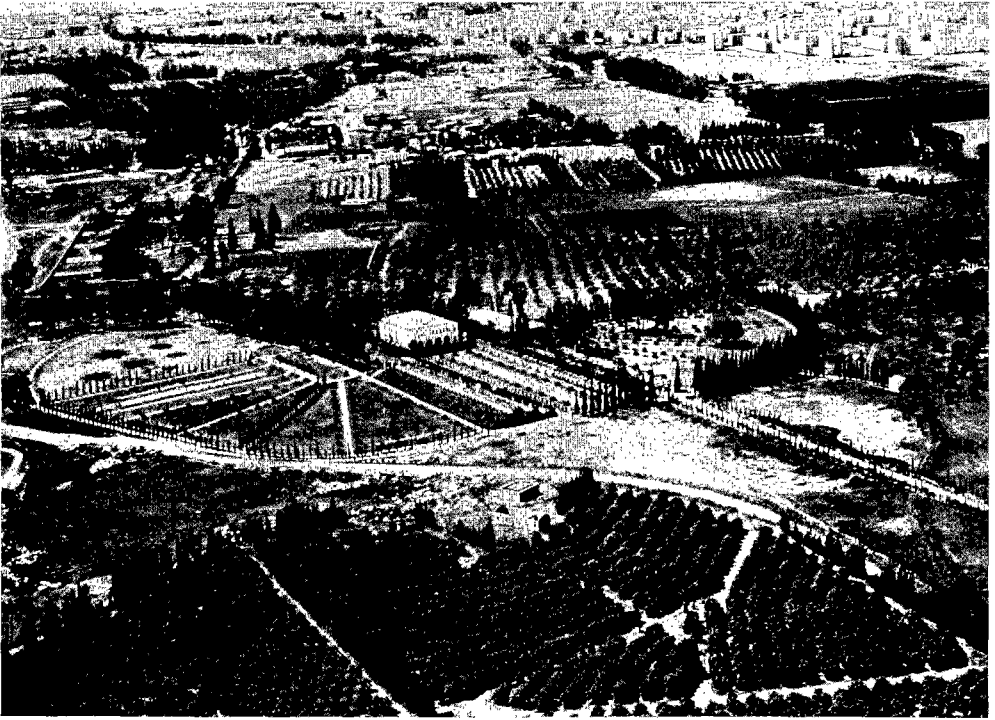
Thou hearest, O my God, my sighs and my groaning, and beholdest my powerlessness, and my poverty, and my misery, and my woes, and

my wretchedness. I swear by Thy might! I have wept with such a weeping that I have been unable to make mention of Thee, or to extol Thee, and cried with such a bitter cry that every mother in her bereavement was bewildered at me, and forgot her own anguish and the sighs she had uttered . . .

My God, my Master, my Highest Hope, and the Goal of my desire! Thou seest and hearest the sighing of this wronged one, from this darksome well which the vain imaginations of Thine adversaries have built, and from this blind pit which the idle fancies of the wicked among Thy creatures have digged. By Thy Beauty, O Thou Whose glory is uncovered to the face of men! I am not impatient in the troubles that touch me in my love for Thee, neither in the adversities which I suffer in Thy path. Nay, I have, by Thy power, chosen them for mine own self, and I glory in them amongst such of Thy creatures as enjoy near access to Thee, and those of Thy servants that are wholly devoted to Thy Self. . .

. . . Thou beholdest, therefore, O my God, how this wronged one hath fallen into the hands of such as have denied Thy right, and broken off from Thy sovereignty. He, round whose person circlet Thy proof, and in whose name and on behalf of whose sovereignty Thy testimony crieth out unto all created things, hath suffered more grievously in his days than any pen can recount, and been so harassed that He Who is Thy Spirit (Jesus) lamented, and all the denizens of Thy Kingdom and all the inmates of Thy Tabernacle in the realms above cried with a great and bitter lamentation. . . .

I swear by Thy glory, O Thou Who beholdest me from Thine all-glorious horizon, and hearest the voice of the Lote-Tree beyond which there is no passing! Should any one consider Thy Books which Thou didst name the Bayán, and ponder in his heart what hath been revealed therein, he would discover that each of these Books announceth my Revelation, and declareth my Name, and testifieth to my Self, and proclaimeth my Cause, and my Praise, and my Rising, and the radiance of my Glory. And yet, notwithstanding Thy proclamation, O my God, and in spite of the words Thou didst utter, O my Beloved, Thou hast seen and heard their calumnies against me, and their evil doings in my days . . .



Aerial view of Bahjí; April 1975. In the centre is seen the Mansion of Bahjí where Bahá'u'lláh spent the last twelve years of His life. His resting place, 'the holiest Shrine of the Bahá'í world,' is to the right of the Mansion. (See frontispiece.)

Thou seest Thy dear One, O my God, lying at the mercy of Thine enemies, and hearest the voice of His lamentation from the midst of such of Thy creatures as have dealt wickedly in Thy sight. He it is, O my Lord, through Whose name Thou didst beautify Thy Tablets, and for Whose greater glory Thou didst send down the Bayán, and at Whose separation from Thee Thou didst weep continually. Look Thou, then, upon His loneliness, O my God, and behold Him fallen into the hands of them that have disbelieved in Thy signs, have turned their backs upon Thee, and have forgotten the wonders of Thy mercy.

He it is, O my God, about Whom Thou hast said: 'But for Thee the Scriptures would have remained unrevealed, and the Prophets unsent.' And no sooner had He, by Thy behest, been manifested and spoken forth Thy praise, than the wicked doers among Thy creatures compassed Him round, with the swords of hate drawn against Him, O Thou the Lord of all names! Thou well knowest what befell Him at the hands of such as have rent asunder the veil of Thy grandeur, and cast behind their backs Thy

Covenant and Thy Testament, O Thou Who art the Maker of the heavens! He is the One for Whose sake Thou (the Báb) hast yielded Thy life, and hast consented to be touched by the manifold ills of the world that He may manifest Himself, and summoned all mankind in His name. As soon as He came down, however, from the heaven of majesty and power, Thy servants stretched out against Him the hands of cruelty and sedition, and caused Him to be afflicted with such troubles that the scrolls of the world are insufficient to contain a full recital of them.

Thou seest, therefore, O Thou Beloved of the world, Him Who is dear to Thee in the clutches of such as have denied Thee, and beholdest Thy heart's desire under the swords of the ungodly. Methinks He, from His most exalted station, saith unto me: 'Would that my soul, O Prisoner, could be a ransom for Thy captivity, and my being, O wronged One, be sacrificed for the adversities Thou didst suffer! Thou art He through Whose captivity the standards of Thine almighty power were hoisted, and the day-star

of Thy revelation shone forth above the horizon of tribulation, in such wise that all created things bowed down before the greatness of Thy majesty.

‘The more they strove to hinder Thee from remembering Thy God and from extolling His virtues, the more passionately didst Thou glorify Him and the more loudly didst Thou call upon Him. And every time the veils of the perverse came in between Thee and Thy servants, Thou didst shed the splendours of the light of Thy countenance out of the heaven of Thy grace. Thou art, in very truth, the Self-Subsisting as testified by the tongue of God, the All-Glorious, the one alone Beloved; and Thou art the Desire of the world as attested by what hath flowed down from the Pen of Him Who hath announced unto Thy servants Thy hidden Name, and adorned the entire creation with the ornament of Thy love, the Most Precious, the Most Exalted.

‘The eyes of the world were gladdened at the sight of Thy luminous countenance, and yet the peoples have united to put out Thy light, O Thou in Whose hands are the reins of the worlds! All the atoms of the earth have celebrated Thy praise, and all created things have been set ablaze with the drops sprinkled by the ocean of Thy love, and yet the people still seek to quench Thy fire. Nay—and to this Thine own Self beareth me witness—they are all weakness, and Thou, verily, art the All-Powerful; and they are but paupers and Thou, in truth, art the All-Possessing; and they are impotent and Thou art, truly, the Almighty. Naught can ever frustrate Thy purpose, neither can the dissensions of the world harm Thee. Through the breaths of Thine utterance the heaven of understanding hath been adorned, and by the effusions of Thy pen every mouldering bone hath been quickened. Grieve not at what hath befallen Thee, neither do Thou lay hold on them for the things they have committed in Thy days. Do Thou be forbearing toward them. Thou art the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Compassionate.’

Thou hast, verily, O my God, suffered Him Who is the Manifestation of Thine own Self to be afflicted with all manner of adversity in order that Thy servants may ascend unto the pinnacle of Thy gracious favour, and attain unto that

which Thou hast, through Thy providence and tender mercies, ordained for them in the Tablets of Thine irrevocable decree. The glory of Thy might beareth me witness! Were they, every moment of their lives, to offer up themselves as a sacrifice in Thy path, they would still have done but little in comparison with the manifold bestowals vouchsafed unto them by Thee.

Glorified art Thou, O Lord my God! I yield Thee thanks for that Thou hast made me the target of divers tribulations and the mark of manifold trials, in order that Thy servants may be endued with new life and all Thy creatures may be quickened.

I swear by Thy glory, O Thou the Best Beloved of the worlds and the Desire of all such as have recognized Thee! The one reason I wish to live is that I may reveal Thy Cause, and I seek the continuance of life only that I may be touched by adversity in Thy path.

I implore Thee, O Thou by Whose summons the hearts of all them who were nigh unto Thee have soared into the atmosphere of Thy presence, to send down upon Thy loved ones what will enable them to dispense with all else except Thee. Endue them, then, with such constancy that they will arise to proclaim Thy Cause, and will call on Thy name, before all that are in Thy heaven and on Thy earth, in such wise that the Pharaohic cruelties inflicted by the oppressors among Thy servants will not succeed in keeping them back from Thee.

Thou art, verily, the God of power, the God of glory, the God of strength and wisdom.

Glorified be Thy name, O Lord my God! Thou beholdest my dwelling-place, and the prison into which I am cast, and the woes I suffer. By Thy might! No pen can recount them, nor can any tongue describe or number them. I know not, O my God, for what purpose Thou hast abandoned me to Thine adversaries. Thy glory beareth me witness! I sorrow not for the vexations I endure for love of Thee, nor feel perturbed by the calamities that overtake me in Thy path. My grief is rather because Thou delayest to fulfil what Thou hast determined in the Tablets of Thy Revelation, and ordained in the books of Thy decree and judgement.

My blood, at all times, addresseth me saying: 'O Thou Who art the Image of the Most Merciful! How long will it be ere Thou riddest me of the captivity of this world, and deliverest me from the bondage of this life? Didst Thou not promise me that Thou shalt dye the earth with me, and sprinkle me on the faces of the inmates of Thy Paradise?' To this I make reply: 'Be thou patient and quiet thyself. The things thou desirest can last but an hour. As to me, however, I quaff continually in the path of God the cup of His decree, and wish not that the ruling of His will should cease to operate, or that the woes I suffer for the sake of my Lord, the Most Exalted, the All-Glorious, should be ended. Seek thou my wish and forsake thine own. Thy bondage is not for my protection, but to enable me to sustain successive tribulations, and to prepare me for the trials that must needs repeatedly assail me. Perish that lover who discerneth between the pleasant and the poisonous in his love for his beloved! Be thou satisfied with what God hath destined for thee. He, verily, ruleth over thee as He willet and pleaseth. No God is there but Him, the Inaccessible, the Most High.'

Glorified art Thou, O my Lord! Thou beholdest my tribulations and all that hath befallen me at the hands of such of Thy servants as keep company with me, who have disbelieved in Thy most resplendent signs, and turned back from Thy most effulgent Beauty. I swear by Thy glory! Such are the troubles that vex me, that no pen in the entire creation can either reckon or describe them.

I implore Thee, O Thou Who art the King of names and the Creator of earth and heaven, so to assist me by Thy strengthening grace that nothing whatsoever will have the power to hinder me from remembering Thee, or celebrating Thy praise, or to keep me back from observing what Thou hast prescribed unto me in Thy Tablets, that I may so arise to serve Thee that with bared head I will hasten forth from my habitation, cry out in Thy name amidst Thy creatures, and proclaim Thy virtues among Thy servants. Having accomplished what Thou hadst decreed, and delivered the thing Thou hadst written down, the wicked doers among

Thy people would, then, compass me about and would do with me in Thy path as would please them.

In the love I bear to Thee, O my Lord, my heart longeth for Thee with a longing such as no heart hath known. Here am I with my body between Thy hands, and my spirit before Thy face. Do with them as it may please Thee, for the exaltation of Thy word, and the revelation of what hath been enshrined within the treasuries of Thy knowledge.

Potent art Thou to do what Thou willest, and able to ordain what Thou pleasest.

All praise be to Thee, O Lord, my God! How mysterious the Fire which Thou hast enkindled within my heart! My very limbs testify to the intensity of its heat, and evince the consuming power of its flame. Should my bodily tongue ever attempt to describe Thee as the One Whose strength hath ever excelled the strength of the most mighty amongst men, the tongue of my heart would address me, saying: 'These are but words which can only be adequate to such things as are of the same likeness and nature as themselves. But He, of a truth, is infinitely exalted above the mention of all His creatures.'

The power of Thy might beareth me witness, O my Well-Beloved! Every limb of my body, methinks, is endowed with a tongue that glorifieth Thee and magnifieth Thy name. Armed with the power of Thy love, the hatred which moveth them that are against Thee can never alarm me; and with Thy praise on my lips, the rulings of Thy decree can in no wise fill me with sorrow. Fortify, therefore, Thy love within my breast, and suffer me to face the assaults which all the peoples of the earth may launch against me. I swear by Thee! Every hair of my head proclaimeth: 'But for the adversities that befall me in Thy path, how could I ever taste the divine sweetness of Thy tenderness and love?'

Send down, therefore, O my Lord, upon me and upon them that love me, that which will cause us to become steadfast in Thy Faith. Enable them, then, to become the Hands of Thy Cause amongst Thy servants, that they may scatter abroad Thy signs, and show forth

Thy sovereignty. There is no God but Thee, Who art powerful to do whatsoever Thou wilt. Thou art, in truth, the All-Glorious, the All-Praised.

Thou dost witness, O my God, how He Who is Thy splendour calleth Thee to remembrance, notwithstanding the manifold troubles that have touched Him, troubles which none except Thee can number. Thou beholdest how, in His prison-house, He recounteth Thy wondrous praises with which Thou didst inspire Him. Such is His fervour that His enemies are powerless to deter him from mentioning Thee, O Thou Who art the Possessor of all names!

Praised be Thou that Thou hast so strengthened Him with Thy strength, and endowed Him by Thine almighty power with such potency, that aught save Thee is in His estimation but a handful of dust. The lights of unfading splendour have so enveloped Him that all else but Thee is in His eyes but a shadow.

And when Thine irresistible summons reached me, I arose, fortified by Thy strength, and called all that are in Thy heaven and all that are on Thy earth to turn in the direction of Thy favours and the horizon of Thy bounties. Some caviled at me, and determined to hurt me and slay me. Others drank to the full of the wine of Thy grace, and hastened towards the habitation of Thy throne.

I beseech Thee, O Thou Who art the Creator of earth and heaven and the Source of all things, to attract Thy servants through the fragrances of the Robe of Thine Inspiration and Thy Revelation, and to help them attain the Tabernacle of Thy behest and power. From eternity Thou wert by Thy transcendent might supreme over all things, and Thou wilt be exalted unto eternity in Thy Godhead and surpassing sovereignty.

Let Thy mercy, then, be upon Thy servants and Thy creatures. Thou art, in truth, the Almighty, the Inaccessible, the All-Glorious, the Unconditioned.

The one true God well knoweth, and all the company of His trusted ones testify, that this wronged One hath, at all times, been faced with dire peril. But for the tribulations

that have touched Me in the path of God, life would have held no sweetness for Me, and My existence would have profited Me nothing. For them who are endued with discernment, and whose eyes are fixed upon the Sublime Vision, it is no secret that I have been, most of the days of My life, even as a slave, sitting under a sword hanging on a thread, knowing not whether it would fall soon or late upon him. And yet, notwithstanding all this We render thanks unto God, the Lord of the worlds. Mine inner tongue reciteth, in the day-time and in the night-season, this prayer: 'Glory to Thee, O my God! But for the tribulations which are sustained in Thy path, how could Thy true lovers be recognized; and were it not for the trials which are borne for love of Thee, how could the station of such as yearn for Thee be revealed? Thy might beareth Me witness! The companions of all who adore Thee are the tears they shed, and the comforters of such as seek Thee are the groans they utter, and the food of them who haste to meet Thee is the fragments of their broken hearts. How sweet to my taste is the bitterness of death suffered in Thy path, and how precious in my estimation are the shafts of Thine enemies when encountered for the sake of the exaltation of Thy Word! Let me quaff in Thy Cause, O my God and my Master, whatsoever Thou didst desire, and send down upon me in Thy love all Thou didst ordain. By Thy glory! I wish only what Thou wishest, and cherish what Thou cherishest. In Thee have I, at all times, placed My whole trust and confidence. Thou art verily the All-Possessing, the Most High. Raise up, I implore Thee, O my God, as helpers to this Revelation such as shall be counted worthy of Thy Name and of Thy sovereignty, that they may remember Thee among Thy creatures, and hoist the ensigns of Thy victory in Thy land, and adorn them with Thy virtues and Thy commandments. No God is there but Thee, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.'

Lauded be Thy name, O Lord my God! Darkness hath fallen upon every land, and the forces of mischief have encompassed all the nations. Through them, however, I perceive

the splendours of Thy wisdom, and discern the brightness of the light of Thy providence.

They that are shut out as by a veil from Thee have imagined that they have the power to put out Thy light, and to quench Thy fire, and to still the winds of Thy grace. Nay, and to this Thy might beareth me witness! Had not every tribulation been made the bearer of Thy wisdom, and every ordeal the vehicle of Thy providence, no one would have dared oppose us, though the powers of earth and heaven were to be leagued against us. Were I to unravel the wondrous mysteries of Thy wisdom which are laid bare before me, the reins of Thine enemies would be cleft asunder.

Glorified be Thou, then, O my God! I beseech Thee by Thy Most Great Name to assemble them that love Thee around the Law that streameth from the good-pleasure of Thy will, and to send down upon them what will assure their hearts.

Potent art Thou to do what pleaseth Thee. Thou art, verily, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.

Glorified art Thou, O my God! Thou knowest that in my love for Thee I have not sought any rest, that in proclaiming Thy Cause I have denied myself every manner of tranquillity, and that in the observance of whatever Thou hast prescribed in Thy Tablets I have not delayed to do Thy bidding. I have, for this reason, suffered what no man among all the inhabitants of Thy realm hath suffered.

Thy glory beareth me witness! Nothing whatsoever can withhold me from remembering Thee, though all the tribulations of the earth were to assault me from every direction. All the limbs and members of my body proclaim their readiness to be torn asunder in Thy path and for the sake of Thy pleasure, and they yearn to be scattered in the dust before Thee. O would that they who serve Thee could taste what I have tasted of the sweetness of Thy love!

I implore Thee to supply whosoever hath sought Thee with the living waters of Thy bounty, that they may rid him of all attachment to any one but Thee. Thou art, verily, the Omniscient, the All-Glorious, the Almighty.

Praise be unto Thee, O my God! Thou seest how He Who is Thy Light hath been shut up in the fortress-town of 'Akká, and been sore oppressed by reason of what the hands of the wicked doers have wrought, whose corrupt desires have kept them back from turning towards Thee, O Thou Who art the King of all names!

I swear by Thy glory! Tribulations, however woeful, can never hinder me from remembering Thee or from celebrating Thy praise. Every vexation borne for love of Thee is a token of Thy mercy unto Thy creatures, and every ordeal suffered in Thy path is but a gift from Thee bestowed on Thy chosen ones. I testify that my countenance, which shineth above the Day-Spring of eternity, hath been irradiated by adversity, and my body hath been adorned by it before all who are in heaven and all who are on earth.

I pray Thee, by Thy Most Great Name, to aid all them that have believed on Thee and on Thy signs to be steadfast in Thy love and to set themselves towards the Dawning-Place of the Day-Star of Thy loving-kindness. Inspire them, then, O my God, with what will unloose their tongue to praise Thee, and will draw them nigh unto Thee in the life that now is and the life that is to come.

Thou truly art the Almighty, the All-Glorious, the Beneficent.

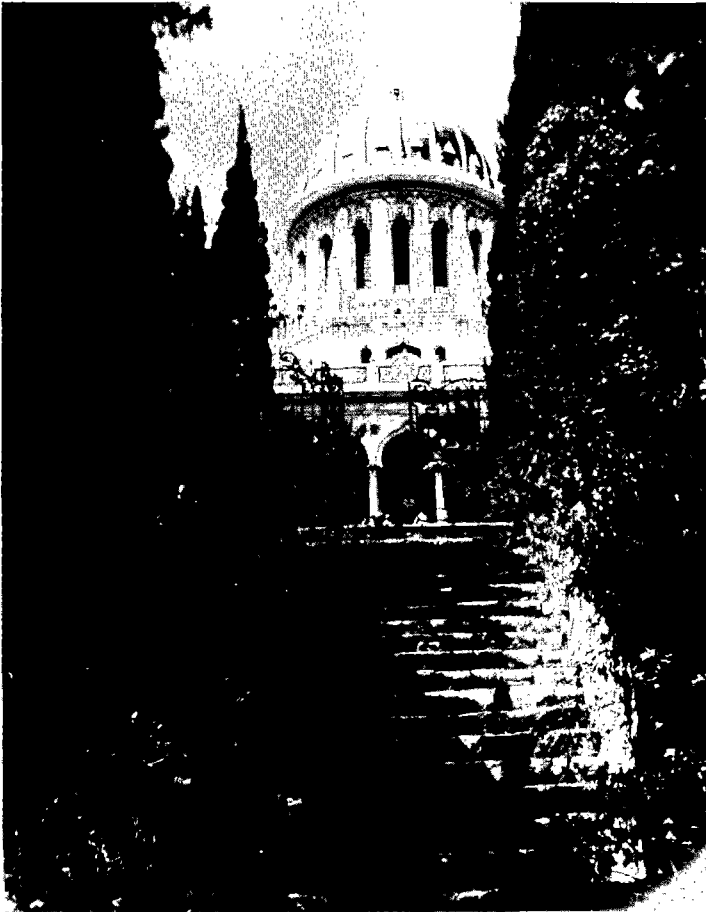
Magnified be Thy name, O Lord my God! I know not what the water is with which Thou hast created me, or what the fire Thou hast kindled within me, or the clay wherewith Thou hast kneaded me. The restlessness of every sea hath been stilled, but not the restlessness of this Ocean which moveth at the bidding of the winds of Thy will. The flame of every fire hath been extinguished except the Flame which the hands of Thine omnipotence have kindled, and whose radiance Thou hast, by the power of Thy name, shed abroad before all that are in Thy heaven and all that are on Thy earth. As the tribulations deepen, it waxeth hotter and hotter.

Behold, then, O my God, how Thy Light hath been compassed with the onrushing winds of Thy decree, how the tempests that blow and

beat upon it from every side have added to its brightness and increased its splendour. For all this let Thee be praised.

I implore Thee, by Thy Most Great Name, and Thy most ancient sovereignty, to look upon Thy loved ones whose hearts have been sorely

shaken by reason of the troubles that have touched Him Who is the Manifestation of Thine own Self. Powerful art Thou to do what pleaseth Thee. Thou art, verily, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.



The Shrine of the Báb viewed from the ninth terrace above Carmel Avenue; 1976.

2. THE BÁB

Excerpts from Selections from the Writings of the Báb

O peoples of the earth! Verily the resplendent Light of God hath appeared in your midst, invested with this unerring Book, that ye may be guided aright to the ways of peace and, by the leave of God, step out of the darkness into the light and onto this far-extended Path of Truth . . .

God hath out of sheer nothingness and through the potency of His command, created the heavens and the earth and whatever lieth between them. He is single and peerless in His eternal unity with none to join partner with His holy Essence, nor is there any soul, except His Own Self, who can befittingly comprehend Him . . .

O peoples of the earth! Verily His Remembrance is come to you from God after an interval during which there were no Messengers, that He may purge and purify you from uncleanness in anticipation of the Day of the One true God; therefore seek ye wholeheartedly divine blessings from Him, inasmuch as We have, in truth, chosen Him to be the Witness and the Source of wisdom unto all that dwell on earth . . .

O Qurratu'l-'Ayn!¹ Proclaim that which hath been sent down unto Thee as a token of the grace of the merciful Lord, for if Thou do it not, Our secret will never be made known to the people, while the purpose of God in creating man is but for him to know Him. Indeed God hath knowledge of all things and is self-sufficient above the need of all mankind.

I am the Mystic Fane which the Hand of Omnipotence hath reared. I am the Lamp which the Finger of God hath lit within its niche and caused to shine with deathless splendour. I am the Flame of that supernal Light that glowed upon Sinai in the gladsome Spot, and lay concealed in the midst of the Burning Bush.

Do not say, 'How can He speak of God while in truth His age is no more than twenty-five?' Give ye ear unto Me. I swear by the Lord of the heavens and of the earth: I am verily a servant of God. I have been made the Bearer of irrefutable proofs from the presence of Him Who is the long-expected Remnant of God. Here is My Book before your eyes, as indeed inscribed in the presence of God in the Mother Book. God hath indeed made Me blessed, wheresoever I may be, and hath enjoined upon Me to observe prayer and fortitude so long as I shall live on earth amongst you.

God hath, at all times and under all conditions, been wholly independent of His creatures. He hath cherished and will ever cherish the desire that all men may attain His gardens of Paradise with utmost love, that no one should sadden another, not even for a moment, and that all should dwell within His cradle of protection and security until the Day of Resurrection which marketh the day-spring of the Revelation of Him Whom God will make manifest.

The Lord of the universe hath never raised up a prophet nor hath He sent down a Book unless He hath established His covenant with all men, calling for their acceptance of the next Revelation and of the next Book; inasmuch as the outpourings of His bounty are ceaseless and without limit.

Say, verily any one follower of this Faith can, by the leave of God, prevail over all who dwell in heaven and earth and in whatever lieth between them; for indeed this is, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the one true Faith. Therefore fear ye not, neither be ye grieved.

Say, God hath, according to that which is revealed in the Book, taken upon Himself the task of ensuring the ascendancy of any one of the followers of the Truth, over and above

¹ In this passage the name Qurratu'l-'Ayn (Solace of the Eyes) refers to the Báb Himself.

one hundred other souls, and the supremacy of one hundred believers over one thousand non-believers and the domination of one thousand of the faithful over all the peoples and kindreds of the earth; inasmuch as God calleth into being whatsoever He willeth by virtue of His behest. Verily He is potent over all things.

Say, the power of God is in the hearts of those who believe in the unity of God and bear witness that no God is there but Him, while the hearts of them that associate partners with God are impotent, devoid of life on this earth, for assuredly they are dead.

The Day is approaching when God will render the hosts of Truth victorious, and He will purge the whole earth in such wise that within the compass of His knowledge not a single soul shall remain unless he truly believeth in God, worshippeth none other God but Him, boweth down by day and by night in His adoration, and is reckoned among such as are well assured.

Say, God indeed is the Sovereign Truth, Who is manifestly Supreme over His servants; He is the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.

There is no paradise, in the estimation of the believers in the Divine Unity, more exalted than to obey God's commandments, and there is no fire in the eyes of those who have known God and His signs, fiercer than to transgress His laws and to oppress another soul, even to the extent of a mustard seed. On the Day of Resurrection God will, in truth, judge all men, and we all verily plead for His grace.

There is no doubt that the Almighty hath sent down these verses unto Him [the Báb], even as He sent down unto the Apostle of God. Indeed no less than a hundred thousand verses similar to these have already been disseminated among the people, not to mention His Epistles, His Prayers or His learned and philosophical treatises. He revealeth no less than a thousand verses within the space of five hours. He reciteth verses at a speed consonant with the capacity of His amanuensis to

set them down. Thus, it may well be considered that if from the inception of this Revelation until now He had been left unhindered, how vast then would have been the volume of writings disseminated from His pen.

If ye contend that these verses cannot, of themselves, be regarded as a proof, scan the pages of the Qur'án. If God hath established therein any evidence other than the revealed verses to demonstrate the validity of the prophethood of His Apostle—may the blessings of God rest upon Him—ye may then have your scruples about Him . . .

Concerning the sufficiency of the Book as a proof, God hath revealed: 'Is it not enough for them that We have sent down unto Thee the Book to be recited to them? In this verily is a mercy and a warning to those who believe.' When God hath testified that the Book is a sufficient testimony, as is affirmed in the text, how can one dispute this truth by saying that the Book in itself is not a conclusive proof? . . .

. . . O concourse of light! By the righteousness of God, We speak not according to selfish desire, nor hath a single letter of this Book been revealed save by the leave of God, the Sovereign Truth. Fear ye God and entertain no doubts regarding His Cause, for verily, the Mystery of this Gate is shrouded in the mystic utterances of His Writ and hath been written beyond the impenetrable veil of concealment by the hand of God, the Lord of the visible and the invisible.

Indeed God hath created everywhere around this Gate oceans of divine elixir, tinged crimson with the essence of existence and vitalized through the animating power of the desired fruit; and for them God hath provided Arks of ruby, tender, crimson-coloured, wherein none shall sail but the people of Bahá, by the leave of God, the Most Exalted; and verily He is the All-Glorious, the All-Wise.

. . . O peoples of the world! Whatsoever ye have offered up in the way of the One True God, ye shall indeed find preserved by

God, the Preserver, intact at God's Holy Gate. O peoples of the earth! Bear ye allegiance unto this resplendent light wherewith God hath graciously invested Me through the power of infallible Truth, and walk not in the footsteps of the Evil One, inasmuch as he prompteth you to disbelieve in God, your Lord, and verily God will not forgive disbelief in Himself, though He will forgive other sins to whomsoever He pleaseth. Indeed His knowledge embraceth all things . . .

How vast the number of people who are well versed in every science, yet it is their adherence to the holy Word of God which will determine their faith, inasmuch as the fruit of every science is none other than the knowledge of divine precepts and submission unto His good-pleasure.

Know thou that in the Bayán purification is regarded as the most acceptable means for attaining nearness unto God and as the most meritorious of all deeds. Thus purge thou thine ear that thou mayest hear no mention besides God, and purge thine eye that it behold naught except God, and thy conscience that it perceive naught other than God, and thy tongue that it proclaim nothing but God, and thy hand to write naught but the words of God, and thy knowledge that it comprehend naught except God, and thy heart that it entertain no wish save God, and in like manner purge all thine acts and thy pursuits that thou mayest be nurtured in the paradise of pure love, and perchance mayest attain the presence of Him Whom God shall make manifest, adorned with a purity which He highly cherisheth, and be sanctified from whosoever hath turned away from Him and doth not support Him. Thus shalt thou manifest a purity that shall profit thee.

Know thou that every ear which hearkeneth unto His Words with true faith shall be immune from the fire. Thus the believer, through his recognition of Him will appreciate the transcendent character of His heavenly Words, will whole-heartedly choose Him over others, and will refuse to incline his affections towards those who disbelieve in Him. Whatever one

gaineth in the life to come is but the fruit of this faith. Indeed any man whose eye gazeth upon His Words with true faith well deserveth Paradise; and one whose conscience beareth witness unto His Words with true faith shall abide in Paradise and attain the presence of God; and one whose tongue giveth utterance to His Words with true faith shall have his abode in Paradise, wherein he will be seized with ecstasy in praise and glorification of God, the Ever-Abiding, Whose revelations of glory never end and the reviving breaths of Whose holiness never fail. Every hand which setteth down His Words with true faith shall be filled by God, both in this world and in the next, with things that are highly prized; and every breast which committeth His Words to memory, God shall cause, if it were that of a believer, to be filled with His love; and every heart which cherisheth the love of His Words and manifesteth in itself the signs of true faith when His Name is mentioned, and exemplifieth the words, 'their hearts are thrilled with awe at the mention of God', that heart will become the object of the glances of divine favour and on the Day of Resurrection will be highly praised by God.

Say, He Whom God shall make manifest will surely redeem the rights of those who truly believe in God and in His signs, for they are the ones who merit reward from His presence. Say, it is far from the glory of Him Whom God shall make manifest that anyone should in this wise make mention of His name, if ye ponder the Cause of God in your hearts. Say, He shall vindicate the Cause through the potency of His command and shall bring to naught all perversion of truth by virtue of His behest. Verily God is potent over all things.

If ye wish to distinguish truth from error, consider those who believe in Him Whom God shall make manifest and those who disbelieve Him at the time of His appearance. The former represent the essence of truth, as attested in the Book of God, while the latter the essence of error, as attested in that same Book. Fear ye God that ye may not identify yourselves with aught but the truth, inasmuch as ye have

been exalted in the Bayán for being recognized as the bearers of the name of Him Who is the eternal Truth.

Say, were He Whom God shall make manifest to pronounce a pious and truthful follower of the Bayán as false, it is incumbent upon you to submit to His decree, as this hath been affirmed by God in the Bayán; verily God is able to convert light into fire whenever He pleaseth; surely He is potent over all things. And were He to declare a person whom ye regard alien to the truth as being akin thereto, err not by questioning His decision in your fancies, for He Who is the Sovereign Truth createth things through the power of His behest. Verily God transmuteth fire into light as He willeth, and indeed potent is He over all things. Consider ye how the truth shone forth as truth in the First Day and how error became manifest as error; so likewise shall ye distinguish them from each other on the Day of Resurrection.

Say, by reason of your remembering Him Whom God shall make manifest and by extolling His name, God will cause your hearts to be dilated with joy, and do ye not wish your hearts to be in such a blissful state? Indeed the hearts of them that truly believe in Him Whom God shall make manifest are vaster than the expanse of heaven and earth and whatever is between them. God hath left no hindrance in their hearts, were it but the size of a mustard seed. He will cheer their hearts, their spirits, their souls and their bodies and their days of prosperity or adversity, through the exaltation of the name of Him Who is the supreme Testimony of God and the promotion of the Word of Him Who is the Day-Spring of the glory of their Creator.

Verily, these are souls who take delight in the remembrance of God, Who dilates their hearts through the effulgence of the light of knowledge and wisdom. They seek naught but God and are oft engaged in giving praise unto Him. They desire naught except whatever He desireth and stand ready to do His bidding. Their hearts are mirrors reflecting whatsoever He Whom God shall make manifest willeth. Thus God will cheer the hearts of those who

truly believe in Him and in His signs and who are well assured of the life to come. Say, the life to come is none other than the days associated with the coming of Him Whom God will make manifest.

Reduce not the ordinances of God to fanciful imaginations of your own; rather observe all the things which God hath created at His behest with the eye of the spirit, even as ye see things with the eyes of your bodies.

How great the number of people who deck themselves with robes of silk all their lives, while clad in the garb of fire, inasmuch as they have divested themselves of the raiment of divine guidance and righteousness; and how numerous are those who wear clothes made of cotton or coarse wool throughout their lives, and yet by reason of their being endowed with the vesture of divine guidance and righteousness, are truly attired with the raiment of Paradise and take delight in the good-pleasure of God. Indeed it would be better in the sight of God were ye to combine the two, adorning yourselves with the raiment of divine guidance and righteousness and wearing exquisite silk, if ye can afford to do so. If not, at least act ye not unrighteously, but rather observe piety and virtue . . .

He—glorified be His mention—resembleth the sun. Were unnumbered mirrors to be placed before it, each would, according to its capacity, reflect the splendour of that sun, and were none to be placed before it, it would still continue to rise and set, and the mirrors alone would be veiled from its light. I, verily, have not fallen short of My duty to admonish that people, and to devise means whereby they may turn towards God, their Lord, and believe in God, their Creator. If, on the day of His Revelation, all that are on earth bear Him allegiance, Mine inmost being will rejoice, inasmuch as all will have attained the summit of their existence, and will have been brought face to face with their Beloved, and will have recognized, to the fullest extent attainable in the world of being, the splendour of Him Who

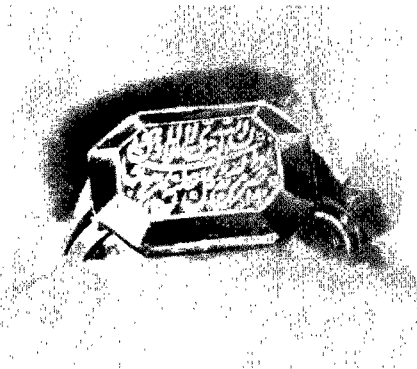
is the Desire of their hearts. If not, My soul will indeed be saddened. I truly have nurtured all things for this purpose. How, then, can anyone be veiled from Him? For this have I called upon God, and will continue to call upon Him. He, verily, is nigh, ready to answer.

O Thou the Supreme Word of God! Fear not, nor be Thou grieved, for indeed unto such as have responded to Thy Call, whether men or women, We have assured forgiveness of sins, as known in the presence of the Best Beloved and in conformity with what Thou desirest. Verily His knowledge embraceth all things. I adjure Thee by My life, set Thy face towards Me and be not apprehensive. Verily Thou art the Exalted One among the Celestial Concurrence, and Thy hidden Mystery hath, of a truth, been recorded upon the Tablet of creation in the midst of the Burning Bush. Ere long God will bestow upon Thee rulership over all men, inasmuch as His rule transcendeth the whole of creation.

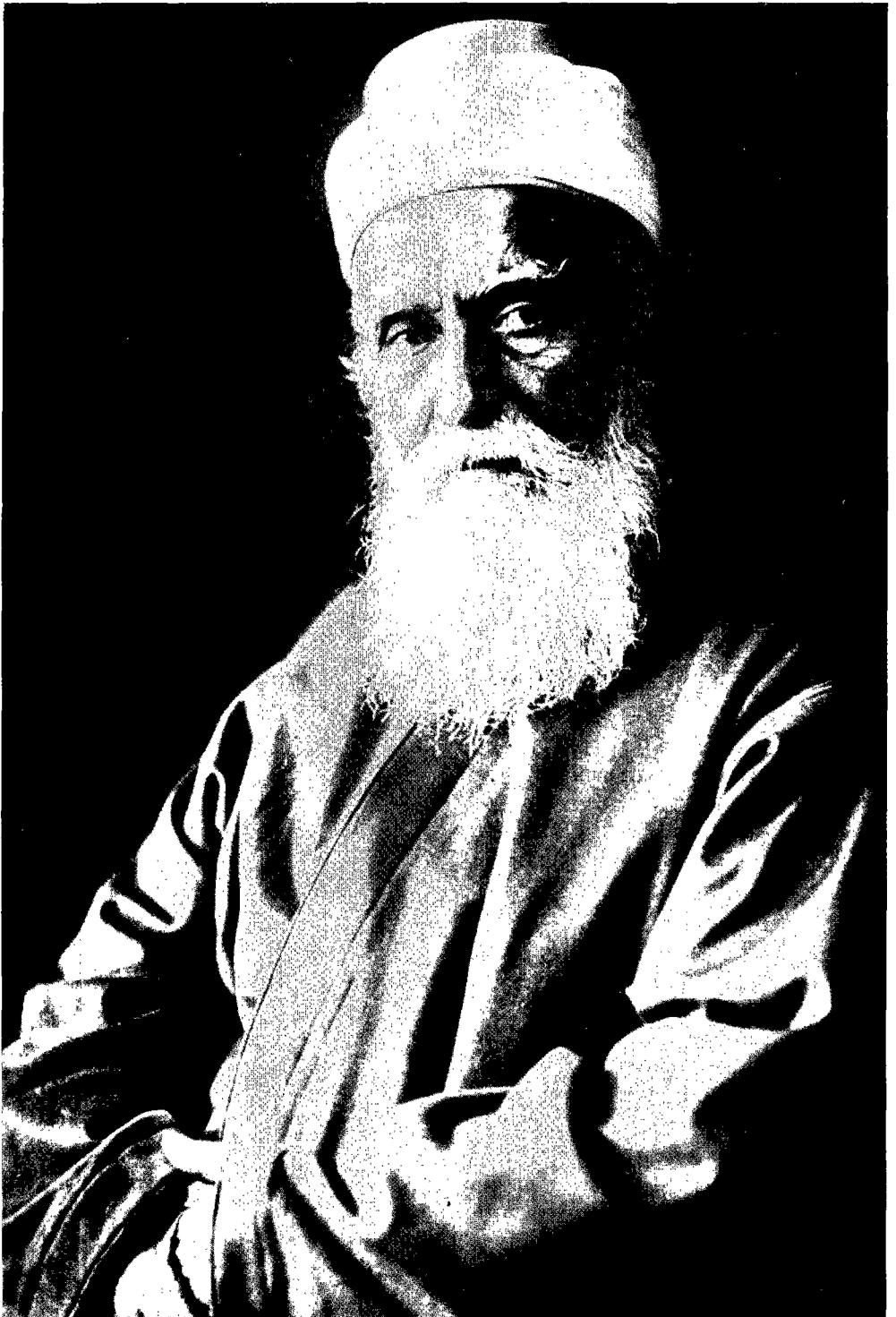
Lauded be Thy Name, O God. Thou art in truth our Lord; Thou art aware of whatso-

ever is in the heavens and on the earth. Send down then upon us a token of Thy mercy. Verily Thou art unsurpassed among them that show mercy. All praise be unto Thee, O Lord. Ordain for us from Thy presence that which will comfort the hearts of the sincere among Thy servants. Glorified art Thou, O God, Thou art the Creator of the heavens and the earth and that which lieth between them. Thou art the sovereign Lord, the Most Holy, the Almighty, the All-Wise. Magnified be Thy Name, O God, send down upon them who have believed in God and in His signs a mighty succour from Thy presence such as to enable them to prevail over the generality of mankind.

Praise be unto Thee, O Lord. Forgive us our sins, have mercy upon us and enable us to return unto Thee. Suffer us not to rely on aught else besides Thee, and vouchsafe unto us, through Thy bounty, that which Thou lovest and desirest and well beseemeth Thee. Exalt the station of them that have truly believed and forgive them with Thy gracious forgiveness. Verily Thou art the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.



A signet ring of the Báb bearing the inscription: 'Praise be unto Him; there is no God but Him. This is a Path revealed by His behest, and all shall pass thereon.'



'Abdu'l-Bahá

(Studio · Boissonnas and Taponier)

Photograph taken in Paris, 1911.

3. 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

Excerpts from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

A. On Universal Peace

TODAY there is no greater glory for man than that of service in the cause of the 'Most Great Peace.' Peace is light whereas war is darkness. Peace is life; war is death. Peace is guidance; war is error. Peace is the foundation of God; war is satanic institution. Peace is the illumination of the world of humanity; war is the destroyer of human foundations. When we consider outcomes in the world of existence we find that peace and fellowship are factors of upbuilding and betterment whereas war and strife are the causes of destruction and disintegration. All created things are expressions of the affinity and cohesion of elementary substances, and non-existence is the absence of their attraction and agreement. Various elements unite harmoniously in composition but when these elements become discordant, repelling each other, decomposition and non-existence result. Everything partakes of this nature and is subject to this principle, for the creative foundation in all its degrees and kingdoms is an expression or outcome of love. Consider the restlessness and agitation of the human world today because of war. Peace is health and construction; war is disease and dissolution. When the banner of truth is raised, peace becomes the cause of the welfare and advancement of the human world. In all cycles and ages war has been a factor of derangement and discomfort whereas peace and brotherhood have brought security and consideration of human interests. This distinction is especially pronounced in the present world conditions, for warfare in former centuries had not attained the degree of savagery and destructiveness which now characterizes it. If two nations were at war in olden times, ten or twenty thousand would be sacrificed but in this century the destruction of one hundred thousand lives in a day is quite possible. So perfected has the

science of killing become and so efficient the means and instruments of its accomplishment that a whole nation can be obliterated in a short time. Therefore comparison with the methods and results of ancient warfare is out of the question.

According to an intrinsic law, all phenomena of being attain to a summit and degree of consummation, after which a new order and condition is established. As the instruments and science of war have reached the degree of thoroughness and proficiency, it is hoped that the transformation of the human world is at hand and that in the coming centuries all the energies and inventions of man will be utilized in promoting the interests of peace and brotherhood. Therefore may this esteemed and worthy society for the establishment of international peace be confirmed in its sincere intentions and empowered by God. Then will it hasten the time when the banner of universal agreement will be raised and international welfare will be proclaimed and consummated so that the darkness which now encompasses the world shall pass away.

Sixty¹ years ago His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh was in Írán. Seventy years ago His Holiness the Báb appeared there. These two blessed souls devoted Their lives to the foundation of international peace and love among mankind. They strove with heart and soul to establish the teachings by which divergent people might be brought together and no strife, rancour or hatred prevail. His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh addressing all humanity, said that Adam the parent of mankind may be likened to the tree of nativity upon which you are the leaves and blossoms. Inasmuch as your origin was one, you must now be united and agreed; you must

¹ Words spoken by 'Abdu'l-Bahá on 13 May 1912.

consort with each other in joy and fragrance. He pronounced prejudice, whether religious, racial, patriotic, political, the destroyer of the body-politic. He said that man must recognize the oneness of humanity, for all in origin belong to the same household and all are servants of the same God. Therefore mankind must continue in the state of fellowship and love, emulating the institutions of God and turning away from satanic promptings, for the divine bestowals bring forth unity and agreement whereas satanic leadings induce hatred and war. . . .

The world of humanity has never enjoyed the blessing of Universal Peace. Year by year the implements of warfare have been increased and perfected. Consider the wars of past centuries; only ten, fifteen or twenty thousand at the most were killed but now it is possible to kill one hundred thousand in a single day. In ancient times warfare was carried on with the sword; today it is the smokeless gun. Formerly battleships were sailing vessels; today they are dreadnoughts. Consider the increase and improvement in the weapons of war. God has created us all human and all countries of the world are parts of the same globe. We are all his servants. He is kind and just to all. Why should we be unkind and unjust to each other? He provides for all. Why should we deprive one another? He protects and preserves all. Why should we kill our fellow-creatures? If this warfare and strife be for the sake of religion, it is evident that it violates the spirit and basis of all religion. All the divine Manifestations have proclaimed the oneness of God and the unity of mankind. They have taught that men should love and mutually help each other in order that they might progress. Now if this conception of religion be true, its essential principle is the oneness of humanity. The fundamental truth of the Manifestations is peace. This underlies all religion, all justice. The divine purpose is that men should live in unity, concord and agreement and should love one another. Consider the virtues of the human world and realize that the oneness of humanity is the primary foundation of them all. Read the Gospel and the other holy books. You will find their

fundamentals are one and the same. Therefore unity is the essential truth of religion and when so understood embraces all the virtues of the human world. Praise be to God! this knowledge has been spread, eyes have been opened and ears have become attentive. Therefore we must endeavour to promulgate and practise the religion of God which has been founded by all the prophets. And the religion of God is absolute love and unity.

When we review history from the beginning down to the present day we find that strife and warfare have prevailed throughout the human world. Wars, religious, racial or political, have arisen from human ignorance, misunderstanding and lack of education. We will first consider religious strife and conflict.

It is evident that the divine prophets have appeared in the world to establish love and agreement among mankind. They have been the shepherds and not the wolves. The shepherd comes forth to gather and lead his flock and not to disperse them by creating strife. Every divine shepherd has assembled a flock which had formerly been scattered. Among the shepherds was His Holiness Moses. At a time when the tribes of Israel were wandering and dispersed, He assembled, united and educated them to higher degrees of capacity and progress until they passed out of the wilderness of discipline into the holy land of possession. He transformed their degradation into glory, changed their poverty into wealth and replaced their vices by virtues until they rose to such a zenith that the splendour of the sovereignty of Solomon was made possible and the fame of their civilization extended to the East and the West. It is evident therefore that His Holiness was a divine shepherd for He gathered the tribes of Israel together and united them in the power and strength of a great nationhood.

When the Messianic star of Jesus Christ dawned, He declared He had come to gather together the lost tribes or scattered sheep of Moses. He not only shepherded the flock of Israel, but brought together people of Chaldea, Egypt, Syria, ancient Assyria and Phoenicia. These people were in a state of utmost hostility, thirsting for the blood of each other with the ferocity of animals; but His Holiness Jesus

Christ brought them together, cemented and united them in His cause and established such a bond of love among them that enmity and warfare were abandoned. It is evident therefore that the divine teachings are intended to create a bond of unity in the human world and establish the foundations of love and fellowship among mankind. Divine religion is not a cause for discord and disagreement. If religion becomes the source of antagonism and strife, the absence of religion is to be preferred. Religion is meant to be the quickening life of the body politic; if it be the cause of death to humanity, its non-existence would be a blessing and benefit to man. Therefore in this day the divine teachings must be sought, for they are the remedies for the present conditions of the world of humanity.

At a time when the Arabian tribes and nomadic peoples were widely separated, living in the deserts under lawless conditions, strife and bloodshed continual among them, no tribe free from the menace of attack and destruction by another,—at such a critical time Mohammed appeared. He gathered these wild tribes of the desert together, reconciled, united and caused them to agree so that enmity and warfare ceased. The Arabian nation immediately advanced until its dominion extended westward to Spain and Andalusia.

From these facts and premises we may conclude that the establishing of the divine religions is for peace, not for war and the shedding of blood. Inasmuch as all are founded upon one reality which is love and unity, the wars and dissensions which have characterized the history of religion have been due to imitations and superstitions which arise afterward. Religion is reality and reality is one. The fundamentals of the religion of God are therefore one in reality. There is neither difference nor change in the fundamentals. Variance is caused by blind imitations, prejudices and adherence to forms which appear later, and inasmuch as these differ, discord and strife result. If the religions of the world would forsake these causes of difficulty and seek the fundamentals, all would agree, and strife and dissension would pass away; for religion and reality are one and not multiple.

Other wars are caused by purely imaginary racial differences; for humanity is one kind, one race and progeny inhabiting the same globe. In the creative plan there is no racial distinction and separation such as Frenchman, Englishman, American, German, Italian or Spaniard; all belong to one household. These boundaries and distinctions are human and artificial, not natural and original. All mankind are the fruits of one tree, flowers of the same garden, waves of one sea. In the animal kingdom no such distinction and separation are observed. The sheep of the East and the sheep of the West would associate peacefully. The oriental flock would not look surprised as if saying, 'These are sheep of the Occident; they do not belong to our country.' All would gather in harmony and enjoy the same pasture without evidence of local or racial distinction. The birds of different countries mingle in friendliness. We find these virtues in the animal kingdom. Shall man deprive himself of these virtues? Man is endowed with superior reasoning power and the faculty of perception; he is the manifestation of divine bestowals. Shall racial ideas prevail and obscure the creative purpose of unity in his kingdom? Shall he say, 'I am a German,' 'I am a Frenchman,' or an 'Englishman' and declare war because of this imaginary and human distinction? God forbid!

If love and agreement are manifest in a single family, that family will advance, become illumined and spiritual; but if enmity and hatred exist within it destruction and dispersion are inevitable. This is likewise true of a city. If those who dwell within it manifest a spirit of accord and fellowship it will progress steadily and human conditions become brighter whereas through enmity and strife it will be degraded and its inhabitants scattered. In the same way the people of a nation develop and advance toward civilization and enlightenment through love and accord, and are disintegrated by war and strife. Finally, this is true of humanity itself in the aggregate. When love is realized and the ideal spiritual bonds unite the hearts of men, the whole human race will be uplifted, the world will continually grow more spiritual and radiant and the happiness and tranquillity

of mankind be immeasurably increased. Warfare and strife will be uprooted, disagreement and dissension pass away and universal peace unite the nations and peoples of the world. All mankind will dwell together as one family, blend as the waves of one sea, shine as stars of one firmament and appear as fruits of the same tree. This is the happiness and

felicity of humankind. This is the illumination of man, the glory eternal and life everlasting; this is the divine bestowal. I desire this station for you and I pray God that the people of America may achieve this great end in order that the virtue of this democracy may be ensured and their names be glorified eternally.

B. On Education

The primary, the most urgent requirement is the promotion of education. It is inconceivable that any nation should achieve prosperity and success unless this paramount, this fundamental concern is carried forward. The principal reason for the decline and fall of peoples is ignorance. Today the mass of the people are uninformed even as to ordinary affairs, how much less do they grasp the core of the important problems and complex needs of the time.

But education is of three kinds: material, human and spiritual. Material education is concerned with the progress and development of the body, through gaining its sustenance, its material comfort and ease. This education is common to animals and man.

Human education signifies civilization and progress: that is to say, government, administration, charitable works, trades, arts and handicrafts, sciences, great inventions and discoveries, and elaborate institutions, which are the activities essential to man as distinguished from the animal.

Divine education is that of the Kingdom of God: it consists in acquiring divine perfections, and this is true education; for in this state man becomes the focus of divine blessings, the manifestation of the words, 'Let us make man in our image and after our likeness.' This is the goal of the world of humanity.

Now we need an educator who will be at the same time a material, human, and spiritual educator, and whose authority will be effective in all conditions. So if any one should say,

'I possess perfect comprehension and intelligence, and I have no need of such an educator', he would be denying that which is clear and evident, as though a child should say, 'I have no need of education; I will act according to my reason and intelligence, and so I shall attain the perfections of existence'; or as though the blind should say, 'I am in no need of sight, because many other blind people exist without difficulty.'

Then it is plain and evident that man needs an educator, and this educator must be unquestionably and indubitably perfect in all respects, and distinguished above all men. Otherwise, if he should be like the rest of humanity, he cannot be their educator. More particularly because he must be at the same time their material and human as well as their spiritual educator; that is to say, he must teach men to organize and carry out physical matters, and to form a social order in order to establish co-operation and mutual aid in living, so that material affairs may be organized and regulated for any circumstances that may occur. In the same way he must establish human education; that is to say, he must educate intelligence and thought in such a way that they may attain complete development, so that knowledge and science may increase, and the reality of things, the mysteries of beings, and the properties of existence may be discovered; that day by day instructions, inventions, and institutions may be improved; and from things perceptible to the senses conclusions as to intellectual things may be deduced.

He must also impart spiritual education; so that intelligence and comprehension may penetrate the metaphysical world, and may receive benefit from the sanctifying breeze of

the Holy Spirit, and may enter into relationship with the Supreme Concurrence. He must so educate the human reality that it may become the centre of the divine appearance, to such a degree that the attributes and the names of God shall be resplendent in the mirror of the reality of man, and the holy verse, 'We will make man in Our image and likeness', shall be realized.

There are some who imagine that an innate sense of human dignity will prevent man from committing evil actions and ensure his spiritual and material perfection. That is, that an individual who is characterized with natural intelligence, high resolve, and a driving zeal, will, without any consideration for the severe punishments consequent on evil acts, or for the great rewards of righteousness, instinctively refrain from inflicting harm on his fellow men and will hunger and thirst to do good. And yet, if we ponder the lessons of history it will become evident that this very sense of honour and dignity is itself one of the bounties deriving from the instructions of the Prophets of God. We also observe in infants the signs of aggression and lawlessness, and that if a child is deprived of a teacher's instructions his undesirable qualities increase from one moment to the next. It is therefore clear that the emergence of this natural sense of human dignity and honour is the result of education. Secondly, even if we grant for the sake of the argument that instinctive intelligence and an innate moral quality would prevent wrongdoing, it is obvious that individuals so characterized are as rare as the philosopher's stone. An assumption of this sort cannot be validated by mere words, it must be supported by the facts. Let us see what power in creation impels the masses toward righteous aims and deeds!

Aside from this, if that rare individual who does exemplify such a faculty should also become an embodiment of the fear of God, it is certain that his strivings toward righteousness would be strongly reinforced.

As to the differences among human beings and the superiority or inferiority of some

individuals to others, the materialists are of two schools of thought: one group is of the opinion that these differences and the superior qualities of some individuals are inborn, and are, as they would put it, an exigency of nature. According to them, it is obvious that differences within the species are inherent. For example, there are, in nature, different kinds of trees; animals, too, are varied in their nature; even minerals vary naturally among themselves, and you have here a quarry filled with stones, there a mine of rubies, translucent and richly red; here a shell with pearl enclosed, there only a bit of clay.

The other school of traditional philosophers holdeth to the view that the differences among individuals and the varying levels of intellects and talents derive from education: for with training, a crooked branch can grow straight, and a barren tree of the desert can be domesticated; it can be grafted and made to bear fruit, which may be bitter, but with time turneth sweet. At first, its fruit may be small; but will grow large and full of flavour, a delight to the taste.

The strongest proof adduced by the second group is this, that the tribes of Africa are, generally speaking, ignorant and wild, while the civilized peoples of America are, in general, possessed of wisdom and understanding, which proveth that the difference between these two peoples is due to education and experience. Such are the stated views of the philosophers.

The Manifestations of God, on the other hand, affirm that differences are demonstrably and indisputably innate, and that 'We have caused some of you to excel others'¹ is a proven and inescapable fact. It is certain that human beings are, by their very nature, different one from the other. Observe a small group of children, born of the same parents, attending the same school, receiving the same education, living on the same diet: some, becoming well educated, will achieve a high degree of advancement; some will reach a middle level; and some will not prove educable at all. It is therefore clear that the disparity among individuals is due to differences of degree which are innate.

But the Manifestations also consider that training and education demonstrably exert a tremendous influence. If, for example, a child

¹ *Qur'an* 17:22.

is deprived of schooling he will certainly remain ignorant, and his knowledge will be limited to what he is able to find out for himself; but if he is brought to a qualified teacher to study the sciences and arts, he will learn of the discoveries made by thousands of other human beings. Thus education is a guide to those who have gone astray; it maketh the blind to see; it bestoweth judgement on the foolish, and a yield of greatness on the unproductive; it causeth the mute to speak, and turneth the false dawn into the true morning's light; through it the tiny seed will become a towering palm, and the runaway slave, a reigning king.

Thus is it certain that education exerteth an influence, and for this reason the Manifestations of God, the Well-Springs of His mercy, are raised up in the world, that through the breaths of holiness They may educate the human race, and make of the sucking child a strong and valiant man. Through Them will the outcasts of the earth become the cherished companions of Heaven, and the portionless receive their due.

Among the safeguards of the Holy Faith is the training of children, and this is among the weightiest of principles in all the divine teachings. Thus from the very beginning mothers must rear their infants in the cradle of good morals—for it is the mothers who are the first educators—so that, when the child cometh to maturity, he will prove to be endowed with all the virtues and qualities that are worthy of praise.

And further, according to the divine commandments, every child must learn reading and writing, and acquire such branches of knowledge as are useful and necessary, as well as learning an art or skill. The utmost care must be devoted to these matters; any neglect of them, any failure to act on them, is not permissible.

Observe how many penal institutions, houses of detention and places of torture are made ready to receive the sons of men, the purpose being to prevent them, by punitive measures, from committing terrible crimes—whereas this very torment and punishment only increaseth depravity, and by such means the desired aim cannot be properly achieved. Therefore must

the individual be trained from his infancy in such a way that he will never undertake to commit a crime, will, rather, direct all his energies to the acquisition of excellence, and will look upon the very commission of an evil deed as in itself the harshest of all punishments, considering the sinful act itself to be far more grievous than any prison sentence. For it is possible so to train the individual that, although crime may not be completely done away with, still it will become very rare.

The purport is this, that to train the character of humankind is one of the weightiest commandments of God, and the influence of such training is the same as that which the sun exerteth over tree and fruit. Children must be most carefully watched over, protected and trained; in such consisteth true parenthood and parental mercy.

Otherwise, the children will turn into weeds growing wild, and become the cursed, Infernal Tree,¹ knowing not right from wrong, distinguishing not the highest of human qualities from all that is mean and vile; they will be brought up in vainglory, and will be hated of the Forgiving Lord.

Wherefore doth every child, new-risen in the garden of Heavenly love, require the utmost training and care.

Were there no educator, all souls would remain savage, and were it not for the teacher, the children would be ignorant creatures.

It is for this reason that, in this New Cycle, education and training are recorded in the Book of God as obligatory and not voluntary. That is, it is enjoined upon the father and mother, as a duty, to strive with all effort to train the daughter and the son, to nurse them from the breast of knowledge and to rear them in the bosom of sciences and arts. Should they neglect this matter, they shall be held responsible and worthy of reproach in the presence of the stern Lord.

And among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh is the promotion of education. Every child must be instructed in sciences as much as is necessary. If the parents are able to provide the expenses

¹ The Zaqqúm, *Qur'án* 37:60, 44:43.

of this education, it is all right, otherwise the community must provide the means for the teaching of that child.

The education and training of children is among the most meritorious acts of humankind and draweth down the grace and favour of the All-Merciful, for education is the indispensable foundation of all human excellence and alloweth man to work his way to the heights of abiding glory. If a child be trained from his infancy, he will, through the loving care of the Holy Gardener, drink in the crystal waters of the spirit and of knowledge, like a young tree amid the rilling brooks. And certainly he will gather to himself the bright rays of the Sun of Truth, and through its light and heat will grow ever fresh and fair in the garden of life.

Therefore must the mentor be a doctor as well: that is, he must, in instructing the child, remedy its faults; must give him learning, and at the same time rear him to have a

spiritual nature. Let the teacher be a doctor to the character of the child, thus will he heal the spiritual ailments of the children of men.

If, in this momentous task, a mighty effort be exerted, the world of humanity will shine out with other adornings, and shed the fairest light. Then will this darksome place grow luminous, and this abode of earth turn into Heaven. The very demons will change to angels then, and wolves to shepherds of the flock, and the wild-dog pack to gazelles that pasture on the plains of oneness, and ravening beasts to peaceful herds; and birds of prey, with talons sharp as knives, to songsters warbling their sweet native notes.

For the inner reality of man is a demarcation line between the shadow and the light, a place where the two seas meet;¹ it is the lowest point on the arc of descent,² and therefore

¹ *Qur'án* 25:55, 35:13, 55:19-25. See also Marriage Prayer revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá beginning *He is God! O peerless Lord! In Thine almighty wisdom Thou hast enjoined marriage upon the peoples . . .*

² See *Some Answered Questions*, pp. 328-9 for 'Abdu'l-Bahá's comments on the arc of descent and ascent.



'Abdu'l-Bahá inside the entrance to a building on Haparsim (Persian) Street, Haifa, formerly occupied by Bahá'í pilgrims from the West; 1919.

is it capable of gaining all the grades above. With education it can achieve all excellence; devoid of education it will stay on, at the lowest point of imperfection.

Every child is potentially the light of the world—and at the same time its darkness; wherefore must the question of education be accounted as of primary importance. From his infancy, the child must be nursed at the breast of God's love, and nurtured in the embrace of His knowledge, that he may radiate light, grow in spirituality, be filled with wisdom and learning, and take on the characteristics of the angelic host.

Since ye have been assigned to this holy task, ye must therefore exert every effort to make that school famed in all respects throughout the world; to make it the cause of exalting the Word of the Lord.

According to the explicit divine Text, teaching the children is indispensable and obligatory. It followeth that teachers are servants of the Lord God, since they have arisen to perform this task, which is the same as worship. You must therefore offer praise with every breath, for you are educating your spiritual children.

The spiritual father is greater than the physical one, for the latter bestoweth but this world's life, whereas the former endoweth his child with life everlasting. This is why, in the Law of God, teachers are listed among the heirs.

Now you in reality have acquired all these spiritual children free and gratis, and that is better than having physical children; for such children are not grateful to their fathers, since they feel that the father serveth them because he must—and therefore no matter what he doeth for them, they pay it no mind. Spiritual children, however, are always appreciative of their father's loving-kindness. This verily is out of the grace of thy Lord, the Beneficent.

Make ye every effort to improve the Tarbiyat School¹ and to develop order and discipline in this institution. Utilize every means to make this School a garden of the All-Merciful, from

which the lights of learning will cast their beams, and wherein the children, whether Bahá'í or other, will be educated to such a degree as to become God's gifts to man, and the pride of the human race. Let them make the greatest progress in the shortest span of time, let them open wide their eyes and uncover the inner realities of all things, become proficient in every art and skill, and learn to comprehend the secrets of all things even as they are—this faculty being one of the clearly evident effects of servitude to the Holy Threshold.

It is certain that ye will make every effort to bring this about, and will also draw up plans for the opening of a number of schools. These schools for academic studies must at the same time be training centres in behaviour and conduct, and they must favour character and conduct above the sciences and arts. Good behaviour and high moral character must come first, for unless the character be trained, acquiring knowledge will only prove injurious. Knowledge is praiseworthy when it is coupled with ethical conduct and a virtuous character; otherwise it is a deadly poison, a frightful danger. A physician of evil character, and who betrayeth his trust, can bring on death, and become the source of numerous infirmities and diseases.

Devote ye the utmost attention to this matter, for the basic, the foundation-principle of a school is first and foremost moral training, character building, and the rectification of conduct.

The subjects to be taught in children's schools are many, and for lack of time We can touch on only a few: First and most important is training in behaviour and good character; the rectification of qualities; arousing the desire to become accomplished and acquire perfections, and to cleave unto the religion of God and stand firm in His Laws, to accord total obedience to every just government, to show forth loyalty and trustworthiness to the ruler of the time, to be well wishers of mankind, to be kind to all.

¹ The first school owned and operated by the Bahá'í community of Persia, located in Tihrán. See *God Passes By*, pp. 299, 363, 371, 372 for references to the establishment and later forced closure of Bahá'í schools in Persia.

And further, as well as in the ideals of character, instruction in such arts and sciences as are of benefit, and in foreign tongues. Also, the repeating of prayers for the well-being of ruler and ruled; and the avoidance of materialistic works that are current among those who see only natural causation, and tales of love, and books that arouse the passions.

To sum up, let all the lessons be entirely devoted to the acquisition of human perfections.

Here, then, in brief are directions for the curriculum of these schools.

As to the organization of the schools: If possible the children should all wear the same kind of clothing, even if the fabric is varied. It is preferable that the fabric as well should be uniform; if, however, this is not possible, there is no harm done. The more cleanly the pupils are, the better; they should be immaculate. The school must be located in a place where the air is delicate and pure. The children must be carefully trained to be most courteous and well-behaved. They must be constantly encouraged and made eager to gain all the summits of human accomplishment, so that from their earliest years they will be taught to have high aims, to conduct themselves well, to be chaste, pure, and undefiled, and will learn to be of powerful resolve and firm of purpose in all things. Let them not jest and trifle, but earnestly advance unto their goals, so that in every situation they will be found resolute and firm.

Training in morals and good conduct is far more important than book learning. A child that is cleanly, agreeable, of good character, well-behaved—even though he be ignorant—is preferable to a child that is rude, unwashed, ill-natured, and yet becoming deeply versed in all the sciences and arts. The reason for this is that the child who conducts himself well, even though he be ignorant, is of benefit to others, while an ill-natured, ill-behaved child is corrupted and harmful to others, even though he be learned. If, however, the child be trained to be both learned and good, the result is light upon light.

Children are even as a branch that is fresh and green; they will grow up in whatever way you train them. Take the utmost care to give them high ideals and goals, so that once they come of age, they will cast their beams like brilliant candles on the world, and will not be defiled by lusts and passions in the way of animals, heedless and unaware, but instead will set their hearts on achieving everlasting honour and acquiring all the excellences of humankind.

O ye handmaids of the Merciful!

The school for girls taketh precedence over the school for boys, for it is incumbent upon the girls of this glorious era to be fully versed in the various branches of knowledge, in sciences and the arts and all the wonders of this pre-eminent time, that they may then educate their children and train them from their earliest days in the ways of perfection.

If, as she ought, the mother possesseth the learning and accomplishments of humankind, her children, like unto angels, will be fostered in all excellence, in right conduct and beauty. Therefore the School for Girls that hath been established in that place must be made the object of the deep concern and high endeavours of the friends. The teachers of that school are handmaids close to the Sacred Threshold, for they are of those who, obedient to the commandments of the Blessed Beauty, have arisen to educate the girl children.

The day will come when those children will be mothers, and each one of them in her deep gratitude will offer up prayers and supplications to Almighty God and ask that her teachers will be granted joy and well-being forever, and a high station in the Kingdom of God.

Name ye this school the Mawhibat School (The School of Bounty).¹

Today it is obligatory for the loved ones of God, and their imperative duty, to educate the children in reading, writing, the various branches of knowledge, and the expansion

¹ A Bahá'í school for girls in Hamadán, Persia.

of consciousness, that on all levels they may go forward day by day.

The mother is the first teacher of the child. For children, at the beginning of life, are fresh and tender as a young twig, and can be trained in any fashion you desire. If you rear the child to be straight, he will grow straight, in perfect symmetry. It is clear that the mother is the first teacher and that it is she who establisheth the character and conduct of the child.

Wherefore, O ye loving mothers, know ye that in God's sight, the best of all ways to worship Him is to educate the children and train them in all the perfections of human-kind; and no nobler deed than this can be imagined . . .

O maid-servants of the Merciful! It is incumbent upon you to train the children from their earliest babyhood! It is incumbent upon you to beautify their morals! It is incumbent upon you to attend to them under all aspects and circumstances, inasmuch as God—glorified and exalted is He!—hath ordained mothers to be the primary trainers of children and infants. This is a great and important affair and a high and exalted position, and it is not allowable to slacken therein at all!

If thou walkest in this right path, thou wouldst become a real mother to the children, both spiritually and materially.

C. On Materialism

You see all round you proofs of the inadequacy of material things—how joy, comfort, peace and consolation are not to be found in the transitory things of the world. Is it not then foolishness to refuse to seek these treasures where they may be found? The doors of the spiritual Kingdom are open to all, and without is absolute darkness.

No matter how far the material world advances it cannot establish the happiness of mankind. Only when material and spiritual civilization are linked and co-ordinated will happiness be assured. Then material civilization will not contribute its energies to the forces of evil in destroying the oneness of humanity, for in material civilization good and evil advance together and maintain the same pace. For example, consider the material progress of man in the last decade. Schools and colleges, hospitals, philanthropic institutions, scientific academies and temples of philosophy have been founded, but hand in hand with these evidences of development, the invention and production of means and weapons for human destruction have correspondingly increased. In early days the weapon of war was the sword; now it is the magazine rifle. Among the ancients men fought with javelins and daggers; now they

employ shells and bombs. Dreadnoughts are built, torpedoes invented and every few days a new ammunition is forthcoming.

All this is the outcome of material civilization; therefore although material advancement furthers good purposes in life, at the same time it serves evil ends. The divine civilization is good because it cultivates morals. Consider what the prophets of God have contributed to human morality. His Holiness Jesus Christ summoned all to the 'Most Great Peace' through the acquisition of pure morals. If the moral precepts and foundations of divine civilization become united with the material advancement of man, there is no doubt that the happiness of the human world will be attained and from every direction the glad tidings of peace upon earth will be announced. Then humankind will achieve extraordinary progress, the sphere of human intelligence will be immeasurably enlarged, wonderful inventions will appear and the spirit of God will reveal itself; all men will consort in joy and fragrance, and life eternal will be conferred upon the children of the kingdom. Then will the power of the divine make itself effective and the breath of the Holy Spirit penetrate the essence of all things. Therefore the material and the divine or merciful civilizations must progress together until the highest aspirations and desires of humanity shall become realized.

These are a few of the teachings and principles of Bahá'u'lláh briefly presented so that you may be informed of their significance and purpose and find them a stimulus to your knowledge and action.

Material civilization is like unto the lamp, while spiritual civilization is the light in that lamp. If the material and spiritual civilization become united, then we will have the light and the lamp together and the outcome will be perfect. For material civilization is like unto a beautiful body and spiritual civilization is like unto the spirit of life. If that wondrous spirit of life enters this beautiful body, the body will become a channel for the distribution and development of the perfections of humanity . . .

For man, two wings are necessary. One wing is the physical power and material civilization; the other is the spiritual power and divine civilization. With one wing only, flight is impossible. Two wings are essential. Therefore no matter how much material civilization advances it cannot attain to perfection except through uplift of the spiritual civilization.

All the prophets have come to promote divine bestowals, to found the spiritual civilization and teach the principles of morality. Therefore we must strive with all our powers so that spiritual influences may gain the victory. For material forces have attacked mankind. The world of humanity is submerged in a sea of materialism. The rays of the Sun of Reality are seen but dimly and darkly through opaque glasses. The penetrative power of the divine bounty is not fully manifest.

. . . This is the time for man to strive and put forth his greatest efforts in spiritual directions. Material civilization has reached an advanced plane but now there is need of spiritual civilization. Material civilization alone will not satisfy; it cannot meet the conditions and requirements of the present age. Its benefits are limited to the world of matter. There is no limitation to the spirit of man, for spirit in itself is progressive and if the divine civiliza-

tion be established the spirit of man will advance. Every developed susceptibility will increase the effectiveness of man. Discoveries of the real, will become more and more possible and the influence of divine guidance will be increasingly recognized. All this is conducive to the divine form of civilization. This is what is meant in the Bible by the descent of the New Jerusalem. The heavenly Jerusalem is none other than the divine civilization, and it is now ready.

. . . Observe how darkness has overspread the world. In every corner of the earth there is strife, discord and warfare of some kind. Mankind is submerged in the sea of materialism and occupied with the affairs of this world. They have no thought beyond earthly possessions and manifest no desire save the passions of this fleeting, mortal existence. Their utmost purpose is the attainment of material livelihood, physical comforts and worldly enjoyments such as constitute the happiness of the animal world rather than the world of man.

The honour of man is through the attainment of the knowledge of God; his happiness is from the love of God; his joy is in the glad-tidings of God; his greatness is dependent upon his servitude to God. The highest development of man is his entrance into the divine kingdom; and the outcome of this human existence is the nucleus and essence of eternal life. If man is bereft of the divine bestowals and if his enjoyment and happiness are restricted to his material inclinations, what distinction or difference is there between the animal and himself? In fact the animal's happiness is greater, for its wants are fewer and its means of livelihood easier to acquire. Although it is necessary for man to strive for material needs and comforts, his real need is the acquisition of the bounties of God. If he is bereft of divine bounties, spiritual susceptibilities and heavenly glad-tidings, the life of man in this world has not yielded any worthy fruit. While possessing physical life he should lay hold of the life spiritual, and together with bodily comforts and happiness, he should enjoy divine pleasures and content. Then is man worthy of the title man; then will he be 'after the image and

likeness of God,' for the image of the Merciful consists of the attributes of the heavenly kingdom.

... If a man is successful in his business, art, or profession he is thereby enabled to increase his physical wellbeing and to give his body the amount of ease and comfort in which it delights. All around us today we see how man surrounds himself with every modern convenience and luxury, and denies nothing to the physical and material side of his nature. But, take heed, lest in thinking too earnestly of the things of the body you forget the things of the soul: for material advantages do not elevate the spirit of a man. Perfection in worldly things is a joy to the body of a man but in no wise does it glorify his soul.

It may be that a man who has every material benefit, and who lives surrounded by all the greatest comfort modern civilization can give him, is denied the all important gift of the Holy Spirit.

It is indeed a good and praiseworthy thing to progress materially, but in so doing, let us not neglect the more important spiritual progress, and close our eyes to the divine light shining in our midst.

Only by improving spiritually as well as materially can we make any real progress, and become perfect beings. It was in order to bring this spiritual life and light into the world that all the great Teachers have appeared. They came so that the Sun of Truth might be manifested, and shine in the hearts of men, and that through its wondrous power men might attain unto everlasting light.

When the Lord Christ came He spread the light of the Holy Spirit on all around Him, and His disciples and all who received His illumination became enlightened, spiritual beings.

It was to manifest this light that Bahá'u'lláh was born, and came into the world. He taught Eternal Truth to men, and shed the rays of divine light in all lands.

Alas! behold how man disregards this light. He still goes on his way of darkness, and disunity, and quarrels and fierce war are still rife.

He uses material progress to gratify his lust for war, and he makes destructive implements and appliances to destroy his brother man.

But let us rather exert ourselves for the attainment of spiritual advantages, for this is the only way of true progress, that which cometh from God and is alone Godly.

Know thou that there are two kinds of happiness, spiritual and material.

As to material happiness, it never exists; nay, it is but imagination, an image reflected in mirrors, a spectre and shadow. Consider the nature of material happiness. It is something which but slightly removes one's afflictions; yet the people imagine it to be joy, delight, exultation and blessing. All the material blessings, including food, drink, etc., tend only to allay thirst, hunger and fatigue. They bestow no delight on the mind nor pleasure on the soul; nay they furnish only the bodily wants. So this kind of happiness has no real existence.

As to spiritual happiness, this is the true basis of the life of man, for life is created for happiness, not for sorrow; for pleasure, not for grief. Happiness is life; sorrow is death. Spiritual happiness is life eternal. This is a light which is not followed by darkness. This is an honour which is not followed by shame. This is a life that is not followed by death. This is an existence that is not followed by annihilation. This great blessing and precious gift is obtained by man only through the guidance of God . . .

This happiness is the fundamental basis from which man is created, worlds are originated, the contingent beings have existence and the world of God appears like unto the appearance of the sun at mid-day.

This happiness is but the love of God. . . .

Were it not for this happiness the world of existence would not have been created.

II

EXCERPTS FROM THE WRITINGS OF SHOGHI EFFENDI

The Greatest Drama in the World's Spiritual History

*Excerpts from The Promised Day is Come*¹

1

A tempest, unprecedented in its violence, unpredictable in its course, catastrophic in its immediate effects, unimaginably glorious in its ultimate consequences, is at present sweeping the face of the earth. Its driving power is remorselessly gaining in range and momentum. Its cleansing force, however much undetected, is increasing with every passing day. Humanity, gripped in the clutches of its devastating power, is smitten by the evidences of its resistless fury. It can neither perceive its origin, nor probe its significance, nor discern its outcome. Bewildered, agonized and helpless, it watches this great and mighty wind of God invading the remotest and fairest regions of the earth, rocking its foundations, deranging its equilibrium, sundering its nations, disrupting the homes of its peoples, wasting its cities, driving into exile its kings, pulling down its bulwarks, uprooting its institutions, dimming its light, and harrowing up the souls of its inhabitants.

This judgement of God, as viewed by those who have recognized Bahá'u'lláh as His Mouthpiece and His greatest Messenger on earth, is both a retributory calamity and an act of holy and supreme discipline. It is at once a visitation from God and a cleansing process for all mankind. Its fires punish the perversity of the human race, and weld its component parts into one organic, indivisible, world-embracing community. Mankind, in these fateful years . . . is, as ordained by Him Who is both the Judge and the Redeemer of the human race, being simultaneously called upon to give account of its past actions, and is being purged and prepared for its future

mission. It can neither escape the responsibilities of the past, nor shirk those of the future. God, the Vigilant, the Just, the Loving, the All-Wise Ordainer, can, in this supreme Dispensation, neither allow the sins of an unregenerate humanity, whether of omission or of commission, to go unpunished, nor will He be willing to abandon His children to their fate, and refuse them that culminating and blissful stage in their long, their slow and painful evolution throughout the ages, which is at once their inalienable right and their true destiny.

The whole earth, Bahá'u'lláh, . . . forecasting the bright future in store for a world now wrapt in darkness, emphatically asserts, is now in a state of pregnancy. The day is approaching when it will have yielded its noblest fruits, when from it will have sprung forth the loftiest trees, the most enchanting blossoms, the most heavenly blessings. The time is approaching when every created thing will have cast its burden. Glorified be God Who hath vouchsafed this grace that encompasseth all things, whether seen or unseen! These great oppressions, He, moreover, foreshadowing humanity's golden age, has written, are preparing it for the advent of the Most Great Justice. This Most Great Justice is indeed the Justice upon which the structure of the Most Great Peace can alone, and must eventually, rest, while the Most Great Peace will, in turn usher in . . . that world civilization which shall remain for ever associated with Him Who beareth the Most Great Name.

¹ Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1941.

Beloved friends! Well nigh a hundred years have elapsed since the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh dawned upon the world—a Revelation, the nature of which, as affirmed by Himself, *none among the Manifestations of old, except to a prescribed degree, hath ever completely apprehended.* For a whole century God has respited mankind, that it might acknowledge the Founder of such a Revelation, espouse His Cause, proclaim His greatness, and establish His Order. In a hundred volumes, the repositories of priceless precepts, mighty laws, unique principles, impassioned exhortations, reiterated warnings, amazing prophecies, sublime invocations, and weighty commentaries, the Bearer of such a Message has proclaimed, as no Prophet before Him has done, the Mission with which God had entrusted Him. To emperors, kings, princes and potentates, to rulers, governments, clergy and peoples, whether of the East or of the West, whether Christian, Jew, Muslim, or Zoroastrian, He addressed, for well-nigh fifty years, and in the most tragic circumstances, these priceless pearls of knowledge and wisdom that lay hid within the ocean of His matchless utterance. Forsaking fame and fortune, accepting imprisonment and exile, careless of ostracism and obloquy, submitting to physical indignities and cruel deprivations, He, the Vicegerent of God on earth, suffered Himself to be banished from place to place and from country to country, till at length He, in the Most Great Prison, offered up His martyred son as a ransom for the redemption and unification of all mankind. *We verily, He Himself has testified, have not fallen short of Our duty to exhort men, and to deliver that whereunto I was bidden by God, the Almighty, the All-Praised. Had they hearkened unto Me, they would have beheld the earth another earth.* And again: *Is there any excuse left for any one in this Revelation? No, by God, the Lord of the Mighty Throne! My signs have encompassed the earth, and My power enveloped all mankind, and yet the people are wrapped in a strange sleep!*

How—we may well ask ourselves—has the world, the object of such Divine solicitude, repaid Him Who sacrificed His all for its sake? What manner of welcome did it accord Him, and what response did His call evoke? A clamour, unparalleled in the history of Shí'ih Islám, greeted, in the land of its birth, the

infant light of the Faith, in the midst of a people notorious for its crass ignorance, its fierce fanaticism, its barbaric cruelty, its ingrained prejudices, and the unlimited sway held over the masses by a firmly entrenched ecclesiastical hierarchy. A persecution, kindling a courage which, as attested by no less eminent an authority than the late Lord Curzon of Kedleston, has been unsurpassed by that which the fires of Smithfield evoked, mowed down, with tragic swiftness, no less than twenty thousand of its heroic adherents, who refused to barter their newly-born faith for the fleeting honours and security of a mortal life.

To the bodily agonies inflicted upon these sufferers, the charges, so unmerited, of Nihilism, occultism, anarchism, eclecticism, immorality, sectarianism, heresy, political partisanship—each conclusively disproved by the tenets of the Faith itself and by the conduct of its followers—were added, swelling thereby the number of those who, unwittingly or maliciously, were injuring its cause.

Unmitigated indifference on the part of men of eminence and rank; unrelenting hatred shown by the ecclesiastical dignitaries of the Faith from which it had sprung; the scornful derision of the people among whom it was born; the utter contempt which most of those kings and rulers who had been addressed by its Author manifested towards it; the condemnations pronounced, the threats hurled, and the banishments decreed by those under whose sway it arose and first spread; the distortion to which its principles and laws were subjected by the envious and the malicious, in lands and among peoples far beyond the country of its origin—all these are but the evidences of the treatment meted out by a generation sunk in self-content, careless of its God, and oblivious of the omens, prophecies, warnings and admonitions revealed by His Messengers.

The blows so heavily dealt the followers of so precious, so glorious, so potent a Faith failed, however, to assuage the animosity that inflamed its persecutors. Nor did the deliberate and mischievous misrepresentations of its fundamental teachings, its aims and purposes, its hopes and aspirations, its institutions and activities, suffice to stay the hand of the oppressor and the calumniator, who sought by every means in their power to abolish its

name and extirpate its system. The hand which had struck down so vast a number of its blameless and humble lovers and servants was now raised to deal its Founders the heaviest and cruelest blows.

Severe as were these tribulations which succeeded one another with bewildering rapidity as a result of the premeditated attacks and the systematic machinations of the court, the clergy, the government and the people, they were but the prelude to a harrowing and extensive captivity which that edict had formally initiated. Extending over a period of more than forty years, and carrying Him successively to 'Iráq, Sulaymáníyyih, Constantinople, Adrianople and finally to the penal colony of 'Akká, this long banishment was at last ended by His death, at the age of over three score years and ten, terminating a captivity which, in its range, its duration and the diversity and severity of its afflictions, is unexampled in the history of previous Dispensations.

No need to expatiate on the particular episodes which cast a lurid light on the moving annals of those years. No need to dwell on the character and actions of the peoples, rulers and divines who have participated in, and contributed to heighten the poignancy of the scenes of this, the greatest drama in the world's spiritual history.

After a revolution of well nigh one hundred years what is it that the eye encounters as one surveys the international scene and looks back upon the early beginnings of Bahá'í history? A world convulsed by the agonies of contending systems, races and nations, entangled in the mesh of its accumulated falsities, receding farther and farther from Him Who is the sole Author of its destinies, and sinking deeper and deeper into a suicidal carnage which its neglect and persecution of Him Who is its Redeemer have precipitated. A Faith, still proscribed, yet bursting through its chrysalis, emerging from the obscurity of a century-old repression, face to face with the awful evidences of God's wrathful anger, and destined to arise above the ruins of a smitten civilization. A world spiritually destitute, morally bankrupt, politically disrupted, socially convulsed, economically paralyzed, writhing, bleeding and breaking up beneath the avenging rod of God. A Faith whose call remained

unanswered, whose claims were rejected, whose warnings were brushed aside, whose followers were mowed down, whose aims and purposes were maligned, whose summons to the rulers of the earth were ignored, whose Herald drained the cup of martyrdom, over the head of whose Author swept a sea of unheard-of tribulations, and whose Exemplar sank beneath the weight of life-long sorrows and dire misfortunes. A world that has lost its bearings, in which the bright flame of religion is fast dying out, in which the forces of a blatant nationalism and racialism have usurped the rights and prerogatives of God Himself, in which a flagrant secularism—the direct offspring of irreligion—has raised its triumphant head and is protruding its ugly features, in which the 'majesty of kingship' has been disgraced, and they who wore its emblems have, for the most part, been hurled from their thrones, in which the once all-powerful ecclesiastical hierarchies of Islám, and to a lesser extent those of Christianity, have been discredited, and in which the virus of prejudice and corruption is eating into the vitals of an already gravely disordered society. A Faith whose institutions—the pattern and crowning glory of the age which is to come—have been ignored and in some instances trampled upon and uprooted, whose unfolding system has been derided and partly suppressed and crippled, whose rising Order—the sole refuge of a civilization in the embrace of doom—has been spurned and challenged, whose Mother-Temple has been seized and misappropriated, and whose 'House'—the *'cynosure of an adoring world'*—has, through a gross miscarriage of justice, as witnessed by the world's highest tribunal, been delivered into the hands of, and violated by, its implacable enemies.

We are indeed living in an age which, if we would correctly appraise it, should be regarded as one which is witnessing a dual phenomenon. The first signalizes the death-pangs of an order, effete and godless, that has stubbornly refused, despite the signs and portents of a century-old Revelation, to attune its processes to the precepts and ideals which that Heaven-sent Faith proffered it. The second proclaims the birth-pangs of an Order, divine and redemptive, that will inevitably supplant the former, and within whose administrative structure an embryonic civilization, incomparable and world-embracing, is imperceptibly maturing. The one is being

rolled up, and is crashing in oppression, bloodshed, and ruin. The other opens up vistas of a justice, a unity, a peace, a culture, such as no age has ever seen. The former has spent its force, demonstrated its falsity and barrenness, lost irretrievably its opportunity, and is hurrying to its doom. The latter, virile and unconquerable, is plucking asunder its chains, and is vindicating its title to be the one refuge within which a sore-tried humanity, purged from its dross, can attain its destiny.

Dear friends! For the trials which have afflicted the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh a responsibility appalling and inescapable rests upon those into whose hands the reins of civil and ecclesiastical authority were delivered. The kings of the earth and the world's religious leaders alike must primarily bear the brunt of such an awful responsibility. *Every one well knoweth, Bahá'u'lláh Himself testifies, that all the kings have turned aside from Him, and all the religions have opposed Him. From time immemorial He declares, they who have been outwardly invested with authority have debarred men from setting their faces towards God. They have disliked that men should gather together around the Most Great Ocean, inasmuch as they have regarded, and still regard, such a gathering as the cause of, and the motive for, the disruption of their sovereignty. The kings, He moreover has written, have recognized that it was not in their interest to acknowledge Me, as have likewise the ministers and the divines, notwithstanding that My purpose hath been most explicitly revealed in the Divine Books and Tablets, and the True One hath loudly proclaimed that this Most Great Revelation hath appeared for the betterment of the world and the exaltation of the nations.*

It should not be forgotten that it was the kings of the earth and the world's religious leaders who, above all other categories of men, were made the direct recipients of the Message proclaimed by both the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. It was they who were deliberately addressed in numerous and historic Tablets, who were summoned to respond to the Call of God, and to whom were directed, in clear and forcible language, the appeals, the admonitions and warnings of His persecuted Messengers. It was they who, when the Faith was born, and later when its mission was proclaimed, were still, for the most part, wielding unquestioned and

absolute civil and ecclesiastical authority over their subjects and followers. It was they who, whether glorying in the pomp and pageantry of a kingship as yet scarcely restricted by constitutional limitations, or entrenched within the strongholds of a seemingly inviolable ecclesiastical power, assumed ultimate responsibility for any wrongs inflicted by those whose immediate destinies they controlled. It would be no exaggeration to say that in most of the countries of the European and Asiatic continents absolutism, on the one hand, and complete subservience to ecclesiastical hierarchies, on the other, were still the outstanding features of the political and religious life of the masses. These, dominated and shackled, were robbed of the necessary freedom that would enable them to either appraise the claims and merits of the Message proffered to them, or to embrace unreservedly its truth.

Small wonder, then, that the Author of the Bahá'í Faith, and to a lesser degree its Herald, should have directed at the world's supreme rulers and religious leaders the full force of Their Messages, and made them the recipients of some of Their most sublime Tablets, and invited them, in a language at once clear and insistent, to heed Their call. Small wonder that They should have taken the pains to unroll before their eyes the truths of Their respective Revelations, and should have expatiated on Their woes and sufferings. Small wonder that They should have stressed the preciousness of the opportunities which it was in the power of these rulers and leaders to seize, and should have warned them in ominous tones of the grave responsibilities which the rejection of God's Message would entail, and should have predicted, when rebuffed and refused, the dire consequences which such a rejection involved. Small wonder that He Who is the King of Kings and the Vicegerent of God Himself should, when abandoned, contemned and persecuted, have uttered this epigrammatic and momentous prophecy: *From two ranks amongst men power hath been seized: kings and ecclesiastics.*

It should be borne in mind, however, that Bahá'u'lláh has not restricted the delivery of His Message to a few individual sovereigns, however potent the sceptres they severally wielded, and however vast the dominions which they ruled. All the kings of the earth have been collectively addressed by His Pen, appealed to,



The Bahá'í International Archives building, described by Shoghi Effendi as 'the first stately edifice destined to usher in the establishment of the World Administrative Centre of the Faith on Mount Carmel.' Construction commenced in 1955; the exterior was completed in 1957.

and warned, at a time when the star of His Revelation was mounting its zenith, and whilst He lay a prisoner in the hands, and in the vicinity of the court, of His royal enemy. In a memorable Tablet, designated as the *Súriy-i-Mulúk* (*Súrih of Kings*) in which the Sulṭán himself and his ministers, and the kings of Christendom, and the French and Persian Ambassadors accredited to the Sublime Porte, and the Muslim ecclesiastical leaders in Constantinople, and its wise men and its inhabitants, and the people of Persia, and the philosophers of the world have been specifically addressed and admonished, He thus directs His words to the entire company of the monarchs of East and West:

O Kings of the earth! Give ear unto the Voice of God, calling from this sublime, this fruit-laden Tree, that hath sprung out of the Crimson Hill, upon the holy Plain, intoning the words: 'There is none other God but He, the Mighty, the All-Powerful, the All-Wise.' . . . Fear God, O concourse of kings, and suffer not yourselves to be deprived of this most sublime grace. Fling away, then, the things ye possess, and take fast hold

on the Handle of God, the Exalted, the Great. Set your hearts towards the Face of God, and abandon that which your desires have bidden you to follow, and be not of those who perish. Relate unto them, O servant, the story of 'Alí (the Báb), when He came unto them with truth, bearing His glorious and weighty Book, and holding in His hands a testimony and proof from God, and holy and blessed tokens from Him. Ye, however, O kings, have failed to heed the Remembrance of God in His days and to be guided by the lights which arose and shone forth above the horizon of a resplendent Heaven. Ye examined not His Cause when so to do would have been better for you than all that the sun shineth upon, could ye but perceive it.

In the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* (the Most Holy Book), that priceless treasury enshrining for all time the brightest emanations of the mind of Bahá'u'lláh, the Charter of His World Order, the chief repository of His laws, the Harbinger of His Covenant, the Pivotal Work containing some of His noblest exhortations, weightiest pronouncements, and portentous prophecies, and revealed during the full tide of His

tribulations, at a time when the rulers of the earth had definitely forsaken Him—in such a Book we read the following:

O kings of the earth! He Who is the sovereign Lord of all is come. The Kingdom is God's, the omnipotent Protector, the Self-Subsisting. Worship none but God, and, with radiant hearts, lift up your faces unto your Lord, the Lord of all names. This is a Revelation to which whatever ye possess can never be compared, could ye but know it. We see you rejoicing in that which ye have amassed from others, and shutting out yourselves from the worlds which naught except My Guarded Tablet can reckon. The treasures ye have laid up have drawn you far away from your ultimate objective. This ill beseemeth you, could ye but understand it. Wash your hearts from all earthly defilements, and hasten to enter the Kingdom of your Lord, the Creator of earth and heaven, Who caused the world to tremble, and all its peoples to wail, except them that have renounced all things and clung to that which the Hidden Tablet hath ordained. . . .

To the Christian kings Bahá'u'lláh, moreover, particularly directs His words of censure, and, in a language that cannot be mistaken, He discloses the true character of His Revelation:

O kings of Christendom! Heard ye not the saying of Jesus, the Spirit of God, 'I go away, and come again unto you'? Wherefore, then, did ye fail, when He did come again unto you in the clouds of heaven, to draw nigh unto Him, that ye might behold His face, and be of them that attained His Presence? In another passage He saith: 'When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you unto all truth.' And yet, behold how, when He did bring the truth, ye refused to turn your faces towards Him, and persisted in disporting yourselves with your pastimes and fancies. Ye welcomed Him not, neither did ye seek His Presence, that ye might hear the verses of God from His own mouth, and partake of the manifold wisdom of the Almighty, the All-Glorious, the All-Wise. Ye have, by reason of your failure, hindered the breath of God from being wafted over you, and have withheld from your souls the sweetness of its fragrance. Ye continue roving with delight in the valley of your corrupt desires. Ye and all ye possess shall pass away. Ye shall, most certainly, return to God, and shall be called to account for your doings in the presence of Him Who shall gather together the entire creation. . . .

The Báb, moreover, in the *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'*, His celebrated commentary on the Súrih of Joseph, revealed in the first year of His Mission, and characterized by Bahá'u'lláh as *the first, the greatest, and mightiest of all books* in the Bábí Dispensation, has issued this stirring call to the kings and princes of the earth:

O concourse of kings and of the sons of kings! Lay aside, one and all, your dominion which belongeth unto God. . . . Vain indeed is your dominion, for God hath set aside earthly possessions for such as have denied Him. . . . O concourse of kings! Deliver with truth and in all haste the verses sent down by Us to the peoples of Turkey and of India, and beyond them, with power and with truth, to lands in both the East and the West. . . . By God! If ye do well, to your own behoof will ye do well; and if ye deny God and His signs, We, in very truth, having God, can well dispense with all creatures and all earthly dominion.

He Who was God's Vicar on earth, addressing, at the most critical moment when His Revelation was attaining its zenith, those who concentrated in their persons the splendour, the sovereignty, and the strength of earthly dominion, could certainly not subtract one jot or tittle from the weight and force which the presentation of so historic a Message demanded. Neither the perils which were fast closing in upon Him, nor the formidable power with which the doctrine of absolute sovereignty invested, at that time, the emperors of the West and the potentates of the East, could restrain the Exile and Prisoner of Adrianople from communicating the full blast of His Message to His twin imperial persecutors as well as to the rest of their fellow-sovereigns.

The magnitude and diversity of the theme, the cogency of the argument, the sublimity and audacity of the language, arrest our attention and astound our minds. Emperors, kings and princes, chancellors and ministers, the Pope himself, priests, monks and philosophers, the exponents of learning, parliamentarians and deputies, the rich ones of the earth, the followers of all religions, and the people of Bahá—all are brought within the purview of the Author of these Messages, and receive, each according to their merits, the counsels and admonitions they deserve. No less amazing is the diversity of the subjects touched upon in these Tablets. The transcendent majesty and unity of an

unknowable and unapproachable God is extolled, and the oneness of His Messengers proclaimed and emphasized. The uniqueness, the universality and potentialities of the Bahá'í Faith are stressed, and the purpose and character of the Bábí Revelation unfolded. The significance of Bahá'u'lláh's sufferings and banishments is disclosed, and the tribulations rained down upon His Herald and upon His Namesake recognized and lamented. His own yearning for the crown of martyrdom, which they both so mysteriously won, is voiced, and the ineffable glories and wonders in store for His own Dispensation foreshadowed. Episodes, at once moving and marvellous, at various stages of His ministry, are recounted, and the transitoriness of worldly pomp, fame, riches, and sovereignty, repeatedly and categorically asserted. Appeals for the application of the highest principles in human and international relations are forcibly and insistently made, and the abandonment of discreditable practices and conventions, detrimental to the happiness, the growth, the prosperity and the unity of the human race, enjoined. Kings are censured, ecclesiastical dignitaries arraigned, ministers and plenipotentiaries condemned, and the identification of His advent with the coming of the Father Himself unequivocally admitted and repeatedly announced. The violent downfall of a few of these kings and emperors is prophesied, two of them are definitely challenged, most are warned, all are appealed to and exhorted.

It should not be forgotten that, apart from these specific Tablets in which the kings of the earth are severally and collectively addressed, Bahá'u'lláh has revealed other Tablets—the *Lawḥ-i-Ra'ís* being an outstanding example—and interspersed the mass of His voluminous writings with unnumbered passages, in which direct addresses, as well as references, have been made to ministers, governments, and their accredited representatives. I am not concerned, however, with such addresses and references, which, vital as they are, cannot be regarded as being endowed with that peculiar pregnancy which direct and specific messages, voiced by the Manifestation of God and directed to the world's Chief Magistrates in His day, must possess.

Dear friends! Enough has been said to portray the tribulations which, for so long

a time, overwhelmed the Founders of so pre-eminent a Revelation, and which the world has so disastrously ignored. Sufficient attention has also been directed to the Messages addressed to those sovereign rulers who, either in the exercise of their unconditioned authority, have deliberately provoked these sufferings, or could have, in the plenitude of their power, arisen to mitigate their effect or deflect their tragic course. Let us now consider the consequences that have ensued. The reaction of these monarchs was, as already stated, varied and unmistakable and, as the march of events has gradually unfolded, disastrous in its consequences. One of the most outstanding amongst these sovereigns treated the Divine Summons with gross disrespect, dismissing it with a curt and insolent reply, written by one of his ministers. Another laid violent hold on the bearer of the Message, tortured, branded, and brutally slew him. Others preferred to maintain a contemptuous silence. All failed completely in their duty to arise and extend their assistance. Two of them, in particular, prompted by the dual impulse of fear and anger, tightened their grip on the Cause they had jointly resolved to uproot. The one condemned his Divine Prisoner to yet another banishment, to *the most unsightly of cities in appearance, the most detestable in climate, and the foulest in water*, whilst the other, powerless to lay hands on the Prime Mover of a hated Faith, subjected its adherents under his sway to abject and savage cruelties. The recital of Bahá'u'lláh's sufferings, embodied in those Messages, failed to evoke compassion in their hearts. His appeals, the like of which neither the annals of Christianity nor even those of Islám have recorded, were disdainfully rejected. The dark warnings He uttered were haughtily scorned. The bold challenges He issued were ignored. The chastisements He predicted they derisively brushed aside.

What, then—might we not consider—has, in the face of so complete and ignominious a rejection, happened, and is still happening, in the course, and particularly in the closing years, of this, the first Bahá'í century, a century fraught with such tumultuous sufferings and violent outrages for the persecuted Faith of Bahá'u'lláh? Empires fallen in dust, kingdoms subverted, dynasties extinguished, royalty besmirched, kings assassinated, poisoned, driven into exile, subjugated in their own realms, whilst

the few remaining thrones are trembling with the repercussions of the fall of their fellows.

This process, so gigantic, so catastrophic, may be said to have had its inception on that memorable night when, in an obscure corner of Shíráz, the Báb, in the presence of the First Letter to believe in Him, revealed the first chapter of His celebrated commentary on the Súrih of Joseph (the *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'*), in which He trumpeted His Call to the sovereigns and princes of the earth. It passed from incubation to visible manifestation when Bahá'u'lláh's prophecies, enshrined for all time in the *Súriy-i-Haykal*, and uttered before Napoleon III's dramatic downfall and the self-imposed imprisonment of Pope Pius IX in the Vatican, were fulfilled. It gathered momentum when, in the days of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Great War extinguished the Romanov, the Hohenzollern, and Hapsburg dynasties, and converted powerful time-honoured monarchies into Republics. It was further accelerated, soon after 'Abdu'l-Bahá's passing, by the demise of the Qájár dynasty in Persia, and the stupendous collapse of both the Sultanate and the Caliphate. It is still operating, under our very eyes, as we behold the fate which, in the course of this colossal and ravaging struggle, is successively overtaking the crowned heads of the European continent. Surely, no man, contemplating dispassionately the manifestations of this relentless revolutionizing process, within comparatively so short a time, can escape the conclusion that the last hundred years may well be regarded, in so far as the fortunes of royalty are concerned, as one of the most cataclysmic periods in the annals of mankind.

Let none, however, mistake or unwittingly misrepresent the purpose of Bahá'u'lláh. Severe as has been His condemnation pronounced against those sovereigns who persecuted Him, and however strict the censure expressed collectively against those who failed signally in their clear duty to investigate the truth of His Faith and to restrain the hand of the wrongdoer, His teachings embody no principle that can, in any way, be construed as a repudiation, or even a disparagement, however veiled, of the institution of kingship. The catastrophic fall, and the extinction of the dynasties and the empires of those monarchs whose disastrous end He particularly prophesied, and the declining fortunes of the sovereigns of His Own

generation, whom He generally reprovéd—both constituting a passing phase of the evolution of the Faith,—should, in no wise, be confounded with the future position of that institution. Indeed, if we delve into the writings of the Author of the Bahá'í Faith, we cannot fail to discover unnumbered passages in which, in terms that none can misrepresent, the principle of kingship is eulogized, the rank and conduct of just and fair-minded kings is extolled, the rise of monarchs, ruling with justice and even professing His Faith, is envisaged, and the solemn duty to arise and ensure the triumph of Bahá'í sovereigns is inculcated. To conclude from the above quoted words, addressed by Bahá'u'lláh to the monarchs of the earth, to infer from the recital of the woeful disasters that have overtaken so many of them, that His followers either advocate or anticipate the definite extinction of the institution of kingship, would indeed be tantamount to a distortion of His teaching.

I can do no better than quote some of Bahá'u'lláh's Own testimonies, leaving the reader to shape his own judgement as to the falsity of such a deduction. In His *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf* He indicates the true source of kingship: *Regard for the rank of sovereigns is divinely ordained, as is clearly attested by the words of the Prophets of God and His chosen ones. He Who is the Spirit (Jesus)—may peace be upon Him—was asked: 'O Spirit of God! Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?' And He made reply: 'Yea, render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.' He forbade it not. These two sayings are, in the estimation of men of insight, one and the same, for if that which belonged to Caesar had not come from God He would have forbidden it. And likewise in the sacred verse: 'Obey God and obey the Apostle, and those among you invested with authority.' By 'those invested with authority' is meant primarily and more specially the Imáms—the blessings of God rest upon them. They verily are the manifestations of the power of God and the sources of His authority, and the repositories of His knowledge, and the day-springs of His commandments. Secondly these words refer unto the kings and rulers—those through the brightness of whose justice the horizons of the world are resplendent and luminous.*

In the *Lawḥ-i-Sulṭán* Bahá'u'lláh further

reveals the significance of kingship: *A just king is the shadow of God on earth. All should seek shelter under the shadow of his justice, and rest in the shade of his favour. This is not a matter which is either specific or limited in its scope, that it might be restricted to one or another person, inasmuch as the shadow telleth of the One Who casteth it. God, glorified be His remembrance, hath called Himself the Lord of the worlds, for He hath nurtured and still nurtureth everyone. Glorified be, then, His grace*

that hath preceded all created things, and His mercy that hath surpassed the worlds.

In the following passage He expresses this wish: *We cherish the hope that one of the kings of the earth will, for the sake of God, arise for the triumph of this wronged, this oppressed people. Such a king will be eternally extolled and glorified. God hath prescribed unto this people the duty of aiding whosoever will aid them, of serving his best interests, and of demonstrating to him their abiding loyalty.*

2

Dear friends! The decline in the fortunes of the crowned wielders of temporal power has been paralleled by a no less startling deterioration in the influence exercised by the world's spiritual leaders. The colossal events that have heralded the dissolution of so many kingdoms and empires have almost synchronized with the crumbling of the seemingly inviolable strongholds of religious orthodoxy. That same process which, swiftly and tragically, sealed the doom of kings and emperors, and extinguished their dynasties, has operated in the case of the ecclesiastical leaders of both Christianity and Islám, damaging their prestige, and, in some cases, overthrowing their highest institutions. *Power hath been seized* indeed, from both kings and ecclesiastics. The glory of the former has been eclipsed, the power of the latter irretrievably lost.

Those leaders who exercised guidance and control over the ecclesiastical hierarchies of their respective religions have, likewise, been appealed to, warned, and reproved by Bahá'u'lláh, in terms no less uncertain than those in which the sovereigns who presided over the destinies of their subjects have been addressed. They, too, and more particularly the heads of Muslim ecclesiastical orders, have, in conjunction with despots and potentates, launched their assaults and thundered their anathemas against the Founders of the Faith of God, its followers, its principles, and its institutions.

This process of deterioration, however starting in its initial manifestations, is still operating with undiminished force, and will, as the opposition to the Faith of God, from various sources and in distant fields, gathers momentum, be

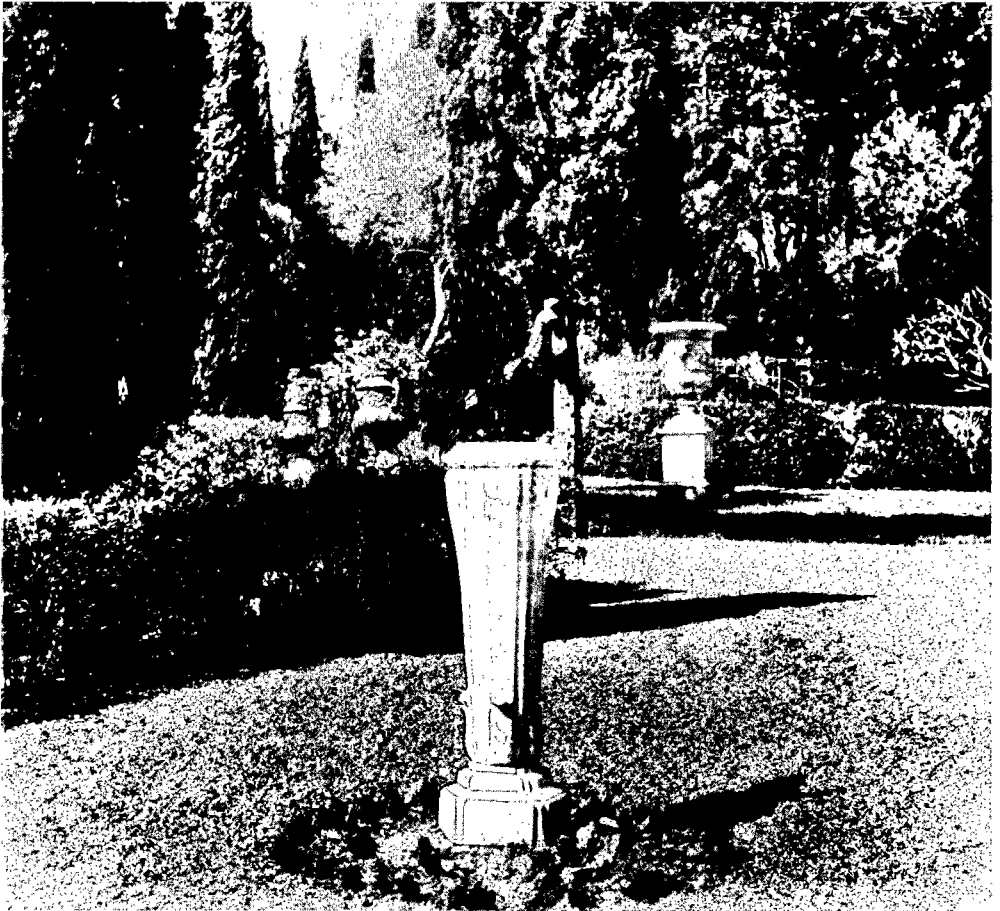
further accelerated and reveal still more remarkable evidences of its devastating power.

It must not be inferred . . . that Bahá'u'lláh directed His historic addresses exclusively to the leaders of Islám and Christianity, or that the impact of an all-pervading Faith on the strongholds of religious orthodoxy is to be confined to the institutions of these two religious systems. *The time fore-ordained unto the peoples and kindreds of the earth, affirms Bahá'u'lláh, is now come. The promises of God, as recorded in the Holy Scriptures, have all been fulfilled. . . . This is the Day which the Pen of the Most High hath glorified in all the Holy Scriptures. There is no verse in them that doth not declare the glory of His holy Name, and no Book that doth not testify unto the loftiness of this most exalted theme. Were We, He adds, to make mention of all that hath been revealed in these heavenly Books and Holy Scriptures concerning this Revelation, this Tablet would assume impossible dimensions. As the promise of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh is enshrined in all the Scriptures of past religions, so does its Author address Himself to their followers, and particularly to their responsible leaders who have intervened between Him and their respective congregations. At one time, writes Bahá'u'lláh, We address the people of the Torah and summon them unto Him Who is the Revealer of verses, Who hath come from Him Who layeth low the necks of men. . . . At another, We address the people of the Evangel and say: 'The All-Glorious is come in this Name whereby the Breeze of God hath wafted over all regions.' . . . At still another, We address the people of the Qur'an saying:*

'Fear the All-Merciful, and cavil not at Him through Whom all religions were founded.' . . . Know thou, moreover, that We have addressed to the Magians Our Tablets, and adorned them with Our Law. . . . We have revealed in them the essence of all the hints and allusions contained in their Books. The Lord, verily, is the Almighty, the All-Knowing.

Leaders of religion, is Bahá'u'lláh's clear and universal censure pronounced in the Kitáb-i-Íqán, in every age, have hindered their people from attaining the shores of eternal salvation, inasmuch as they held the reins of authority in their mighty grasp. Some for the lust of leadership, others through want of knowledge and understanding, have been the cause of the deprivation of the people. By their sanction and authority, every Prophet of God hath drunk

from the chalice of sacrifice, and winged His flight unto the heights of glory. What unspeakable cruelties they that have occupied the seats of authority and learning have inflicted upon the true Monarchs of the world, those Gems of Divine virtue! Content with a transitory dominion, they have deprived themselves of an everlasting sovereignty. Not one Prophet of God was made manifest Who did not fall a victim to the relentless hate, to the denunciation, denial and execration of the clerics of His day! Woe unto them for the iniquities their hands have formerly wrought! Woe unto them for that which they are now doing! What veils of glory more grievous than these embodiments of error! By the righteousness of God! To pierce such veils is the mightiest of all acts, and to rend them asunder the most meritorious of all deeds! On their



Partial view of the Bahá'í gardens on Mount Carmel. In the foreground is seen an ornamental peacock mounted on a graceful pedestal.

tongue, He, moreover, has written, *the mention of God hath become an empty name; in their midst His holy Word a dead letter. Such is the sway of their desires, that the lamp of conscience and reason hath been quenched in their hearts. . . . No two are found to agree on one and the same law, for they seek no God but their own desire, and tread no path but the path of error. In leadership they have recognized the ultimate object of their endeavour, and account pride and haughtiness as the highest attainments of their hearts' desire. They have placed their sordid machinations above the Divine decree, have renounced resignation unto the will of God, busied themselves with selfish calculation, and walked in the way of the hypocrite. With all their power and strength they strive to secure themselves in their petty pursuits, fearful lest the least discredit undermine their authority or blemish the display of their magnificence.*

The leaders of men, He has likewise asserted, have, from time immemorial, prevented the people from turning unto the Most Great Ocean. The Friend of God (Abraham) was cast into fire through the sentence pronounced by the divines of the age, and lies and calumnies were imputed to Him Who discoursed with God (Moses). Reflect upon the One Who was the Spirit of God (Jesus). Though He showed forth the utmost compassion and tenderness, yet they rose up against that Essence of Being and Lord of the seen and unseen, in such a manner that He could find no refuge wherein to rest. Each day He wandered unto a new place, and sought a new shelter. Consider the Seal of the Prophets (Muhammad)—may the souls of all else except Him be His sacrifice! How grievous the things which befell that Lord of all being at the hands of the priests of idolatry, and of the Jewish doctors, after He had uttered the blessed words proclaiming the unity of God! By My life! My pen groaneth, and all created things cry out by reason of the things that have touched Him, at the hands of such as have broken the Covenant of God and His Testament, and denied His Testimony, and gainsaid His signs.

Islám, at once the progenitor and persecutor of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, is, if we read aright the signs of the times, only beginning to sustain the impact of this invincible and triumphant Faith. We need only recall the nineteen hundred years of abject misery and dispersion which they

who, only for the short space of three years, persecuted the Son of God, have had to endure, and are still enduring. We may well ask ourselves, with mingled feelings of dread and awe, how severe must be the tribulations of those who, during no less than fifty years, have, *at every moment tormented with a fresh torment Him Who is the Father, and who have, in addition, made His Herald—Himself a Manifestation of God—to quaff, in such tragic circumstances, the cup of martyrdom.*

A glance at the writings of the Author of the Bahá'í Revelation will reveal the important and significant fact that He Who addressed collectively an immortal message to all the kings of the earth, Who revealed a Tablet to each of the outstanding crowned heads of Europe and Asia, Who issued His call to the sacerdotal leaders of Islám, both Sunní and Shí'ih, Who did not exclude from His purview the Jews and the Zoroastrians, has, apart from His numerous and repeated exhortations and warnings to the entire Christian world, directed particular messages, some general, others precise and challenging, to the heads, as well as to the rank and file, of the ecclesiastical orders of Christendom—its pope, its kings, its patriarchs, its archbishops, its bishops, its priests, and its monks.

These *fallen stars* of the firmament of Christendom, these *thick clouds* that have obscured the radiance of the true Faith of God, these princes of the Church that have failed to acknowledge the sovereignty of the *King of kings*, these deluded ministers of the Son who have shunned and ignored the promised Kingdom which the *Everlasting Father* has brought down from heaven, and is now establishing upon earth—these are experiencing, in this *Day of Reckoning*, a crisis, not indeed as critical as that which the Islamic sacerdotal order, the inveterate enemies of the Faith, has had to face, but one which is no less widespread and significant. *Power hath been seized* indeed, and is being increasingly seized, from these ecclesiastics that speak in the name, and yet are so far away from the spirit, of the Faith they profess.

We have only to look around us, as we survey the fortunes of Christian ecclesiastical orders, to appreciate the steady deterioration of their influence, the decline of their power, the damage

to their prestige, the flouting of their authority, the dwindling of their congregations, the relaxation of their discipline, the restriction of their press, the timidity of their leaders, the confusion in their ranks, the progressive confiscation of their properties, the surrender of some of their most powerful strongholds, and the extinction of other ancient and cherished institutions. Indeed, ever since the Divine summons was issued, and the invitation extended, and the warning sounded, and the condemnation pronounced, this process, that may be said to have been initiated with the collapse of the temporal sovereignty of the Roman Pontiff, soon after the Tablet to the Pope had been revealed, has been operating with increasing momentum, menacing the very basis on which the entire order is resting. Aided by the forces which the Communist movement has unloosed, reinforced by the political consequences of the last war, accelerated by the excessive, the blind, the intolerant, and militant nationalism which is now convulsing the nations, and stimulated by the rising tide of materialism, irreligion, and paganism, this process is not only tending to subvert ecclesiastical institutions, but appears to be leading to the rapid dechristianization of the masses in many Christian countries.

How tragically has Christendom ignored, and how far it has strayed from, that high mission which He Who is the true Prince of Peace has, in these, the concluding passages of His Tablet to Pope Pius IX, called upon the entire body of Christians to fulfil—passages which establish, for all time, the distinction between the Mission of Bahá'u'lláh in this age and that of Jesus Christ: *Say: O concourse of Christians! We have, on a previous occasion, revealed Ourselves unto you, and ye recognized Me not. This is yet another occasion vouchsafed unto you. This is the Day of God; turn ye unto Him. . . . The Beloved One loveth not that ye be consumed with the fire of your desires. Were ye to be shut out as by a veil from Him, this would be for no other reason than your own waywardness and ignorance. Ye make mention of Me, and know Me not. Ye call upon Me, and are heedless of My Revelation. . . . O people of the Gospel! They who were not in the Kingdom have now entered it, whilst We behold you, in this day, tarrying at the gate. Rend the veils asunder by the power of your Lord, the Almighty, the*

All-Bounteous, and enter, then, in My name My Kingdom. Thus biddeth you He Who desireth for you everlasting life. . . . We behold you, O children of the Kingdom, in darkness. This, verily, beseemeth you not. Are ye, in the face of the Light, fearful because of your deeds? Direct yourselves towards Him . . . Verily, He (Jesus) said: 'Come ye after Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.' In this day, however, We say: 'Come ye after Me, that We may make you to become quickeners of mankind.' Say: He moreover has written, We, verily, have come for your sakes, and have borne the misfortunes of the world for your salvation. Flee ye the One Who hath sacrificed His life that ye may be quickened? Fear God, O followers of the Spirit (Jesus), and walk not in the footsteps of every divine that hath gone far astray. . . . Open the doors of your hearts. He Who is the Spirit (Jesus) verily, standeth before them. Wherefore keep ye afar from Him Who hath purposed to draw you nigh unto a Resplendent Spot? Say: We, in truth, have opened unto you the gates of the Kingdom. Will ye bar the doors of your houses in My face? This indeed is naught but a grievous error.

Such is the pass to which the Christian clergy have come—a clergy that have interposed themselves between their flock and the Christ returned in the glory of the Father. As the Faith of this Promised One penetrates farther and farther into the heart of Christendom, as its recruits from the garrisons which its spirit is assailing multiply, and provoke a concerted and determined action in defence of the strongholds of Christian orthodoxy, and as the forces of nationalism, paganism, secularism and racialism move jointly towards a climax, might we not expect that the decline in the power, the authority, and the prestige of these ecclesiastics will be accentuated, and further demonstrate the truth, and more fully unfold the implications, of Bahá'u'lláh's pronouncement predicting the eclipse of the luminaries of the Church of Jesus Christ.

Devastating indeed has been the havoc wrought in the fortunes of the Shí'ih hierarchy in Persia, and pitiable the lot reserved for its remnant now groaning under the yoke of a civil authority it had for centuries scorned and dominated. Cataclysmic indeed has been the collapse of the most preeminent institution of Sunnī Islám, and irretrievable the downfall of its

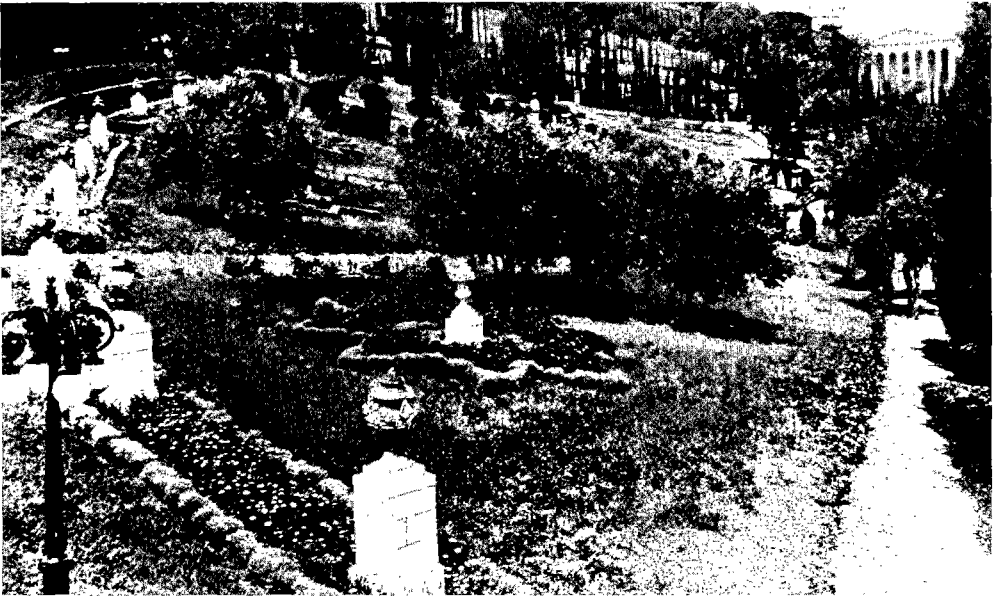
hierarchy in a country that had championed the cause of the self-styled vicar of the Prophet of God. Steady and relentless is the process which has brought such destruction, shame, division, and weakness to the defenders of the strongholds of Christian ecclesiasticism, and black indeed are the clouds that darken its horizon. Through the actions of Muslim and Christian divines—*idols*, whom Bahá'u'lláh has stigmatized as constituting the majority of His enemies—who failed, as commanded by Him, to lay aside their pens and fling away their fancies, and who, as He Himself testified, had they believed in Him would have brought about the conversion of the masses, Islám and Christianity have, it would be no exaggeration to say, entered the most critical phase of their history.

Let none, however, mistake my purpose, or misrepresent this cardinal truth which is of the essence of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. The divine origin of all the Prophets of God—including Jesus Christ and the Apostle of God, the two greatest Manifestations preceding the Revelation of the Báb—is unreservedly and unshakably upheld by each and every follower of the Bahá'í religion. The fundamental unity of these Messengers of God is clearly recognized, the continuity of their Revelations is affirmed, the God-given authority and correlative character of their Books is admitted, the singleness of their aims and purposes is proclaimed, the uniqueness of their influence emphasized, the ultimate reconciliation of their teachings and followers taught and anticipated. *They all, according to Bahá'u'lláh's testimony, abide in the same tabernacle, soar in the same heaven, are seated upon the same throne, utter the same speech, and proclaim the same Faith.*

The Faith standing identified with the name of Bahá'u'lláh disclaims any intention to belittle any of the Prophets gone before Him, to whittle down any of their teachings, to obscure, however slightly, the radiance of their Revelations, to oust them from the hearts of their followers, to abrogate the fundamentals of their doctrines, to disregard any of their revealed Books, or to suppress the legitimate aspirations of their adherents. Repudiating the claim of any religion to be the final revelation of God to man, disclaiming finality for His own Revelation, Bahá'u'lláh inculcates the basic principle of the relativity of religious truth, the continuity of Divine Rev-

elation, the progressiveness of religious experience. His aim is to widen the basis of all revealed religions and to unravel the mysteries of their scriptures. He insists on the unqualified recognition of the unity of their purpose, restates the eternal verities they enshrine, coordinates their functions, distinguishes the essential and the authentic from the non-essential and spurious in their teachings, separates the God-given truths from the priest-prompted superstitions, and on this as a basis proclaims the possibility, and even prophesies the inevitability, of their unification, and the consummation of their highest hopes.

Nor should it be thought for a moment that the followers of Bahá'u'lláh either seek to degrade or even belittle the rank of the world's religious leaders, whether Christian, Muslim, or of any other denomination, should their conduct conform to their professions, and be worthy of the position they occupy. *Those divines, Bahá'u'lláh has affirmed, . . . who are truly adorned with the ornament of knowledge and of a goodly character are, verily, as a head to the body of the world, and as eyes to the nations. The guidance of men hath, at all times, been and is dependent upon these blessed souls. And again: The divine whose conduct is upright, and the sage who is just, are as the spirit unto the body of the world. Well is it with that divine whose head is attired with the crown of justice, and whose temple is adorned with the ornament of equity. And yet again: The divine who hath seized and quaffed the most holy Wine, in the name of the sovereign Ordainer, is as an eye unto the world. Well is it with them who obey him, and call him to remembrance. Great is the blessedness of that divine, He, in another connection has written, that hath not allowed knowledge to become a veil between him and the One Who is the Object of all knowledge, and who, when the Self-Subsisting appeared, hath turned with a beaming face towards Him. He, in truth, is numbered with the learned. The inmates of Paradise seek the blessing of his breath, and his lamp sheddeth its radiance over all who are in heaven and on earth. He, verily, is numbered with the inheritors of the Prophets. He that beholdeth him hath, verily, beheld the True One, and he that turneth towards him hath, verily, turned towards God, the Almighty, the All-Wise. Respect ye the divines amongst you, is His exhortation, they whose acts*



View of the arc on Mount Carmel looking towards the Bahá'í International Archives building; 1973. Around this arc, wrote Shoghi Effendi, 'the edifices destined to serve as the seat of the future Bahá'í World Commonwealth are to be erected.'



The Shrine on Mount Carmel of Bahíyyih Khánum, daughter of Bahá'u'lláh. 'The conjunction of the resting-place of the Greatest Holy Leaf with those of her brother and mother,' Shoghi Effendi wrote, 'incalculably reinforces the spiritual potencies of that consecrated Spot which . . . is destined to evolve into the focal centre of those world-shaking, world-embracing, world-directing administrative institutions ordained by Bahá'u'lláh and anticipated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá.'

conform to the knowledge they possess, who observe the statutes of God, and decree the things God hath decreed in the Book. Know ye that they are the lamps of guidance betwixt earth and

heaven. They that have no consideration for the position and merit of the divines amongst them have, verily, altered the bounty of God vouchsafed unto them.

3

Dear friends! I have, in the preceding pages, attempted to represent this world-afflicting ordeal that has laid its grip upon mankind as primarily a judgement of God pronounced against the peoples of the earth, who, for a century, have refused to recognize the One Whose advent had been promised to all religions, and in Whose Faith all nations can alone, and must eventually, seek their true salvation.

This great retributive calamity, for which the world's supreme leaders, both secular and religious, are to be regarded as primarily answerable, as testified by Bahá'u'lláh, should not, if we would correctly appraise it, be regarded solely as a punishment meted out by God to a world that has, for a hundred years, persisted in its refusal to embrace the truth of the redemptive Message proffered to it by the supreme Messenger of God in this day. It should be viewed also, though to a lesser degree, in the light of a divine retribution for the perversity of the human race in general, in casting itself adrift from those elementary principles which must, at all times, govern, and can alone safeguard, the life and progress of mankind. Humanity has, alas, with increasing insistence, preferred, instead of acknowledging and adoring the Spirit of God as embodied in His religion in this day, to worship those false idols, untruths and half-truths, which are obscuring its religions, corrupting its spiritual life, convulsing its political institutions, corroding its social fabric, and shattering its economic structure.

Not only have the peoples of the earth ignored, and some of them even assailed, a Faith which is at once the essence, the promise, the reconciler, and the unifier of all religions, but they have drifted away from their own religions, and set up on their subverted altars other gods wholly alien not only to the spirit but to the traditional forms of their ancient faiths.

The face of the world, Bahá'u'lláh laments, hath altered. The way of God and the religion of God have ceased to be of any worth in the eyes of men. The vitality of men's belief in God, He also

has written, is dying out in every land . . . The corrosion of ungodliness is eating into the vitals of human society. Religion, He affirms, is verily the chief instrument for the establishment of order in the world, and of tranquillity amongst its peoples. . . . The greater the decline of religion, the more grievous the waywardness of the ungodly. This cannot but lead in the end to chaos and confusion. And again: Religion is a radiant light and an impregnable stronghold for the protection and welfare of the peoples of the world. As the body of man, He, in another connection, has written, needeth a garment to clothe it, so the body of mankind must needs be adorned with the mantle of justice and wisdom. Its robe is the Revelation vouchsafed unto it by God.

This vital force is dying out, this mighty agency has been scorned, this radiant light is obscured, this impregnable stronghold abandoned, this beauteous robe discarded. God Himself has indeed been dethroned from the hearts of men, and an idolatrous world passionately and clamorously hails and worships the false gods which its own idle fancies have fatuously created, and its misguided hands so impiously exalted. The chief idols in the desecrated temple of mankind are none other than the triple gods of Nationalism, Racialism and Communism, at whose altars governments and peoples, whether democratic or totalitarian, at peace or at war, of the East or of the West, Christian or Islamic, are, in various forms and in different degrees, now worshipping. Their high priests are the politicians and the worldly-wise, the so-called sages of the age; their sacrifice, the flesh and blood of the slaughtered multitudes; their incantations outworn shibboleths and insidious and irreverent formulas; their incense, the smoke of anguish that ascends from the lacerated hearts of the bereaved, the maimed, and the homeless.

The theories and policies, so unsound, so pernicious, which deify the state and exalt the nation above mankind, which seek to subordinate the sister races of the world to one

single race, which discriminate between the black and the white, and which tolerate the dominance of one privileged class over all others—these are the dark, the false, and crooked doctrines for which any man or people who believes in them, or acts upon them, must, sooner or later, incur the wrath and chastisement of God.

Contrasting with, and irreconcilably opposed to, these war-engendering, world-convulsing doctrines, are the healing, the saving, the pregnant truths proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh, the Divine Organizer and Saviour of the whole human race—truths which should be regarded as the animating force and the hallmark of His Revelation: *The world is but one country, and mankind its citizens. Let not a man glory in that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind.* And again: *Ye are the fruits of one tree, and the leaves of one branch. Bend your minds and wills to the education of the peoples and kindreds of the earth, that haply . . . all mankind may become the upholders of one order, and the inhabitants of one city . . . Ye dwell in one world, and have been created through the operation of one Will. Beware lest the desires of the flesh and of a corrupt inclination provoke divisions among you. Be ye as the fingers of one hand, the members of one body.* And yet again: *All the saplings of the world have appeared from one Tree, and all the drops from one Ocean, and all beings owe their existence to one Being.* And furthermore: *That one indeed is a man who today dedicateth himself to the service of the entire human race.*

Not only must irreligion and its monstrous offspring, the triple curse that oppresses the soul of mankind in this day, be held responsible for the ills which are so tragically besetting it, but other evils and vices, which are, for the most part, the direct consequences of the *weakening of the pillars of religion*, must also be regarded as contributory factors to the manifold guilt of which individuals and nations stand convicted. The signs of moral downfall, consequent to the dethronement of religion and the enthronement of these usurping idols, are too numerous and too patent for even a superficial observer of the state of present-day society to fail to notice. The spread of lawlessness, of drunkenness, of gambling, and of crime; the inordinate love of pleasure, of riches, and other earthly vanities; the laxity in morals, revealing itself in the

irresponsible attitude towards marriage, in the weakening of parental control, in the rising tide of divorce, in the deterioration in the standard of literature and of the press, and in the advocacy of theories that are the very negation of purity, of morality and chastity—these evidences of moral decadence, invading both the East and the West, permeating every stratum of society, and instilling their poison in its members of both sexes, young and old alike, blacken still further the scroll upon which are inscribed the manifold transgressions of an unrepentant humanity.

Small wonder that Bahá'u'lláh, the Divine Physician, should have declared: *In this day the tastes of men have changed, and their power of perception hath altered. The contrary winds of the world, and its colours, have provoked a cold, and deprived men's nostrils of the sweet savours of Revelation.*

Brimful and bitter indeed is the cup of humanity that has failed to respond to the summons of God as voiced by His Supreme Messenger, that has dimmed the lamp of its faith in its Creator, that has transferred, in so great a measure, the allegiance owed Him to the gods of its own invention, and polluted itself with the evils and vices which such a transference must necessarily engender.

Dear friends! It is in this light that we, the followers of Bahá'u'lláh, should regard this visitation of God which, in the concluding years of the first century of the Bahá'í era, afflicts the generality, and has thrown into such a bewildering confusion the affairs, of mankind. It is because of this dual guilt, the things it has done and the things it has left undone, its misdeeds as well as its dismal and signal failure to accomplish its clear and unmistakable duty towards God, His Messenger, and His Faith, that this grievous ordeal, whatever its immediate political and economic causes, has laid its adamant grip upon it.

God, however, as has been pointed out in the very beginning of these pages, does not only punish the wrong-doings of His children. He chastises because He is just, and He chastens because He loves. Having chastened them, He cannot, in His great mercy, leave them to their fate. Indeed, by the very act of chastening them He prepares them for the mission for which He has created them. *My calamity is My providence*, He, by the mouth of Bahá'u'lláh, has assured

them, *outwardly it is fire and vengeance, but inwardly it is light and mercy.*

The flames which His Divine justice have kindled cleanse an unregenerate humanity, and fuse its discordant, its warring elements as no other agency can cleanse or fuse them. It is not only a retributory and destructive fire, but a disciplinary and creative process, whose aim is the salvation, through unification, of the entire planet. Mysteriously, slowly, and resistlessly God accomplishes His design, though the sight that meets our eyes in this day be the spectacle of a world hopelessly entangled in its own meshes, utterly careless of the Voice which, for a century, has been calling it to God, and miserably subservient to the siren voices which are attempting to lure it into the vast abyss.

God's purpose is none other than to usher in, in ways He alone can bring about, and the full significance of which He alone can fathom, the Great, the Golden Age of a long-divided, a long-afflicted humanity. Its present state, indeed even its immediate future, is dark, distressingly dark. Its distant future, however, is radiant, gloriously radiant—so radiant that no eye can visualize it.

The winds of despair, writes Bahá'u'lláh, as He surveys the immediate destinies of mankind, *are, alas, blowing from every direction, and the strife that divides and afflicts the human race is daily increasing. The signs of impending convulsions and chaos can now be discerned, inasmuch as the prevailing order appears to be lamentably defective. Such shall be its plight*, He, in another connection, has declared, *that to disclose it now would not be meet and seemly. These fruitless strifes*, He, on the other hand, contemplating the future of mankind, has emphatically prophesied, in the course of His memorable interview with the Persian orientalist, Edward G. Browne, *these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come. . . . These strifes and this bloodshed and discord must cease, and all men be as one kindred and one family. Soon, He predicts, will the present-day order be rolled up, and a new one spread out in its stead. After a time*, He also has written, *all the governments on earth will change. Oppression will envelop the world. And following a universal convulsion, the sun of justice will rise from the horizon of the unseen realm. The whole earth*, He, moreover, has stated, *is now in a state of pregnancy. The day is approaching when it will*

have yielded its noblest fruits, when from it will have sprung forth the loftiest trees, the most enchanting blossoms, the most heavenly blessings. All nations and kindreds, 'Abdu'l-Bahá likewise has written, . . . will become a single nation. Religious and sectarian antagonism, the hostility of races and peoples, and differences among nations, will be eliminated. All men will adhere to one religion, will have one common faith, will be blended into one race, and become a single people. All will dwell in one common fatherland, which is the planet itself.

What we witness at the present time, during 'this gravest crisis in the history of civilization,' recalling such times in which 'religions have perished and are born,' is the adolescent stage in the slow and painful evolution of humanity, preparatory to the attainment of the stage of manhood, the stage of maturity, the promise of which is embedded in the teachings, and enshrined in the prophecies, of Bahá'u'lláh. The tumult of this age of transition is characteristic of the impetuosity and irrational instincts of youth, its follies, its prodigality, its pride, its self-assurance, its rebelliousness, and contempt of discipline.

The ages of its infancy and childhood are past, never again to return, while the Great Age, the consummation of all ages, which must signalize the coming of age of the entire human race, is yet to come. The convulsions of this transitional and most turbulent period in the annals of humanity are the essential prerequisites, and herald the inevitable approach, of that Age of Ages, *the time of the end*, in which the folly and tumult of strife that has, since the dawn of history, blackened the annals of mankind, will have been finally transmuted into the wisdom and the tranquillity of an undisturbed, a universal, and lasting peace, in which the discord and separation of the children of men will have given way to the world-wide reconciliation, and the complete unification of the divers elements that constitute human society.

This will indeed be the fitting climax of that process of integration which, starting with the family, the smallest unit in the scale of human organization, must, after having called successively into being the tribe, the city-state and the nation, continue to operate until it culminates in the unification of the whole world, the final object and the crowning glory of human evolution on this planet. It is this stage

which humanity, willingly or unwillingly, is resistlessly approaching. It is for this stage that this vast, this fiery ordeal which humanity is experiencing is mysteriously paving the way. It is with this stage that the fortunes and the purpose of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh are indissolubly linked. It is the creative energies which His Revelation has released in the *year sixty*, and later reinforced by the successive effusions of celestial power vouchsafed in the *year nine* and the *year eighty* to all mankind, that have instilled into humanity the capacity to attain this final stage in its organic and collective evolution. It is with the Golden Age of His Dispensation that the consummation of this process will be for ever associated. It is the structure of His New World Order, now stirring in the womb of the administrative institutions He Himself has created, that will serve both as a pattern and a nucleus of that world commonwealth which is the sure, the inevitable destiny of the peoples and nations of the earth.

This is the stage which the world is now approaching, the stage of world unity, which, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá assures us, will, in this century, be securely established. *The Tongue of Grandeur*, Bahá'u'lláh Himself affirms, *hath . . . in the Day of His Manifestation proclaimed: 'It is not his to boast who loveth his country, but it is his who loveth the world.'* Through the power, He adds, *released by these exalted words He hath lent a fresh impulse, and set a new direction, to the birds of men's hearts, and hath obliterated every trace of restriction and limitation from God's Holy Book.*

A word of warning should, however, be uttered in this connection. The love of one's country, instilled and stressed by the teaching of Islám, as *an element of the Faith of God* has not, through this declaration, this clarion-call of Bahá'u'lláh, been either condemned or disparaged. It should not, indeed it cannot, be construed as a repudiation, or regarded in the light of a censure pronounced against, a sane and intelligent patriotism, nor does it seek to undermine the allegiance and loyalty of any individual to his country, nor does it conflict with the legitimate aspirations, rights, and duties of any individual state or nation. All it does imply and proclaim is the insufficiency of patriotism, in view of the fundamental changes effected in the economic life of society and the interdependence of the nations, and as the

consequence of the contraction of the world, through the revolution in the means of transportation and communication—conditions that did not and could not exist either in the days of Jesus Christ or of Muḥammad. It calls for a wider loyalty, which should not, and indeed does not, conflict with lesser loyalties. It instills a love which, in view of its scope, must include and not exclude the love of one's own country. It lays, through this loyalty which it inspires, and this love which it infuses, the only foundation on which the concept of world citizenship can thrive, and the structure of world unification can rest. It does insist, however, on the subordination of national considerations and particularistic interests to the imperative and paramount claims of humanity as a whole, inasmuch as in a world of interdependent nations and peoples the advantage of the part is best to be reached by the advantage of the whole.

The world is, in truth, moving on towards its destiny. The interdependence of the peoples and nations of the earth, whatever the leaders of the divisive forces of the world may say or do, is already an accomplished fact. Its unity in the economic sphere is now understood and recognized. The welfare of the part means the welfare of the whole, and the distress of the part brings distress to the whole. The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh has, in His own words, *lent a fresh impulse and set a new direction* to this vast process now operating in the world. The fires lit by this great ordeal are the consequences of men's failure to recognize it. They are, moreover, hastening its consummation. Adversity, prolonged, world-wide, afflictive, allied to chaos and universal destruction, must needs convulse the nations, stir the conscience of the world, disillusion the masses, precipitate a radical change in the very conception of society, and coalesce ultimately the disjointed, the bleeding limbs of mankind into one body, single, organically united, and indivisible.

To the general character, the implications and features of this world commonwealth, destined to emerge, sooner or later, out of the carnage, agony, and havoc of this great world convulsion, I have already referred in my previous communications. Suffice it to say that this consummation will, by its very nature, be a gradual process, and must, as Bahá'u'lláh has Himself anticipated, lead at first to the establish-

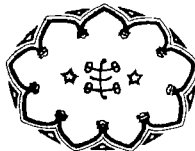
ment of that Lesser Peace which the nations of the earth, as yet unconscious of His Revelation and yet unwittingly enforcing the general principles which He has enunciated, will themselves establish. This momentous and historic step, involving the reconstruction of mankind, as the result of the universal recognition of its oneness and wholeness, will bring in its wake the spiritualization of the masses, consequent to the recognition of the character, and the acknowledgement of the claims, of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh—the essential condition to that ultimate fusion of all races, creeds, classes, and nations which must signalize the emergence of His New World Order.

Then will the coming of age of the entire human race be proclaimed and celebrated by all the peoples and nations of the earth. Then will the banner of the Most Great Peace be hoisted. Then will the world-wide sovereignty of Bahá'u'lláh—the Establisher of the Kingdom of the Father foretold by the Son, and anticipated by the Prophets of God before Him and after Him—be recognized, acclaimed, and firmly established. Then will a world civilization be born, flourish, and perpetuate itself, a civilization with a fullness of life such as the world has never seen nor can as yet conceive. Then will the Everlasting Covenant be fulfilled in its completeness. Then will the promise enshrined in all the Books of God be redeemed, and all the prophecies uttered by the Prophets of old come to pass, and the vision of seers and poets be realized. Then will the planet, galvanized through the universal belief of its dwellers in one God, and their allegiance to one common Revelation, mirror, within the limitations imposed upon it, the

effulgent glories of the sovereignty of Bahá'u'lláh, shining in the plenitude of its splendour in the Abhá Paradise, and be made the footstool of His Throne on high, and acclaimed as the earthly heaven, capable of fulfilling that ineffable destiny fixed for it, from time immemorial, by the love and wisdom of its Creator.

Not ours, puny mortals that we are, to attempt, at so critical a stage in the long and chequered history of mankind, to arrive at a precise and satisfactory understanding of the steps which must successively lead a bleeding humanity, wretchedly oblivious of its God, and careless of Bahá'u'lláh, from its calvary to its ultimate resurrection. Not ours, the living witnesses of the all-subduing potency of His Faith, to question, for a moment, and however dark the misery that enshrouds the world, the ability of Bahá'u'lláh to forge, with the hammer of His Will, and through the fire of tribulation, upon the anvil of this travailing age, and in the particular shape His mind has envisioned, these scattered and mutually destructive fragments into which a perverse world has fallen, into one single unit, solid and indivisible, able to execute His design for the children of men.

Ours rather the duty, however confused the scene, however dismal the present outlook, however circumscribed the resources we dispose of, to labour serenely, confidently and unremittingly to lend our share of assistance, in whichever way circumstances may enable us, to the operation of the forces which, as marshalled and directed by Bahá'u'lláh, are leading humanity out of the valley of misery and shame to the loftiest summits of power and glory.



Symbol of the Greatest Name adopted by Shoghi Effendi for use on his stationery.

حَبْدًا هَذَا الْيَوْمَ الدَّيْمِيَّةُ تَصَوَّرَتْ فِي الْحَرَمِ الْأَمَكِيِّ حَبْدًا هَذَا الْيَوْمَ الْمِيَارَ الَّذِي لَا تُعَادِلُهُ الْقُرُونُ
 وَالْأَعْيُنُ حَبْدًا هَذَا الْيَوْمَ إِذْ تَوَجَّهَ وَجْهَ الْقَدَمِ إِلَى مَقَامِ إِذْ نَامَتْ الْأَشْيَاءُ وَعَمَّ رَأْيُهَا الْمَلَأَ أَعْلَى
 مَا كَرَّمْنَا نَزْلًا بِهَا قَبْلَ الْيَوْمِ وَجَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ لِلْمَلَكِ الْأَسْمَاءُ وَأَوَّضَ السَّمَاءَ إِذْ أَخَذَهَا الصَّبْرُ وَالسُّرُورُ
 وَنَادَى بِعَلَى النَّدَاءِ نَفْسِي قَبْلَ الْكَفْدَاءِ وَأَعْتَبَكَ الْفَدَاءَ وَلِيُحْيِيَ الْفَدَاءَ مِثْلَ كَيْفِي نَامَ طَالِعَ الْجَبْرِ قَالَتْ
 وَأَجْرِي مَحْرُوكَ الْكَلْبِ حَبْدًا صَبْرًا مَعْتَبَرًا مِنْكَ شَرَفِي بِقَدْرِكَ وَجَلِيدِي مِنْ بَيْتِهَا يَا أَيُّهَا صَبْرُ قَدَمِ الْمَلَكِ
 جَعَلْتَهُ صَوْنًا لِي وَعِبَادًا لِي فَلَمَّا جَاءَ الرَّبُّ الْيَوْمَ فِيهِ إِذْ نَامَ الْقِيَمَةُ الْكَلْبِيَّةُ وَطَوَّرَ الْأَسْمَاءَ الْكَلْبِيَّةُ
 فِي حَرَمِ الْمَلِكِ الْأَشْيَاءَ فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ نَدَائُهَا إِلَى السَّقَاةِ الْأَعْلَى فَلَمَّا أَكْرَمَ اجْتِمَاعًا بِرَأْفَقِ الْكَلْبِيَّةِ قَالَتْ
 يَا أَيُّهَا الْفَقْدَانُ يَا أَيُّهَا الْبَحْرُ الْوَصَالُ وَجِهًا بِذَلِكَ قَتَّ عَيْنَكَ عَيْنَ الْوَجُودِ وَالْبَسْمُ شَعْرَتِيكَ الشُّهُودِ
 طَوَّيْتُ لِي بِمَا جَعَلْتَهُ لِي فِي هَذَا الْيَوْمِ عَشْرَةَ وَهَطَّعَ أَيَّامَهُ وَهَشَرَتْ تِلْكَ طَوَّيْتُ لِي عَبْدًا طَوَّيْتُ لِي
 وَدَكَرْتُ لِي وَبَرَّيْتُ لِي وَفَزَيْتُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ رَبِّكَ خَدَمَكَ كَسَّ الْقِيَامَةَ سَمِيرًا يَا أَيُّهَا تَمَّ شَكْلُهُ يَا بَدَلًا
 حُرَمًا يَا لَيْسَ لِي وَصَلًا يَا لَيْسَ لِي الْكَبِيرُ حُرَمًا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ أَنْ يَحِبَّ الْمَقَامَ الَّذِي اسْتَقْرَبْتَهُ عَشْرًا وَتَشَرَّفَ
 بِقَدْرِهِ وَفَارَ بِلِقَائِهِ وَفِيهِ إِزْتَفَعُ نَدَاءَهُ وَصَعِدَ دَفْعًا يَا كَرِيمُ بِشَيْءٍ صَلْبِي قَوْلِي أَلَمْ يَكُنْ
 بِسُلْطَانِ عَالَمِ الْعَالَمِينَ وَبَنُو سُلْطَانِهَا أَشْرَفُ الْأَرْضِ وَمِنْ عَلَيْهَا أَيُّهَا أَنْ تَكُونِي مَعْتَقًا فِي مَقَامِكَ
 اسْرِعْ عَنِّي مَطْوِيًّا مَدِينَةَ اللَّهِ النَّبِيِّ لَتَمَّ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَكَعْبًا أَلَدًا الَّتِي كَانَتْ تَقَاتِلُ الْمُتَمَرِّينَ وَالْمُخَاصِمِينَ
 وَالْمَلَائِكَةَ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالْحَبْرَانَ بِشَرَكٍ بِقَعْدَةٍ مِنْ بَقَاعِ الْأَرْضِ وَكَأَنَّ قَدِيمَةً مَرِيدَةً هَذَا الظُّهُورُ
 الَّذِي الْجَنَابُ فَوَادِ الطَّرِيقِ وَنَادَتْ السَّنْدُ الْمَلِكُ الْمَلَكُ لِلْمَلِكِ رَبِّ الْأَرْضِ هَذَا يَوْمَهُ بِشَرِّ الْجَبْرِ وَالْحَبْرِ
 بِمَا يَطْهَرُ مِنْ عَيْنِي يَا لَيْسَ لِي الْمَكُونُ الْمَسْتَوْعِبُ الْعَقُوقُ الْأَبْصَارُ سَوْجُودِي سَفِينَةَ اللَّهِ عَلِيًّا وَطَوَّيْتُ
 أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ الَّذِينَ ذَكَرْتَهُمْ فِي كِتَابِ الْأَسْمَاءِ تَبَارَكَ مَوْلَى الْعَوْرَةِ الَّذِي يَذْكُرُ فِي حَجَّتِ الذِّبْرَةِ وَطَوَّيْتُ الْعَطَاةَ بِمَا
 كَانَتْ تَأْتِي عَلَيْهِ وَفَحْرًا فِي كَرِيمَةٍ تَأْتِيهِ هُوَ الْهَيْمِيُّ عَلَى مَوْلَى الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَاءِ بِأَسْمَاءِ الْمُسْتَدْرِ الْغَيْرِ الْمَسْبُوعِ ❖

A transcription of the Tablet of Carmel, 'remarkable for its allusions and prophecies', revealed by Bahá'u'lláh in the course of one of His four visits to Haifa 'when His tent was pitched in the vicinity of the Carmelite Monastery' on Mount Carmel (Shoghi Effendi).

PART TWO
THE FIRST HALF CENTURY OF THE
FORMATIVE AGE OF THE BAHÁ'Í
FAITH

I

FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

EUNICE BRAUN

The Cause of God, impelled by the mighty forces of life within it, must go on from strength to strength, increasing in size and developing greater and greater powers for the accomplishment of God's purpose on earth.

The Universal House of Justice.

THE CLOSE OF THE HEROIC AGE

The Passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

EARLY on a November morning in 1921, with darkness on the Mountain of God and on the slopes of Haifa below, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's earthly life ended. The Heroic Age of the Cause of God was drawing to a close, 'that primitive period in which its Founders had lived, in which its life had been generated, in which its greatest heroes had struggled and quaffed the cup of martyrdom'.¹

Through the provisions of His *Will and Testament*, 'Abdu'l-Bahá had forged the vital link which would forever connect the Heroic Age with the Formative Age of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, a transitional stage which Shoghi Effendi said 'must in the fullness of time reach its blossom and yield its fruit in the exploits and triumphs that are to herald the Golden Age of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh'.²

The Heroic Age of the Faith had begun on May 23, 1844 in Shíráz, Persia, with the Call of the Báb, the youthful Prophet-Herald of the Bahá'í Faith. During His brief, turbulent Ministry, thousands of His followers were put to death. Two years after the Báb had been martyred in the public square of Tabríz on July 9, 1850, Bahá'u'lláh Himself was arrested and cast into the Síyáh-Chál, a subterranean dungeon in Tíhrán. He was the Promised One of all ages for Whom the Báb had prepared the way and given His life, and for Whom the world had been

waiting for thousands of years. Forty years of exile and imprisonment were in store for Bahá'u'lláh, during which the full import and grandeur of His Mission would gradually unfold.

The first decade of Bahá'u'lláh's exile in 'Iráq was marked by the revelation of the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* (The Book of Certitude) and the *Hidden Words*, 'two outstanding contributions to the world's religious literature'. On the eve of His forced departure for Constantinople, in April 1863, Bahá'u'lláh made an open declaration of His Mission to His close followers in the Garden of Ríqván outside Baghdád. During the five years of His Turkish exile, spent mostly in Adrianople, Bahá'u'lláh revealed powerful Tablets to the rulers and religious leaders in East and West. For Bahá'u'lláh, His family and faithful followers this was a period of increasing tribulation stirred up by an envious half-brother, Mírzá Yaḥyá, who labored to create doubt and division among the believers, and to plant suspicion in the minds of government officials.

Five years after Bahá'u'lláh's incarceration in the penal colony of 'Akká in 1868, He revealed His Most Holy Book, the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* (the Book of Laws). Shortly after His passing on May 29, 1892, the Book of His Covenant, written entirely in His Own hand, was unsealed and read. It disclosed the appointment of His eldest Son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, as the Center of His Covenant and Interpreter of His Revelation.

¹ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 324.

² Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 98.

This ignited flames of jealousy and rebellion in the heart of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's half-brother, Muḥammad-'Alí, a fire that would rage throughout the Master's life and extend into the early years of Shoghi Effendi's ministry. But the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh had the power to protect His faithful followers from all the forces

that would arise in the future to mar the purity of His Faith or to split its ranks. *So firm and mighty is this Covenant, is the Master's asseveration, that from the beginning of time until the present day no religious Dispensation hath produced its like.*¹



A glimpse of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, 7 Persian Street, Haifa

Three Divine Charters

Toward the close of His life, Bahá'u'lláh revealed the *Tablet of Carmel*, the first of three Divine Charters within the framework of which the Cause of God would unfold. This charter was the impetus and authority for the development of the World Centre as the spiritual focus of the world-wide Bahá'í community and the 'heart and nerve center' of the administrative order. Thus would Mount Carmel one day become the seat of the supreme administrative body, the Universal House of Justice.

During the years 1916 and 1917 'Abdu'l-Bahá revealed the second of these Divine Charters, the *Tablets of the Divine Plan*. This is the charter for the promulgation of the Faith throughout the world, and it conferred the primary responsibility for its discharge upon the North American Bahá'í community.

The third and last of the Divine Charters, the *Will and Testament* of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, written by His own hand, at times under great personal stress and danger, is the charter for the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. It is a document whose provisions were both of immediate application and projecting into the future. Shoghi Effendi

wrote of it: 'We must trust to time, and the guidance of God's Universal House of Justice, to obtain a clearer and fuller understanding of its provisions and implications.'² It gave immediate authority for the development of the administrative institutions of the Faith. This document, 'unique in the annals of the world's religious systems', assured the continuing unity and integrity of the Faith through the appointment of Shoghi Effendi, eldest grandson of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, as Guardian of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. It described the method of electing the Universal House of Justice ordained by Bahá'u'lláh, and the relationship of this supreme institution to the Guardianship and to the secondary Houses of Justice (National Spiritual Assemblies). It called for the appointment and outlined the duties of the Hands of the Cause of God, stressed the supreme authority of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, and warned of the danger and evil of Covenant-breaking. It made teaching the Cause the chief cornerstone of faith.

¹ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 238.

² Shoghi Effendi, *Bahá'í Administration*, p. 62.

THE OPENING OF THE FORMATIVE AGE

(First Epoch 1921–1944)

The Guardianship

WE stand in the shadow of Shoghi Effendi's thirty-six years of Guardianship, too near to see fully the towering heights of his achievement. Even less, perhaps, can we comprehend the staggering effect that his appointment as Guardian of the Cause of God had upon him, a youth of twenty-four years. He was then preparing himself at Oxford University to serve the Faith through mastery of the English language. This followed two years of being the constant companion and secretary of the Master. The Hand of the Cause, 'Amat'u'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm, wife and companion to Shoghi Effendi for twenty years, gives us, in her book *The Priceless Pearl*, a moving insight into the effect the appointment had upon his pure and sensitive nature, coupled with the sudden loss of his beloved Grandfather.

Aided by Bahíyyih Khánúm, the sister of 'Abdu'l-Bahá known as the Greatest Holy Leaf, Shoghi Effendi took immediate steps to rally the Bahá'is around the world. Within a few weeks he had made contact with the High Commissioner of Palestine, appealed to the Persian believers for steadfastness, written to Bahá'is

in the Far East, and penned a deeply moving letter to the Bahá'is of North America, recalling the Master's great trust in the believers there. Soon after this the head of the British Mandatory Government gave official recognition to Shoghi Effendi as head of the Faith.

Brought low by grief and fatigue and by the renewal of vicious attacks from ever-watchful Covenant-breakers, the youthful Shoghi Effendi withdrew from the Holy Land in April 1922, seeking refuge in the mountains of Europe. It was a period of 'communion with himself and his destiny', a time to marshal his strength. Some months later he returned to the Holy Land, 'with renewed hope and vigor', to shoulder the unprecedented burden of the Guardianship. Messages to Assemblies and to individual Bahá'is began to flow—a fresh stream that would become a mighty river in the years to come. Within his first year he wrote scores of letters to Bahá'is throughout the world. They were messages of high vision and hope, calling the believers to bend their efforts towards Bahá'u'lláh's 'great purpose for mankind.'

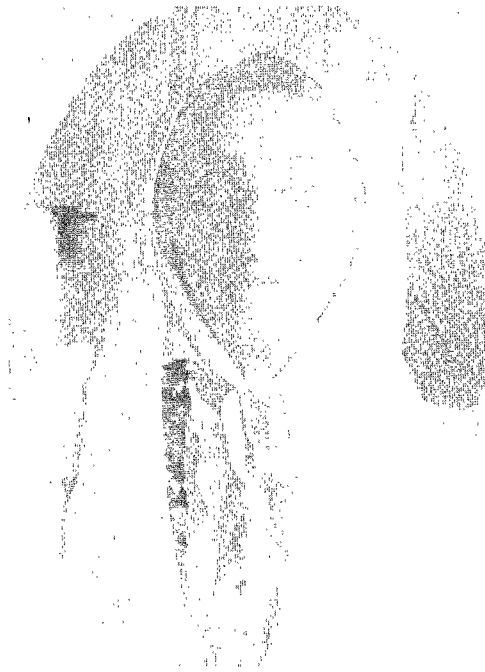
First Steps of the Administrative Order

The work of raising the administrative structure, so clearly envisaged by Shoghi Effendi, was only dimly understood by the Bahá'is at the time. But the great majority of them loved and trusted this 'priceless pearl' bestowed upon them by the Master. Under the loving guidance of their Guardian, the believers around the world began to lay the foundations of the administrative order with the far goal of erecting the Universal House of Justice, ordained by Bahá'u'lláh and delineated in the *Will and Testament* of the Master.

Shoghi Effendi, 'true brother' to every devoted Bahá'í, patiently outlined the way in which local and national Assemblies should be elected, the manner of their functioning, and the spiritual qualities needed by the members to

assure success. He stressed the loving, frank spirit of consultation that must underlie every effort. Before the close of his second year as Guardian, he had sent forth detailed guidelines on building the Mother Temple of the West in Wilmette, Illinois, stressed the importance of the Bahá'í Fund, had given standards for publishing activities, encouraged the holding of summer schools and outlined the pattern of committee work.

Raising and guiding the Assemblies was to receive the greater part of Shoghi Effendi's attention for sixteen years. But he never let the Bahá'is lose sight of the main goal: 'to bury our cares and teach the Cause, delivering far and wide this Message of Salvation to a sorely-stricken world.' It was the 'most urgent' of all



Bahiyih (Bahá'íyyih) Khánúm, 'The Greatest Holy Leaf', as she appeared in 1919. A brief account of her life appears on p. 73.

obligations, the purpose for which the Divine institutions were being raised. With all the practical work to be done, personal character was the essential foundation: 'Nothing but the abundance of our actions, nothing but the purity of our lives and the integrity of our characters, can . . . establish our claim that the Bahá'í spirit is in this day the sole agency that can translate a long-cherished ideal into an enduring achievement.'¹

Only a scattering of local Assemblies and Bahá'í centers existed in 1921 throughout North America, Europe, the Caucasus, India, Persia, the Near East and Australasia. Bahá'u'lláh Himself had sent forth traveling teachers to carry His Message abroad. 'Abdu'l-Bahá had called upon Eastern and Western believers, 'Heralds of the Covenant', to make teaching journeys. Now, gradually, the first National Spiritual Assemblies were established: the British Isles, Germany and Austria, India and Burma in 1923; Egypt and Sudan in 1924; the United States and Canada in 1925; 'Iráq in 1931; Persia, Australia and New Zealand in 1934. They were like beacon lights around the

¹ *ibid.*, p. 68.

world connected to the powerful dynamo that was the Guardianship. Only in America, however, could the building of the administrative order proceed steadily, unhindered by restrictions, persecution and the ravages of war.

The Master had chosen North America and given it primacy in the implementation of His Divine Plan. It was, He said, a nation that had developed powers and capacities that would enable it to be the first to build the Tabernacle of the Great Peace and proclaim the oneness of mankind throughout the world. As a result of His visit to North America in 1912, the light of Divine Revelation that had risen in the East was being poured upon the West, even as the Báb had foretold. America was being raised up by the Hand of God to be 'the cradle and stronghold of the Administrative Order of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh',² the land from which the Call of the Kingdom would be raised in all regions.

An early milestone was the formulation of the Declaration of Trust and By-Laws of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada, in 1927. Five years later a similar document for Local Spiritual

² Shoghi Effendi, *Citadel of Faith*, p. 34.

Assemblies was put into effect for the Spiritual Assembly of New York City. Both became patterns to be adopted by Bahá'í communities around the world. These documents define the character and purpose of the Bahá'í community, the method of elections and the authority and functions of elected Assemblies. They set forth the relationship of these bodies to each other, to the Guardian, and to the Universal House of Justice, and provide a legal basis for incorporation and for the ownership of property. The national charters, Shoghi Effendi stated, would pave the way for the Constitution 'upon which the blest and sanctified edifice of the first International House of Justice' would one day 'securely rest and flourish'.

Tribulation and Triumph

Sixteen years would elapse before the world mission outlined in the *Tablets of the Divine Plan* could be set in motion. During this period the Faith remained mostly in the shadow of world attention, leaving the Bahá'í community free to proceed actively with the building of its administrative order. On the other hand, a number of attacks and persecutions occurred that brought the Faith sharply to the attention of world leaders. The Master had warned that such attacks would come and grow more fierce in the future, initially from fanatical religious leaders who feared loss of their power and position. As the Faith grew, enfolding all races, classes and religions, envious minds would be seized with jealousy and suspicion. Nevertheless, these attacks, borne steadfastly by the friends, would only cause the Faith to advance more swiftly and strongly.

Such an attack soon came in *Baghdád*. The House of Bahá'u'lláh, declared by Him to be a place of future pilgrimage, was seized by enemies in 1925. When all appeals through the religious courts of the land had failed, the case was brought before the League of Nations. The Permanent Mandates Commission of this body ruled in favor of the Bahá'í claim. 'Iráq, then under British Mandate, was pressed for action—but none came. The League's Commission expressed its concern, year after year. Mountfort Mills, an international lawyer and a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada, acting on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, had several audiences with

King Feisal of 'Iráq and the King assured him of 'Iráq's compliance with the decision rendered by the League. Then a series of events, including the deaths of the 'Iráqí Prime Minister and of King Feisal himself, as well as the admission of 'Iráq to the League in 1932, brought matters to a standstill. Bahá'u'lláh had foretold both the calamity and eventual liberation of His House: *Grieve not, O House of God, if the veil of thy sanctity be rent asunder . . . In the fullness of time, the Lord shall, by the power of truth, exalt it in the eyes of all men.*¹ Though outwardly a calamity, this event served to bring the Faith to the attention of governments and world leaders as nothing else had done since the birth of the Formative Age, the Guardian declared.

During the same period, the Bahá'ís of Egypt suffered grave injustices through rulings of the Muslim Ecclesiastical Court. They were declared heretics, denied the use of cemeteries and harassed by many other legal difficulties. At this time, the highest Muslim court ruled the Bahá'í Faith to be a new, independent religion, entirely outside the laws of Islám. This verdict was intended to bring humiliation and hardship upon the Bahá'ís of Egypt, which in many ways it did. But it also became, in the words of Shoghi Effendi, 'the first charter of the emancipation of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh from the fetters of Islamic orthodoxy'.²

Difficulties of a different nature arose for the believers in Turkistán where a Bahá'í community had flourished since the days of Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'í schools were already in operation in 1897, and the first House of Worship in the Bahá'í world had been built in 'Ishqábád in 1908. Believers there, as elsewhere in the world, were strictly obedient to their government and did not in any way mingle in political affairs. But the policies of the new regime that had arisen after the first World War brought restrictions in 1928. Ten years later the Bahá'í Temple was confiscated by the civil authorities, the schools were closed, and the Bahá'í community was disbanded.

Persia, cradle of the Faith, whose earth had been stained by the blood of the martyrs and of the blessed Báb Himself, is second only to the Holy Land in ties of love that bind together the hearts of Bahá'ís throughout the world. Its

¹ Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 114-115.

² Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 366.

leaders inflicted untold pain and hardship on the Promised One of God and banished Him from His homeland forever—yet, its future is glorious. Bahá'u'lláh has written: *Let nothing grieve thee, O Land of Tā (Tīhrán), for God hath chosen thee to be the source of the joy of all mankind. . . The day is approaching when thy agitation will have been transmuted into peace and quiet calm.*¹

The fall of the Qájár dynasty and the coming of a new, more enlightened regime gave hope to the Bahá'ís that the longed-for day of 'peace and quiet calm' was in some degree approaching.

The Master had sent many Persian teachers to America and the Persian Bahá'ís looked for the day when Bahá'ís from the West would come to their aid, as promised. Dr. Susan Moody had earlier spent fifteen years in Tīhrán when in 1928, at seventy-seven years of age, she was asked by Shoghi Effendi to return. Assisted at various times by other believers she had played an important part in the founding of the Tarbiyat schools, had established medical services for women and aided the repressed women of that land to raise their status. She was highly honored by the Persian government. But persecution arose again and was at its height when she died in 1934. Schools that had served Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís alike were closed throughout Persia. Bahá'í Centers were seized. A ban was placed against Bahá'í literature.

In the summer of 1932, Keith Ransom-Kehler, representing the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada, made an historic journey to Persia to appeal in person to the Sháh. This followed many weeks of counsel from the Guardian in the Holy Land. Her first interview with the Minister of the Court gave promise of an immediate removal of the ban on literature. But this did not take place and shortly the Minister himself was removed from office. During the course of fifteen months, Mrs. Ransom-Kehler made repeated appeals to the Sháh. No acknowledgement came; no interview was granted. In addition to pouring out her mind and spirit on this mission, she traveled thousands of miles throughout Persia, meeting the Bahá'ís, teaching administration, encouraging Bahá'í women to take their rightful place in the work of the Faith. Long, heartbreaking months of striving and waiting, as well as

ceaseless efforts to meet with Bahá'ís, exhausted her. She contracted smallpox in Işfáhán and died within a few days, on October 23, 1933. She was buried near the graves of the King of Martyrs and the Beloved of Martyrs, heroic brothers sacrificed in the time of Bahá'u'lláh. The soil of Persia now received the remains of the 'first American martyr' and a Hand of the Cause from the West, Shoghi Effendi having elevated her to that rank at her passing. She was one of those whom the Guardian later called 'three heroines' of the Faith in America. The others were Martha Root and May Maxwell.

The First to Arise

Although the *Tablets of the Divine Plan* would not be put into operation with an organized teaching plan until 1937, there were those who arose early to carry the Message around the world. Even before the revelation of the Tablets, great services had been rendered by Lua Getsinger, who went to India at the Master's request and passed away in Egypt in 1916; by Alma Knobloch in Germany; her sister Fanny in South Africa; and by many others, too numerous to name, in other parts of the world.

Among the most notable responses made to the Tablets were the unique services of Martha Root in Latin America, Europe and the Orient; the services of Hyde and Clara Dunn in Australia; and those of Mrs. H. Emogene Hoagg and Marion Jack in Alaska.

Martha Root, who became the 'star-servant' of Bahá'u'lláh, was the first to arise in the very year the Tablets were read in New York City.* For twenty years she traveled the world as a journalist, spreading the Teachings, circling the globe four times. At all times she was in close touch with Shoghi Effendi and under his guidance. In Japan, she assisted Agnes Alexander, who had already taken the Message there by 1914. Because of the Master's special stress on the future of China, Martha visited that vast country four times. She enlisted in the Cause a Chinese professor, Dr. Y. S. Tsao, who immediately went to work translating Bahá'í literature into Chinese.

The Dowager Queen Marie of Rumania,

*The *Tablets of the Divine Plan*, revealed during 1916-17, were not received until after the Armistice that ended the first World War, when communication with the Holy Land was restored.

¹ Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 110-111.



Her Majesty Dowager Queen Marie of Romania whose 'acknowledgement of the Divine Message stands as the first fruits of the vision which Bahá'u'lláh had seen long before in His captivity, and had announced in His Kitáb-i-Aqdas' (Shoghi Effendi).

granddaughter of Queen Victoria, accepted the Faith through Martha and welcomed her visits many times. Deep appreciation of the Teachings was expressed publicly by the Queen, and by many other world leaders through Martha Root's efforts. She brought the Faith to Latin America as early as 1919, once crossing the Andes on a mule. The Bahá'ís of India and Burma welcomed her on three visits and gratefully utilized her services. She interviewed scores of their high dignitaries and spoke to packed university halls, often accompanied by Professor Pritam Singh, himself a tireless worker for the Cause in India. Australia and New Zealand were stirred to new levels of activity through her visits during which she secured unprecedented publicity. At the wish of the Guardian, she arranged the translation and publication of Bahá'í literature, especially Dr. J. E. Esslemont's *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, in many languages.

Martha Root lies buried in Hawaii, halfway between East and West, where she fell, ill and exhausted, in the autumn of 1939. She was the

'archetype of Bahá'í itinerant teachers,' wrote Shoghi Effendi, 'and the foremost Hand raised by Bahá'u'lláh since 'Abdu'l-Bahá's passing.' He called her the 'Leading Ambassador of His Faith and Pride of Bahá'í teachers, whether men or women, in both the East and the West'.¹

Hyde and Clara Dunn, later named Hands of the Cause, arrived in Sydney, Australia from America in 1920, to become its 'spiritual conquerors'. They took the Message to New Zealand in 1922. Three years later the Bahá'í magazine, *Herald of the South*, began publication. An Assembly was raised in Melbourne in 1923 through the efforts of the Dunns. They welcomed the visits of Martha Root, and of Keith Ransom-Kehler on her Far Eastern journey in 1930. On Keith's visit to New Zealand, the Message was taken to several Maori villages. A National Assembly for Australia and New Zealand was formed in 1934, and the first summer school established at Yerrinbool, Australia, in 1938.

¹ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 386.

Marion Jack of Canada, an early pioneer to Alaska, went to Europe in the 1920s. By 1930 she had found her true goal, Bulgaria, and stayed for the remaining twenty-four years of her life. Her desire to remain at this post persuaded the Guardian to let her stay through the danger and hardship of the second World War. At one time she was ably assisted by George Adam Benke, a native of Russia, who had been taught the Faith by Alma Knobloch in Germany and who, laying down his life in his arduous pioneer post, became the first European Bahá'í martyr. Marion Jack was an 'immortal heroine', Shoghi Effendi cabled at the time of her death in 1954, a 'shining example pioneers present future generations East West'.

Another who responded early to the Tablets was Leonora Holsapple Armstrong, the 'mother of the Bahá'ís of Brazil'. She was honored there in February 1971 for fifty years of constant service to the Cause and soon thereafter was appointed to the Continental Board of Counsellors in South America. Johanna Schubarth returned from America to her native Norway in 1927 to nurse her mother and at the Guardian's request remained until her own death in 1952. He named her the 'mother of the Norwegian Bahá'í community', the 'founder of the Faith in that country'.

These are among the immortal heroes and heroines of the Faith whose hearts responded to the Call of the Master, and who, with the encouragement of the beloved Guardian, served steadfastly to the end of their days. Their self-sacrifice was to become an example and inspiration for all the pioneers who would arise in years to come when the great teaching campaigns were launched by Shoghi Effendi.

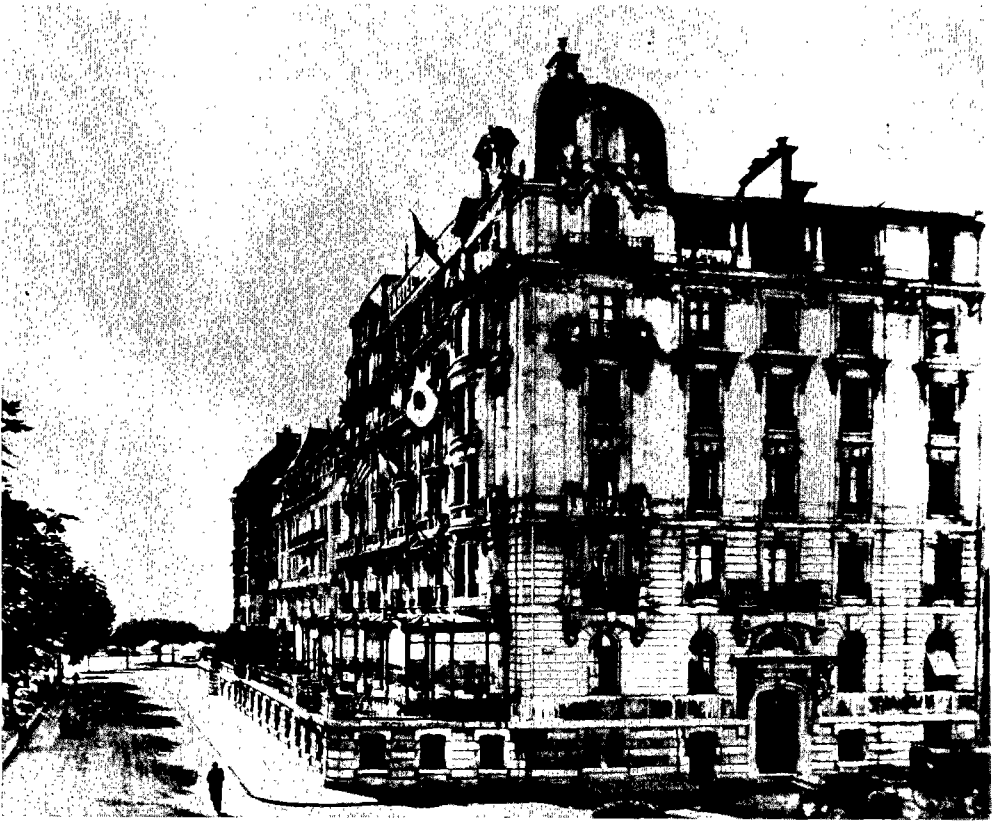
Between Wars in Europe

The old Europe of the 19th century, whose rulers had been called to account by Bahá'u'lláh, was shattered by the Great War of 1914-1918. Out of the chaos a League of Nations was born. One of its first setbacks was its rejection by the government of the United States whose President, Woodrow Wilson, the Guardian wrote in *God Passes By*, '... imbibing some of the principles so clearly enunciated by Him ('Abdu'l-Bahá) in His discourses, ... incorporated them in a Peace Program which

stands out as the boldest and noblest proposal yet made for the well-being and security of mankind.' The Master had already observed in His *Tablet to the Central Organization for a Durable Peace, The Hague*, dated December 17, 1919, that the League suffered from grave limitations. The principles given by Bahá'u'lláh to ensure peace were sadly lacking in the vision of most of its framers. There was no power to enforce its sanctions. In the end, the shortsightedness of the nations prevailed. Nonetheless, in the years following the first World War, which also marked the rise of the Formative Age of the Faith, the League of Nations, seated in Geneva, was a source of hope and idealism to many peace-loving people.

Geneva became the seat of many world movements and peace organizations. An international Bahá'í Bureau was founded there in 1925 through the efforts of Mme. Jeanne Stannard and under the guidance of the Guardian. The story of the development of the Bureau and the services contributed to it by Mrs. H. Emogene Hoagg, Miss Julia Culver, Mrs. Helen Bishop, Lady Blomfield and others from various countries, is told elsewhere. Its international status was soon recognized by the Federation of International Movements, and later by the League itself. Lectures on peace and other matters of international interest were given there by Bahá'ís and others. Esperanto congresses were convened, organized by Martha Root and Lydia Zamenhof, daughter of the founder of this auxiliary language, whom Martha had attracted to the Faith. Visitors came to the Center from many countries. One of these was George Townshend, at that time Canon of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, and Archdeacon of Clonfert, positions he later renounced to devote his entire effort to the service of Bahá'u'lláh. Following a visit to the Bureau in October 1929 he wrote of the spirit there as 'an echo of Haifa'.

The Bahá'í Messenger was published by the Bureau in English, French and German, partially supported by donations from Shoghi Effendi. Although the Bureau had no administrative authority in the Faith, it served in various ways to link the work of Bahá'ís in many countries. One of its most useful services was the translation and publication of literature. This advanced greatly through the efforts of Anne Lynch, a Bahá'í of Russian origin, fluent in five



The Bahá'í International Bureau and offices of the Bahá'í European Teaching Committee were housed for a time in this building, 37, Quai Wilson, Geneva, Switzerland.

other languages. The Bureau was a special source of encouragement to Bahá'ís during and after World War II, until 1957 when it closed.

The tragedy of World War II had its opening scene in Germany, a land that only a few decades earlier had seen *the banks of the Rhine . . . covered with gore*, as warned by Bahá'u'lláh. After the first World War, the Bahá'ís arose to form a National Assembly of Germany and Austria in 1923. The first summer school of Europe began in Esslingen, Germany, a site once blessed by the Master's footsteps. Among its early teachers were Dr. Adelbert Mühl-schlegel and Dr. Hermann Grossmann, both later to be named Hands of the Cause. Then the dark shadows cast by the new regime that had come to power in the spring of 1933 began to reach across the land. Germany withdrew from the League of Nations. Esslingen school, which had seen such a bright array of international visitors, was forced to close in 1936 by order of

the government. That summer the school had reached a high point—May Maxwell, distinguished disciple of the Master, was present, along with her daughter Mary. Mary Maxwell had been teaching for many months in Germany and the following March would become Rúhiyyih Khánum, wife of Shoghi Effendi. In June 1937, the German National Assembly was forced to dissolve and all Bahá'í activities were forbidden.

Before the turn of the century, France had been illumined by the teaching of May Maxwell. She had been deeply attracted to the Cause through Lua Getsinger, one of the first American believers, described by Shoghi Effendi as the 'mother teacher of the West'. Soon after this, in 1898, May journeyed from Paris to 'Akká with Lua, among the first party of Western pilgrims ever to visit the Master. May returned to Paris aflame with the Teachings to attract many who would become brilliant teachers of

the Faith. Among these were Edith McKay (de Bons), the first believer in France; Edith Sanderson; Marion Jack; Thomas Breakwell, the first English Bahá'í; Laura Barney, the interlocutor of *Some Answered Questions*; and Hippolyte Drefus, first native-born French believer.

Hippolyte Dreyfus wrote many books on the Faith and translated Bahá'í writings into French. At one time he presented the Bahá'í teachings at a meeting in Lyons presided over by the celebrated French statesman, M. Edouard Herriott. Until his death in 1928, he assisted Shoghi Effendi in a number of vital international matters. France distinguished itself in the early formative years by holding an annual conference in Paris for all Bahá'í students in Europe.

Most countries of western Europe had some resident believers during this period. Louisa Gregory, wife of Louis Gregory (named first Negro Hand of the Cause at his passing), went to the Balkans in 1928 and helped form the first Bahá'í group in Belgrade. Literature was available in most European languages. By 1937, *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* had been published in thirty-five languages.

This book, first published in England in 1923, was to become one of the most potent teaching tools of the Cause. A year after it appeared, the author, Dr. John E. Esslemont, a physician of Scottish descent, went to Haifa to assist the Guardian. He served for a year until his untimely death and lies buried at the foot of Carmel. He was posthumously appointed a Hand of the Cause. His book, Shoghi Effendi said, would 'alone inspire generations yet unborn to tread the path of truth', a prediction that has already been abundantly fulfilled.

England was the scene of the Master's first public address in the West, delivered at the City Temple, London, on September 10, 1911. The hour of unity of the sons of men had arrived, He declared. These words were echoed in the autumn of 1924 before a large gathering at the Conference of Some Living Religions Within the British Empire. Horace Holley—later to become a Hand of the Cause—wrote a paper for this noted event at Shoghi Effendi's request. It was read by Mountfort Mills.

A World Congress of Faiths, broader in scope, was held in London in 1936. Sir Herbert Samuel, later Viscount Samuel of Carmel, paid

a glowing tribute to the Bahá'í Faith: 'Other faiths and creeds have to consider . . . in what way they can contribute to the idea of world fellowship. But the Bahá'í Faith exists almost for the sole purpose of contributing to the fellowship and the unity of mankind.' The Venerable Archdeacon George Townshend of Ireland prepared a Bahá'í paper for the conference. His brilliant book, *The Promise of All Ages*, was already in publication, a harbinger of many more to come that would so greatly enrich the literature of the Faith. The year 1936 was a significant year for the Bahá'ís of the British Isles. The first summer school was held in August at Matlock, Bath. The British *Bahá'í Journal*, which was to receive high praise from Shoghi Effendi, began publication. The Bahá'í Publishing Trust was formed in 1937; Shoghi Effendi called the British believers to build and develop it with the same dedication that the American friends had given to the building of the Temple in America.

War clouds were now spreading swiftly over Europe and the world. Mussolini's attack on Ethiopia in 1935, the civil war that erupted in Spain in 1936, and the haste of nations to build up arms were signs of the coming convulsion and chaos.

The Far East

The Far East was not spared. Conflict between Japan and China broke out on Chinese soil in 1937. Martha Root herself narrowly escaped from Shanghai under Japanese bombardment. She went to India to spend fifteen months, 'the most outstanding feature in the year', wrote the Indian National Assembly. 'She opened the whole of India for us!'

India was one of the first countries to receive the Faith. During the Ministry of the Báb one of the eighteen Letters of the Living, an Indian, was sent to India by the Báb Himself. One of its first teachers, Jamál Effendi, was sent by Bahá'u'lláh in 1875. He opened Burma shortly thereafter with Siyyid Muşţafá Rúmí, one of the first believers in India. Siyyid-i-Rúmí remained in Burma the rest of his life, bringing an entire village, Daidanaw, into the Faith. In 1899 he had taken to the Holy Land the marble casket made by the Bahá'ís of Mandalay to hold the precious remains of the Báb. He translated

many passages from the Writings into Burmese and founded numerous Bahá'í centers. Siyyid Muşţafá was appointed a Hand of the Cause posthumously.

The vast area of the Indian subcontinent, encumbered by many languages, presented challenges far greater than those confronting many other communities. By the 1930s *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* was already published in Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, Sindhi, Gujrati and Burmese. India was one of the first communities to proclaim the Faith widely to large audiences. Thousands heard of the Teachings in the early formative years through talks at universities, from the platforms of religious and philosophical societies, and through the participation of Bahá'ís in various cultural events. Bahá'í women began early to take part in administrative work. One of the first women of the East to speak on public platforms was a Bahá'í, Mrs. Shirin Fozdar. She acted as the representative for women of both India and Persia at an All-Asian Women's Conference in Lahore in 1931. A Bahá'í summer school was first opened in 1938 in Simla, in the foothills of the Himalaya mountains. One of the earliest Bahá'ís of Hindu background, Narayenrao Vakil, attracted many believers from the Hindu community and served as chairman of the National Assembly for over twenty years. Professor Pritam Singh occupies a unique position in the history of the Bahá'í Faith in India. He was the first member of the Sikh community of India to accept Bahá'u'lláh and devoted his entire life, until his passing in 1959, to the promotion of the Bahá'í Faith.

The Passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf

For many years Bahá'í pilgrims had been privileged to enter the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's 'well-beloved, deeply spiritual sister'. They had shared, in the words of the Guardian, her 'extreme sociability which made her accessible to all; a generosity, a love . . . that reflected so clearly the attributes of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's character . . . a quiet and unassuming disposition that served to enhance a thousand-fold the prestige of her exalted rank'. That rank, bestowed by Bahá'u'lláh, was 'a station such as none other woman hath surpassed'.¹

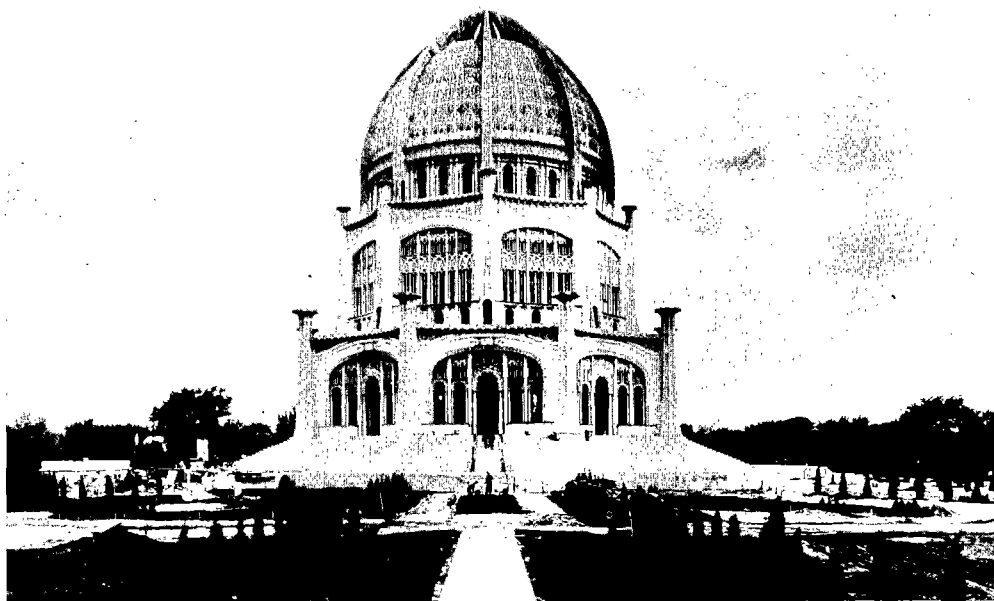
Bahíyyih Khánúm shared the trials and ordeals of her Father, her beautiful, noble mother (Navváb), and her two brothers, from the early days of terror in Tíhrán to the prison confinement in 'Akká. She was in that prison when her youngest brother, Mírzá Míhdi, 'the Purest Branch', fell to his death from the roof. She lived for the purpose of serving Bahá'u'lláh and His Cause. When He ascended, she remained firmly with 'Abdu'l-Bahá against the 'almost entire company of His faithless relatives'. The affairs of the Cause in the Holy Land were placed in her care when the Master made His western journeys.

It was she who cabled the news of the Master's passing to the Bahá'í world, and of the appointment of Shoghi Effendi as Guardian. She stood at the side of the young Guardian with a compassionate love and understanding, coupled with iron steadfastness in the Covenant, that made her a source of comfort and tower of strength to Shoghi Effendi in his early years.

Named 'Bahá'íyyih', she was better known as 'Bahíyyih'. The honorific 'The Most Exalted Leaf', sometimes translated as 'The Greatest Holy Leaf', which Bahá'u'lláh conferred upon her blessed mother, Navváb, was bestowed upon Bahíyyih Khánúm by her Father after the passing of Navváb.

When Bahíyyih Khánúm died in July 1932, Shoghi Effendi built a beautiful marble monument over her resting place on the side of Mount Carmel. He likened its design to the administrative order—the circular steps symbolizing the Local Spiritual Assemblies, its pillars the National Assemblies, crowned by the dome of the Universal House of Justice. She was 'the last survivor of a glorious and heroic age', the Guardian wrote. Her death drew to a close the 'most moving chapter of Bahá'í history'. She had lived to witness the first eleven years of the Formative Age and the steady development of the Administrative Order under the guidance of Shoghi Effendi. Seven years after her passing, Shoghi Effendi was to bring the sacred remains of her mother, Navváb, and of the Purest Branch, to rest beside her. This act, he stated, further reinforced the spiritual potencies of that sacred spot and released forces that would hasten the coming of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

¹ Shoghi Effendi, *Bahá'í Administration*, p. 194.



The first Bahá'í House of Worship in the western hemisphere, situated in the heart of the United States at Wilmette, Illinois. The building was formally dedicated to public worship in 1953 as a highlight of the celebrations marking the centenary of 'the first intimation' Bahá'u'lláh received of His mission. Surrounding the Temple are gardens with fountains and pools, completed in 1955.

The Mother Temple of the West

In the twilight years of the Greatest Holy Leaf, Shoghi Effendi wrote to the believers in North America urging them to proceed with the building of the Bahá'í Temple, news of its progress being the 'one remaining solace in her swiftly ebbing life'. Her longing and hope for this great Mother Temple of the West went back to the Master's words foretelling its glorious future in teaching the Faith. The ground had been hallowed by His footsteps in 1912, but work had proceeded slowly during the first twenty years. Models of the Temple displayed in New York and Chicago art galleries drew the keen interest and admiration of many architects, including the president of the Architectural League. Many called it a 'new creation', a 'Temple of Peace', the 'Temple of Light'. Articles in journals published as far apart as New York and Tokyo described its features and explained its symbology.

Even as many nationalities and races had been present when the Master dedicated the site in Wilmette, so did contributions come from all

over the world. Corinne True, later named a Hand of the Cause, who had been honored by receiving the Master in her home in Chicago, served as the financial secretary, encouraging Bahá'ís in this vast undertaking which the Master had said was 'the most important of all things'.

For eight years the circular basement, resting on steel caissons sunk 122 feet to bedrock, served as a meeting place, but it was unsightly to passersby. In spite of the great economic depression that gripped the nation and the world, Bahá'ís went forward in 1930 to erect the superstructure. The architect, Louis Bourgeois, a French Canadian Bahá'í, who had felt himself an instrument in the hands of a Divine destiny, died that same year. The casting of the beautiful, lacelike forms for the exterior began in 1932. A model shown at the Chicago Century of Progress Exposition in 1933 made thousands of people aware of the Bahá'í Faith. When the first Seven Year Plan was launched in America in 1937, one of its chief goals was the completion of the Temple exterior by May 1944, marking the end of the first century of the Faith.

*America Before the First Seven Year Plan**Early Proclamation and Teaching Efforts*

Prior to the opening of the first Seven Year Plan in 1937, there were no organized teaching plans with specific goals. Nevertheless many Bahá'ís arose to teach throughout North America, Europe, Latin America, Asia and the Pacific Islands. The Faith had been proclaimed at expositions and conferences on peace and world affairs in the United States—echoes of its first mention in that country in 1893 at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago. At that time religious leaders from all over the world, assembled at a World Parliament of Religions, heard the name of Bahá'u'lláh read from a paper prepared by a Christian missionary of those days. In this brief presentation Bahá'u'lláh's words were described as 'noble . . . Christlike' and His famed statement to Professor E. G. Browne of Cambridge was quoted: 'That all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers.'

Nineteen years later the Master Himself declared in San Francisco: *The age has dawned when human fellowship will become a reality . . . all mankind shall dwell in peace and security beneath the shelter of the . . . one living God.*¹ In 1925 this theme was publicly proclaimed again in San Francisco through a World Unity Conference initiated by the Bahá'ís and participated in by outstanding civic leaders.

The first Bahá'í Race Amity Conference was convened in 1921 in Washington, D.C., at the Master's request, largely through the efforts of Mrs. Agnes Parsons. It became the 'mother' of a whole series of similar events which eventually grew into the annual Race Unity Day observed by hundreds of Bahá'í communities. Shoghi Effendi was quick to praise this effort but also urged Bahá'ís to be 'living witnesses' to race unity, after the example set by the Master in America. Louis Gregory, who had participated in the Conference, was the first Bahá'í to make regular circuits to speak on the Faith at Negro colleges in the South. He and Willard McKay became the first Negro-white teaching team in the South, in 1931—a courageous undertaking at that time. Dorothy Baker, later named a Hand of the Cause, followed some few years after, fearlessly giving the Teachings in more

than ninety southern colleges, for both whites and blacks.

The Souvenir of 'Abdu'l-Bahá at West Englewood, New Jersey, became an annual event in memory of the Feast given there by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1912. The property itself was donated in 1935 by Roy Wilhelm, named a Hand of the Cause at his passing.

The first summer school in the United States began at 'Green Acre' in Eliot, Maine, on America's eastern shore. The Faith had been represented there, along with many other religious and cultural movements, before the Master's visit to it in 1912. This open forum of a liberal nature had been initiated in 1892 by Sarah Farmer, daughter of a well-known American inventor.* Sarah became attracted to the Faith, visited the Master in 'Akká in 1900, and thereafter 'Green Acre' steadily developed a greater emphasis on the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. It became Bahá'í property in 1929. A Pacific school was opened at Geyserville, California, in 1927, at the ranch home of John and Louisa Bosch, early believers who deeded it to the Bahá'í Trustees in 1935. Davison Bahá'í school, first called Louhelen Ranch, in the heart of America in Michigan, held its first sessions in 1931 through the efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Lou Eggleston. It later became Bahá'í property.

Publishing Before the First Seven Year Plan

When *The Dawn-Breakers* was first published in the United States in 1932, Shoghi Effendi said it should become an 'unchallengeable textbook' in the summer schools, giving the Bahá'ís of the West an understanding of the spirit that moved the believers of the early Heroic Age. Shoghi Effendi himself compiled, edited and translated this monumental work, even directing details of its design. During these sixteen years of preparation before the first plan was launched, literature in the English language was greatly expanded through the publication of many outstanding texts, particularly Shoghi Effendi's translations of the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh. In addition to various Prayers and Tablets, he translated the following works: *The Kitáb-i-*

* Among notable figures associated with these programs were John Greenleaf Whittier, noted American poet; Booker T. Washington and, at a later time, Mirzá Abu'l-Faql, well-known Persian scholar and learned apologist of the Bahá'í Faith.

¹ 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 364-365.

Íqán (The Book of Certitude), *The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh* (published earlier in England in his own translation), *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* and *Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh*.

With *Some Answered Questions, Paris Talks* and *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*,† all first published in England, various compilations of the Master's talks in the West, and an increasingly diversified list of books and pamphlets written by Bahá'ís, the believers of this time had a greatly enriched treasury of the scriptural, interpretive and expository literature of their Faith in the English language.

A unique publishing endeavor began with the issuance in 1926 of the first volume of *The Bahá'í World*, then called *The Bahá'í Yearbook*. This enterprise was based upon a suggestion from Horace Holley who labored devotedly as secretary of the American National Assembly to develop the Administrative Order under the Guardian's guidance. It received Shoghi Effendi's wholehearted support—he personally selected and arranged the contents of twelve consecutive volumes in his lifetime, all of which were published in the United States under the aegis of the National Spiritual Assembly. The content of these volumes, consisting of a review of international events and documentary material relating to the progress of the Faith was, beginning with volume II, compiled by an international board of editors, under the supervision of Shoghi Effendi.* As succeeding editions were published over the years, thousands of copies were presented to public and university libraries throughout the world and to local, national and international leaders.

Many believers of the Master's time had been initially attracted to the Cause by the spirit of the 'return'. 'Abdu'l-Bahá's fatherly love and noble example, movingly recounted in Howard

Colby Ives' book *Portals to Freedom*, motivated them more to carry out His admonitions than any concept of laying the foundation of a divinely ordained social pattern which they, as yet, could but dimly perceive. It was not only the Guardian's great task to lay the foundation of the Administrative Order as a base for launching the Divine Plan, but especially to educate the Bahá'ís in the meaning of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

From 1929 to 1936, Shoghi Effendi released a series of seven major letters later published in one volume as *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*. These letters disclosed the theme of a divine economy enshrined in Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation. They presented a world nearing the edge of catastrophe, its religious and political institutions unable to stop the drift, and declared the society-building power of the new Revelation. Two forces were at work, Shoghi Effendi explained, the crumbling of an old order and the building of a new one. The work of Bahá'ís in spreading the Faith, with its spirit of unity reflected in its own working pattern, was at the heart of the integrating process. The Lesser Peace, offered by Bahá'u'lláh to a world that had refused His Most Great Peace, would be a political union of the nations, though a spiritually hungry humanity would not find rest until it turned wholeheartedly to Bahá'u'lláh. North America's role in achieving that Most Great Peace was analyzed in one letter and the believers admonished not to relinquish their God-given responsibility and primacy. *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh*, published in 1934, cast a brilliant light upon the Faith itself, the stations of its Central Figures, its links with past and future Dispensations, and the manner in which the creative energies released through Bahá'u'lláh's laws worked through His Administrative Order. The last message of the series, published in 1936, entitled *The Unfoldment of World Civilization*, gave a broad view of the titanic, spiritual upheaval taking place throughout the world in all areas of human life, as society struggled toward the coming of age of the entire human race. This analysis of the processes released by Bahá'u'lláh, coupled with an illuminating glimpse of its consummation in a future Golden Age, immensely expanded the understanding of the believers at this time, as to their sacred, glorious task.

†The first revised edition of this work by Esslemont was published in 1937 under the direction of Shoghi Effendi. In 1950 the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States purchased the publishing rights to this title from Allen and Unwin, London, the original publisher. Acting under the advice of the Universal House of Justice, another revised edition was published in 1970, adding new developments and statistics.

**The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII (1954-1963), was produced at the World Centre under the supervision of the Universal House of Justice which thenceforth assumed responsibility for publication of subsequent volumes.



The summer residence at Yerrinbool, Australia, of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Bolton of Sydney, where the friends gathered for study of the Bahá'í Faith, was dedicated in 1937 as the first Bahá'í Summer School of that country and in January 1938 the first school was held. Mr. and Mrs. John Hyde Dunn are seen seated in the centre of the second row. Mr. and Mrs. Bolton are seen third from the right, back row, and fourth from the right, second row, respectively.

The Promulgation of the Divine Plan

'A new hour has struck', wrote Shoghi Effendi to the North American believers in 1935. Amidst the 'deepening gloom' of the world, the time was drawing near for the Message of Bahá'u'lláh to be carried to the 'countless multitudes that hunger for its teachings'. A year later he further exhorted the American believers: 'The promulgation of the Divine Plan . . . is the key which Providence has placed in the hands of the American believers . . . leading them to fulfill their unimaginably glorious Destiny.'¹

The First Seven Year Plan (1937-1944)

So urgent was this hour in history that the Guardian asked delegates to the Annual Convention of the United States and Canada in 1937 to prolong their sessions and deliberate on the tasks assigned to them in the Seven Year Plan. Its chief objectives were: (1) completion of the exterior of the Temple in Wilmette; (2) the formation of a Spiritual Assembly in each state

and province of North America, and in Alaska; (3) the establishment of a center in each republic of Latin America and the Caribbean.

This Seven Year Plan, initiated by the Guardian, marked the first organized response of the American believers to the mandate given to them in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan, and the first systematic teaching plan in the Bahá'í world. As other National Assemblies were formed and gained in strength, they developed active campaigns and were given similar plans, largely aimed at this time toward their own internal expansion. At a later time all the National Assemblies would become the 'generals' of the 'radiant army of Bahá'u'lláh' whose mission would be the spiritual conquest of the planet.

Now a spiritual army began to take shape in America. Goals were mapped out, committees appointed, funds established, recruits moved into position. The first big exodus of pioneers began. 'To try, to persevere, is to ensure ultimate and complete victory', exclaimed the Guardian. An early prize was the formation in 1938 of the first Latin American Spiritual Assembly, that of Mexico City! The Guardian's

¹ Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to America*, pp. 5, 8.



May Ellis Maxwell, 'beloved handmaid and distinguished disciple' of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, won 'the priceless honour of a martyr's crown' (Shoghi Effendi).

heart was exhilarated by the 'unbroken solidarity and unquenchable enthusiasm' that distinguished this new enterprise.

On December 25, 1938 Shoghi Effendi dispatched a long letter that might be termed a permanent guide for every Bahá'í teacher and pioneer. Published as *The Advent of Divine Justice*, it referred again to America's leading role in proclaiming Bahá'u'lláh's Teachings to the world—that country now being the 'chief remaining citadel' of the Faith in a world that had become an 'armed camp'. The resounding call was to arise and teach; its watchword, the conduct and character of each Bahá'í. These soldiers in the spiritual army of Bahá'u'lláh must stand out brightly against the darkness of the materialism and moral laxity of their culture. Complete freedom from every kind of prejudice must be shown in daily life. Both black and white must do their part to 'heal the wounds' of the past. Teaching the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh meant also to deepen in understanding of His Mission. The Guardian named

an early target for the present Plan: planting the banner of the Faith in Panama, that meeting place of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, an area to which the Master had attached great importance in His Tablets.

In the spring of 1939, Shoghi Effendi warned of the imminent eruption of war. It burst upon Europe in August of that year, a few weeks before the passing of Martha Root in Hawaii. Six months later May Maxwell, spiritual mother of the Faith in France and Canada, won her 'martyr's crown' in Argentina, laying down her life at this southern outpost of the Faith. She was the last of America's 'three heroines' whose dust now lay in far off continents and islands. The passing of these two handmaidens at this time assured the triumph of the new Plan, Shoghi Effendi wrote.

A Bahá'í International School, which was created through the generosity of Loulie Mathews of the Inter-America Committee, opened in Colorado in 1940 especially to train pioneer teachers for the Latin American campaign. When midpoint of the Plan arrived, there were three Assemblies and five groups established in



Martha L. Root, 'archetype of Bahá'í itinerant teachers . . . foremost Hand first Bahá'í century . . . first finest fruit Formative Age Faith . . .' (Shoghi Effendi).

Latin America, and literature was being published there. A news bulletin linked these new outposts, and Shoghi Effendi expressed a desire to correspond directly with each pioneer.

The war in Europe spread, threatening the Holy Land. *The Promised Day is Come* came from the Guardian's pen early in 1941, giving the Bahá'ís a better understanding of this destructive chapter in human history. The 'judgment of God' was upon the world, he wrote, preparing it for the Day foretold in the Holy Books of the past. The burden of the nations was the price they were paying for ignoring the summons of the Divine Physician. Secular and religious leaders had withheld the healing Message—now they were powerless to stem the tide. In spite of the present darkness, the Guardian assured his spiritual warriors that they should 'labor serenely, confidently, and unremittingly' to lead humanity out of its misery. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 brought the United States into the war both in Europe and the Pacific. Although this brought hardship and restrictions, the pioneers continued to go forth to Latin America and throughout North America.

The Temple exterior was completed early in 1943, and the first Alaskan Assembly formed that year in Anchorage. Shortwave programs were beamed to South America. Seven Assemblies were still needed in North America—and only a year to go. A mighty effort was raised using every type of proclamation and teaching facility. March of 1944 came and the last three Canadian Assemblies were formed; it was the final seal of victory!

The First Centenary of the Faith

War still raged in both hemispheres as Bahá'ís gathered in meetings around the world to celebrate the centenary of the Declaration of the Báb, in *Shiráz*, on the eve of May 23, 1844. A century ago He had called to the West to arise and proclaim the New Day. Now East and West joined in thanksgiving and praise to Him and to Bahá'u'lláh. Ninety delegates to the National Convention of *Írán* gathered in *Shiráz* to visit the upper room of the Báb's house where He had declared His Mission to Mullá Husayn. In the Holy Land, over 150 Bahá'ís heard the beloved Guardian chant in

the Holy Shrines and later recount the thrilling progress of the Cause.

Some five hundred Egyptian Bahá'ís celebrated the occasion in their new *Ḥaziratu'l-Quds*—the dome having been completed only two hours earlier! *Íraqí* Bahá'ís scheduled six days of events with many visitors attending. In spite of harassment the believers of these lands had continued their heroic efforts in opening new areas, translating literature into Arabic and encouraging the activity of youth.

Australian Bahá'ís met in their newly acquired headquarters, now appropriately dedicated by 'Mother' Dunn. New Zealand held a banquet meeting in Auckland. Bahá'ís there had recently witnessed the unique universality of the Faith through a talk given in an Anglican pulpit by an American serviceman of orthodox Jewish background.

The Mayor of Bombay opened India's observance. Such an intensive publicity campaign was mounted that it attracted the making of a news film. The Indian community had delighted the Guardian by launching their own Six Year Plan in 1938. At the Guardian's suggestion, its chief goal was sending pioneers to open new areas.

The valiant British Bahá'ís had not only survived the war but had managed to modestly increase their numbers despite severe hardship and the restriction on travel. Their summer school had functioned every year of the war except 1940 when the threat of invasion was heavy. Now many cities arranged beautiful, informative exhibits—one of these attracting much attention in the heart of Westminster. Sir Ronald Storrs, first military Governor of Jerusalem under the British Mandate, who had known and admired the Master for many decades, gave a warm tribute to the Faith at the London observance.

More than 1,600 Bahá'ís of North and South America gathered under the dome of the House of Worship in Wilmette to view the first portrait of the Báb ever shown in the West. It marked the final triumph of the first Seven Year Plan. The Faith now reached from Alaska in the far North to Magellanes at the southern tip of South America. The beautiful exterior of the Mother Temple of the West, floodlit at night, gleamed like a heavenly jewel.

Shoghi Effendi issued a world survey of the Faith for the centenary. The Cause had spread

to seventy-eight countries, fifty-six of them sovereign states. Fifteen Spiritual Assemblies had been formed in Latin America and there was a Bahá'í center in each republic. Literature was available in forty-nine languages. While the centenary celebrations were still in progress, the Guardian cabled a decision to proceed at an early date with the building of the Shrine of the Báb—the outer structure to enclose the one raised by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. It was designed by the distinguished Canadian architect, William Sutherland Maxwell, the father of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥiyiyih Kḥánúm. He was later named a Hand of the Cause.

At a time when war threats hung heavily over the Holy Land, with the burden of guiding a world community under intense problems of communication, and with Covenant-breaking spreading amongst his own family, Shoghi Effendi had the strength of mind and purpose to write his immortal book *God Passes By*. One hundred years of the world's greatest religious drama are recorded in its pages. This chronicle of the forward march of the Cause of God, meeting crises of all kinds and emerging triumphant from tribulation, opened up a new vision to Bahá'ís, for the future as well as of the past.

THE SECOND EPOCH OF THE FORMATIVE AGE (1944–1963)

The Aftermath of the War

THE second World War ended officially on May 8, 1945 in Europe and on September 2 of that year in Japan. The foundations of the Cause in Europe and the Orient had been sorely tried but had held firm. The German Bahá'ís had suffered greatly but heroically. They had been brought to trial, placed in concentration camps, their literature and archives destroyed—yet the Bahá'í community in this country, which Shoghi Effendi said was 'destined to play an outstanding role in the spiritual revival' of Europe, rose quickly to its feet. Marta Brauns-Forel of Karlsruhe, daughter of the famed Swiss scientist, Dr. Auguste Forel, to whom the Master had addressed a Tablet, was one of many German believers who performed courageous services. Another was Paul Gollmer of Stuttgart who aided that community to obtain an official permit to organize within a few months of the close of the war. Bahá'ís there and elsewhere in Germany were assisted in these efforts by Allied Bahá'í servicemen. The National Assembly of Germany and Austria was formed again in 1946.

American Bahá'í servicemen searched out the believers in Japan, among them the much-loved Fujita (Mr. Saichiro Fujita) who had come to the Holy Land in 1919 at the Master's invitation and had served there for nearly twenty years. The library of Agnes Alexander, with hundreds of precious copies in Japanese of Dr. Esslemont's book, was found intact in a ruined

part of Tokyo. Four years were to pass before Tokyo would form its Spiritual Assembly.

The Indian sub-continent underwent fundamental changes during and after the war. The days of British rule ended. The land was divided by hatred and prejudice. New political boundaries were formed; religious riots spread like wildfire, but the Bahá'í community forged ahead, undivided by these factions in their midst. They had increased their numbers during their Six Year Plan. Now they planned to triple their Assemblies by 1950 and to translate Dr. Esslemont's book into eighteen additional languages. New teaching zones were mapped out and pioneer families went forth together, one each from Indian and Persian backgrounds, to form nuclei of new Bahá'í communities. The National Assembly of India and Burma summarized the substance of pioneering in these words: 'The individual, the backbone of the whole scheme, will, in . . . pioneering . . . develop the qualities of faith in God, in himself and in his fellowmen, the attributes of renunciation, of courage and audacity, of initiative and enterprise.'

The Burmese Bahá'ís had suffered severely during the war. One who died in the violence that swept the land was Siyyid Muṣṭafá Rúmí, at the age of ninety-nine. He was named a Hand of the Cause at his passing. An urgent goal for India was to assist the Burmese community to rise again.

Formation of the United Nations

It was significant to Bahá'ís that the United Nations was formed in San Francisco, convening on April 25, 1945. Exactly thirty years earlier to the day, Bahá'ís had taken part in an international peace conference in San Francisco which sent President Woodrow Wilson a message. More significant, the Master had said in California in 1912: *May the first flag of International Peace be upraised in this State.* Bahá'ís seized their chance now and arranged meetings, banquets, exhibits, radio programs and press interviews. They presented a specially prepared brochure, *The Bahá'í Peace Program*, to thousands of delegates and observers, and sent their own observers to the sessions. Their efforts were so well noted that a leading Egyptian newspaper published an account of the Bahá'í activity and printed the contents of the brochure in full. The Hon. Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar, the leader of the Indian delegation, was inspired to visit the Bahá'í Temple in Wilmette and later received a Bahá'í delegation in London. The following January British Bahá'ís sent a letter and brochure to each United Nations delegate at the first meeting of the General Assembly in London.

Encouraged and guided by Shoghi Effendi, Bahá'í interest and participation in the work of the United Nations grew. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles was one of the first members of the League of Nations Union in England and this membership was later carried forward into the United Nations Association. The National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada was first accredited as a non-governmental organization in 1947, followed by accreditation of the Bahá'í International Community in 1948. Bahá'í observers took part in United Nations non-governmental conferences in many parts of the world. National Assemblies appointed committees to encourage local Bahá'í activity and support for the work of the United Nations. Carefully prepared documents based upon Bahá'í principles were formally submitted to this body, including 'A Bahá'í Declaration of Human Obligations and Rights', and 'A Bahá'í Statement on Rights of Women', both in 1947. In 1955 delegates at the charter revision conference were presented with 'Bahá'í Proposals for Charter Revision'.

In 1947 the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine asked Shoghi Effendi, as Head of a Faith with its world center in Haifa, for a statement on the Bahá'í attitude toward Palestine and its future. The Guardian included with his letter of reply a summary of the history and teachings of the Faith, later published and widely circulated as *The Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, A World Religion*. In 1970, under the direction of the Universal House of Justice, the Bahá'í International Community was admitted to consultative status with the Economic and Social Council as a non-governmental organization.

*The Second Seven Year Plan (1946-1953)***'A God-Given Mandate'*

Less than a year had elapsed since the ending of the 'greatest conflict that (had) ever shaken the human race' when Shoghi Effendi issued a call to the North American community to rise to 'scale loftier heights of heroism'. Western Europe was the new spiritual frontier—that 'war-torn, spiritually famished European continent, cradle of world-famed civilizations, twice-blest by 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visits, whose rulers Bahá'u'lláh specifically and collectively addressed'.¹ A European Teaching Committee was formed with an auxiliary office in Geneva. Ten goal countries were named: Portugal, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Luxemburg, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden—Finland would be added later. The first pioneers sailed within four months, 'wholly dedicated souls, aglow with enthusiasm', but facing many physical hardships and spiritual challenges. Shoghi Effendi encouraged a close collaboration between the British Publishing Trust and the German Publishing Committee to quickly provide the needed literature. By Riqdván 1948, there were new Bahá'ís in each goal city. The first European Teaching Conference held in Geneva in May 1948 was hailed by the Guardian as a landmark in the European campaign. Nearly a hundred Bahá'ís came from nineteen countries to share in a new fellowship and to plan further victories. A joyful cable from

*The second Seven Year Plan, intended to carry a stage further the mission conceived by 'Abdu'l-Bahá for the American Bahá'í Community, . . . must, as it operates in three continents, be productive of results outshining any as yet achieved since the Divine Plan itself was set in motion . . . ' Shoghi Effendi, *Citadel of Faith*, pp. 6, 7.

¹ Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to America*, p. 88.

Shoghi Effendi urged them to continue to hold aloft 'the torch of divine guidance'. Summer schools opened—the first in Switzerland in 1947. By March of 1952 progress was such as to move Shoghi Effendi to call for the formation of the Italo-Swiss National Spiritual Assembly at Ridván 1953.

A few weeks after the inauguration of this new Seven-Year Plan, Shoghi Effendi issued a lengthy, cogent message published as *A God-Given Mandate*. It presented a panoramic view of the evolution of the Divine Plan from the birth of the Faith 'in darkest Persia' to that 'ultimate redemption of all mankind'. Again the Guardian stressed the significance of the Master's visits to the West, and especially His call to America to proclaim the *advent of the Kingdom of the Lord of Hosts . . . in all the five continents of the globe*. The present stage of the Divine Plan would end during the hundredth anniversary of the 'Year Nine' that had marked the birth of Bahá'u'lláh's Mission in the *Síyáh-Chál*. Shoghi Effendi named it 'Holy Year' to be observed in 1952–1953. A further projection in the evolution of the Divine Plan, he wrote, would be marked by the worldwide celebration of the 'Most Great Festival', the 'greatest of all Jubilees', related to the 1,335 days mentioned in the Book of Daniel. This Great Festival was to be observed at Ridván 1963. *A God-Given Mandate* was not only an appeal and a stirring challenge to the believers—it was also an assurance of victory to all who would arise to assume their God-given role.

Shoghi Effendi named other objectives of this plan: consolidation and expansion of the Faith throughout the Americas; completion of the House of Worship in Wilmette and landscaping of the grounds; the formation of National Spiritual Assemblies in Canada, in Central America and South America.

Ten National Plans Circle the World

The first of the new pillars for the Universal House of Justice was raised in Canada where delegates met in April 1948, in the Maxwell home, hallowed by the Master's presence in 1912.* Under the Guardian's direction, the National Assembly of Canada initiated a Five

Year Plan resulting in the establishment of thirty Local Assemblies from coast to coast, the opening of a hundred centers including ones in Greenland and Newfoundland, the enrollment of Eskimo and Indian believers and the purchase of a *Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds* in Toronto. In their second year, the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly secured, through an Act of Parliament, incorporation by Royal Charter which the Guardian termed unique in the history of the Bahá'í world and the strongest incorporation legally.

A sense of commitment intensified among Latin American Bahá'ís as they assumed increasing responsibilities toward the formation of their own National Spiritual Assemblies. Regional committees took shape in 1946, new Assemblies and groups were formed, and the number of believers doubled in a single year. Summer schools arose in Argentina, Chile and Mexico. Teaching conferences were convened in Buenos Aires and in Panama City, each to become the seat of a future National Assembly. In 1947 Shoghi Effendi addressed them in his long message to America, published as *The Challenging Requirements of the Present Hour*, as 'co-workers and associates' in carrying out the Divine Plan. When the two Latin American National Spiritual Assemblies were elected in Central America and South America at Ridván 1951, he assigned them a threefold responsibility: consolidation of the administrative structure, intensifying the teaching work, and deepening the believers. Under this plan a Bahá'í Cultural Institute was established in the heart of the Indian country in Chichicastenango, Guatemala, and a Bahá'í school was held at 'Karbílá' near Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Lifting their sights above their own horizons, Shoghi Effendi indicated to these two fledgling communities the combined efforts they would soon be called upon to make, with their sister communities in Australasia and the Indian subcontinent, toward the 'spiritual conquest of the multitudinous islands of the South Pacific Ocean'.

Australia and New Zealand far exceeded the original goals of a Six Year Plan on which they had spontaneously embarked in 1947, bringing the total number of Assemblies to seventeen, and groups to forty. This plan, Shoghi Effendi said, would pave the way for that 'mighty Crusade' whereby they would carry the Faith to

*In 1954 this house was transferred to the National Assembly of Canada as a gift from Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm.

the farflung Pacific territories. He attested 'the vitality of the faith of the believers' in Australia, exemplified by the number of pioneers who went to virgin territories, and by their purchase of a Temple site in Sydney.

India, Pakistan and Burma also spontaneously adopted a Nineteen Month Plan, their third consecutive one since the systematic prosecution of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan had begun in 1937. It too was a 'prelude to the mighty and historic Crusade' to be launched in the future. Additional translations were published, and the following countries opened: Thailand; Malaya (with an Assembly in Singapore); Indonesia; Sarawak (with an Assembly in Kuching); Zanzibar; Madagascar; and Nepal. Eight Assemblies were formed on the home front, and the 'New Era School' in Panchgani was moved to larger premises with progress made toward governmental recognition.

In 1944 the Bahá'is of the British Isles began prosecution of a Six Year Plan under which they trebled the size of their community and established Spiritual Assemblies in nineteen cities. It was, in the Guardian's words, 'one of the most significant undertakings embarked upon by the members of the Bahá'í National Assemblies during the opening years of the second Bahá'í century'. It was but the harbinger of an even more remarkable achievement soon to be won. During this period a wide proclamation of the Faith was effected through the publication of a statement by George Townshend, wherein he explained his reasons for resigning his Orders and church offices. Entitled *The Old Churches and the New World Faith*, it was sent to more than 10,000 religious and other leaders of public opinion.

Still emerging from the war's devastation, the Bahá'is of Germany and Austria nevertheless doubled their numbers by 1947. With his wisdom and compassion, Shoghi Effendi guided them through this critical period of political and social unrest, and encouraged them to adopt, in 1948, a Five Year Plan. Because all literature had been destroyed, the publication of major Bahá'í books became a prime goal. A new Hazíratu'l-Quds was constructed in Frankfurt-am-Main; fourteen new communities were raised and Spiritual Assemblies formed in nine of them. Esslingen Bahá'í School opened after a suspension of ten years.

Persia adopted a forty-five month plan in 1946. In addition to expansion of the national community, the goals included sending pioneers to India and 'Iráq, and forming Local Assemblies in Afghanistan, Arabia and in the Persian Gulf. In the course of the plan effective steps were taken to encourage Bahá'í women and to assist them in taking an active part in the affairs of the community. Shoghi Effendi paid tribute to the 'glorious and continuing efforts rendered by the beloved Bahá'í sisters' of a land that had given Táhírih to the world.

Women were elected for the first time to Spiritual Assemblies in Egypt in the course of their Five Year Plan that began in May of 1948. The Faith was expanded in both Egypt and Sudan, centers were opened in Eritrea, Algeria and Libya, and an Assembly was formed in Tunis in April 1953. Negotiations also began for the purchase of the House of Bahá'u'lláh in Istanbul, a project brought to conclusion in 1954.

'Iráq, whose Bahá'í community often shared the repression known to its sister communities in Persia and Egypt, is also a hallowed land to Bahá'is. It had known the footsteps of Bahá'u'lláh through the first ten years of His exile, and was the scene of His momentous Declaration in the Garden of Ríqván at Baghdád. During the years leading up to the Holy Year, the believers' devotion manifested itself in a plan during which they increased the number of centers, translated and published many additional titles in Arabic and completed the construction of a national headquarters which included a spacious hall seating five hundred.

Midpoint of the second Seven Year Plan brought a financial crisis to the United States Bahá'í community. Costs for completing the Temple in Wilmette had risen greatly, and the expenses of two continental campaigns (Europe and Latin America) were formidable. Shoghi Effendi called for an austerity period wherein certain activities were temporarily suspended, a period later extended to the whole Bahá'í world. But the Divine Plan continued to go forward. When the Centenary of the Báb's martyrdom was observed on July 9, 1950 and the beautiful arcade and parapet of the Shrine were completed, the Guardian felt able to proceed with the completion of this 'Queen of Carmel'. He released a new world survey to 1950. The Faith



The first Local Spiritual Assembly of Kampala, Uganda; Riḍván 1952. Back row (left to right): Philip Hainsworth (pioneer), Chrispian Kajubi (Ganda tribe), Enoch Olinga (Teso tribe), 'Alí Y. Nakhjavání (pioneer), Frederick Bigabwa (Toro tribe), Peter Musoke (Ganda tribe). Front row (left to right): Mrs. Samíhîh Banání (pioneer), Músá Banání (pioneer), Mrs. Violette Nakhjavání (pioneer).

had reached a hundred countries—a gain of twenty-two in six years!

The African Campaign

Three years remained for the Bahá'í world to win the goals. Then Bahá'ís learned that plans aimed at the stars could aim even higher under the farseeing eye of their Guardian. A new campaign was announced—Africa! Britain would spearhead and coordinate this challenging undertaking which called for the combined efforts of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles, of Egypt, India, Persia and the United States. The British Bahá'ís had just completed their Six Year Plan. Shoghi Effendi had praised their achievement—especially the number of Bahá'ís who had arisen to take part, a record participation for the Formative Age. With his praise still ringing in their ears at Riḍván 1950, they heard his new summons: a Two Year Plan

(1951–1953) to plant the banner of the Faith amidst the tribes of central and western Africa. The northern and southern fringes of this vast continent had been illuminated in the course of the Ministries of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The new campaign was designed to eventually carry the light of the Faith to all regions. America was asked especially to send its 'much-loved Negro Bahá'ís' to pioneer. Britain, Egypt and Persia sent pioneers. India's part was to consolidate Zanzibar and Madagascar. Five countries thus worked together to take the light of the Faith to the tribes of Africa, the first truly international teaching plan.

One of the first pioneers to arise from Persia was Músá Banání, later named a Hand of the Cause and 'the Spiritual Conqueror of Africa'. An Assembly was formed in Kampala, Uganda in 1952. West Africa was opened. Shoghi Effendi increased the goals to twenty-five states and dependencies. By the next year all goals

were exceeded! Native African believers arose to teach their people, to pioneer, to go outside their own territories—among them a future Hand of the Cause, Enoch Olinga. Shoghi Effendi later bestowed upon him the honorific ‘Abu’l-Futúh’ (the Father of Victories).

Developments at the World Centre

As the plans progressed, dramatic changes took place in the Holy Land. The new State of Israel was formed in May 1948, under a plan adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Almost immediately a war broke out, short but intense. During this time Shoghi Effendi, with his small staff of helpers, remained steadfastly in Haifa, conducting the affairs of the Bahá’í world community.

Through Shoghi Effendi’s strenuous efforts over a period of years, the physical properties and endowments in the Holy Land had greatly increased. The Shrine of the Báb would soon lift its golden dome in the heart of Carmel. New terraces and gardens were adorning the slopes of the Holy Mountain, adjoining the serene memorial gardens that shelter the remains of the Holy Family. Protective gardens had been added to the Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh. Bahjí, Bahá’u’lláh’s last residence, had been beautifully restored by Shoghi Effendi after he had been able, in 1932, to remove Muḥammad ‘Alí and his family from this sacred house they had so pitifully neglected. Mazra’ih, outside ‘Akká, where the Manifestation of God had dwelt for a time, was leased in 1950 and simply furnished; it was given into Bahá’í custody and restored in 1951.

All this and much more was achieved by the beloved Guardian alone over a period of years in the face of constant opposition and harassment by both old and new Covenant-breakers. They thwarted him in every way they could, slandered his station, wrongly portrayed him to the authorities, and brought legal actions against him. Often his ‘heavy-laden heart’ would turn to the believers for consolation, and they responded with an abundant love and loyalty. Forces arose in the 1950s to demolish one by one the schemes of the Covenant-breakers as though God had totally wearied of their presence in the precincts of His Holy Mountain. Within a few years, after a ‘steady decline’

in their fortunes, these thorns were removed. Places where they had dwelt near the holy sites were quickly replaced with stately gardens designed by Shoghi Effendi.

Appointment of the International Bahá’í Council

January 9, 1951 brought the historic announcement by Shoghi Effendi of the appointment of the International Bahá’í Council, ‘the first embryonic International Institution’, of the Bahá’í world. Counting later appointments, its members and officers were: Amatu’l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánúm (liaison between the Guardian and the Council); Mason Remey (president); Amelia Collins (vice-president); Leroy Ioas (secretary-general); Jessie Revell (treasurer); Ugo Giachery (member-at-large); Ethel Revell and Luṭfu’lláh Ḥakím (Western and Eastern secretaries) and Sylvia Ioas (added in 1955). This Council would become an elected body in the future, Shoghi Effendi stated, and its destiny was to evolve into the Universal House of Justice.

The Council assisted the Guardian in building the Shrine of the Báb, extending the land areas near the Holy Places, securing the site of the future House of Worship on Mount Carmel, and in cementing relationships with the Israeli Government. The new State of Israel, itself taking shape during these years, came to recognize the Bahá’í Faith as an independent world religion, with both its spiritual and administrative centers in the Holy Land. A special department for Bahá’í affairs was opened in the Ministry for Religious Affairs.

Appointment of the Hands of the Cause of God

A cable from the Guardian on December 24, 1951 announced the appointment of the first contingent of Hands of the Cause of God. Bahá’u’lláh had named certain believers as ‘Hands of the Cause’, as did ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. In *His Will and Testament* the Master mentions their duties, *to diffuse the Divine Fragrances, to edify the souls of men, to promote learning, to improve the character of all men and to be ever watchful* in protecting the Faith from evil-wishers. Although Shoghi Effendi had given this high rank to certain believers after they had passed on, no appointments had been previously announced. The Hands of the Cause were to function on all the continents and from the Holy Land. Continental funds were later

established to further their work, and Assemblies and individuals were invited to contribute.

Nineteen Hands of the Cause—some already members of the Bahá'í Council—were appointed in two groups over a two-month period as follows: William Sutherland Maxwell, Mason Remey, Amelia Collins (Holy Land); Valíyú'lláh Varqá, Tarázu'lláh Samandari, 'Alí Akbar Furútan, Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í, Dhikru'lláh Khádem (Persia); George Townshend, Hermann Grossmann, Ugo Giachery, Adelbert Mühlischlegel (Europe); Horace Holley, Dorothy Baker, Leroy Ioas, Fred Schopflocher, Corinne True (America); Músá Banání (Africa); and Clara Dunn (Australia).

A New Plan Foreshadowed

As the Holy Year drew near, the teaching plans of the National Assemblies were nearing completion. Shoghi Effendi named four Hands of the Cause who would represent him at the Intercontinental Conferences to be held in 1953: Leroy Ioas (Africa, in February); Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm (who had been appointed a Hand of the Cause after the passing of her father William Sutherland Maxwell in 1952) accompanied by Amelia Collins (America, at Ridván); Ugo Giachery (Europe, in July) and Mason Remey (Asia, in October). All were members of the Bahá'í Council.

For some years exciting glimpses of a new teaching plan that would encircle the globe had been revealed in the Guardian's letters. Pilgrims returned home excited by what they heard at the Guardian's table. Like a drumbeat drawing nearer, news of this plan began to stir the hearts of the believers who were still submerged in winning the current goals. It was envisaged as a third Seven Year Plan to begin in 1956. In the spring of 1952, the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States cabled the Guardian expressing a desire not to make use of the promised three-year respite originally mentioned by him, and Shoghi Effendi cabled back his appreciation of this 'noble determination'.

In spite of forewarning, no message from Shoghi Effendi so electrified the Bahá'í world as the one published as *Launching the World-Embracing Spiritual Crusade* with which he opened the Holy Year in October 1952. The Crusade would reach throughout the planet and harness the forces of the entire Bahá'í world.

Through the years, Shoghi Effendi had prepared Bahá'u'lláh's 'Army of Light' for this spiritual conquest of the world. The Hands of the Cause would be the 'Standard Bearers' of this mighty campaign, to be assisted in their work by five Auxiliary Boards, one for each continent, to be appointed by the Hands during Ridván 1954. The 'generals' would be the twelve existing National Assemblies: the British Isles; the United States; Germany and Austria; Egypt and Sudan; 'Iráq; India, Pakistan and Burma; Persia; Australia and New Zealand; Canada; Central America; South America; Italy and Switzerland. Like a brilliant commander, Shoghi Effendi marshaled the forces of the entire Bahá'í world and launched them on this 'soul-stirring . . . world-embracing Crusade'.

The fourfold purposes of the plan were: (1) development of the World Centre; (2) strengthening the national bases from which the twelve plans would proceed—one for each National Assembly; (3) consolidation of all new territories; (4) opening remaining virgin territories. With its details spread out, the scope of this new plan was breathtaking. It included the formation of forty-eight new National Spiritual Assemblies—each to have its own headquarters, constitution, endowment and legal incorporation; the erection of two new Temples, one in Asia (Persia) and one in Europe (Germany); the purchase of eleven Temple sites and the opening of one hundred and thirty-one new countries and territories. Ties with the United Nations were to be strengthened. A beautiful new International Archives building would be built on Mount Carmel, on the 'arc' laid out by the Guardian as the site of future edifices for institutions of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. Six publishing trusts would be formed and literature published in ninety-one new languages. Precious historic sites in Persia would be secured. And, God willing, the Most Great Jubilee would be celebrated in the vicinity of Baghdád itself.

The Holy Year and the Great Jubilee

African Bahá'ís from thirty tribes, Orientals and Occidentals from the other continents, gathered together literally within a 'tent of oneness' in Kampala. The Hand of the Cause Leroy Ioas welcomed them in the Guardian's name, read his message of praise and gratitude

for past victories and outlined the plan for opening the whole continent of Africa and its islands. Nine other Hands of the Cause were there, touching the hearts of the Africans with stories from the Heroic Age of the Faith, encouraging them to teach and to take hold of the administration of their new Faith. The great victory in Africa was the hearts of the Africans. Centuries of fear and mistrust were wiped away with tears of joy and love—everyone there knew he was a child of God and an heir of the Kingdom of Bahá'u'lláh.

The All-America Conference in Wilmette at Ridván 1953 was a 'triple celebration—the dedication of the Mother Temple of the West, the launching of a World Spiritual Crusade and the commemoration of the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh's Mission'.¹ Some 2,300 Bahá'is heard Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum read the Guardian's messages and witnessed the dedication of the Temple whose site the Master had blessed forty-one years before. Some were present who had been with the Master that day—one of them the Hand of the Cause Valiyu'lláh Varqá whose father and brother had been martyred in Persia. Bahá'u'lláh's portrait was formally shown for the first time outside the Holy Land. The model of the Temple to adorn Carmel was displayed. The vast goals for America, spread throughout all continents and islands of the sea, were disclosed. Pioneers arose by the score. A few weeks after this conference, the Guardian announced a Roll of Honor for the 'Knights of Bahá'u'lláh', those pioneers who would open the virgin territories. It was later to be placed, he said, beneath the entrance of the Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh.

Fourteen Hands of the Cause, the largest number at any of the conferences, were present at the Stockholm conference convened by the European Teaching Committee of America. The Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery pinpointed the most immediate goals on which to begin: the Temple in Frankfurt, the virgin territories to be opened, the Temple sites in Rome and Stockholm and the translation of urgently needed literature. Before the conference had closed, pioneers had volunteered for all the European territories.

The New Delhi conference held in October closed the Holy Year. Here the Faith achieved a

new prestige as the President of the Indian Republic, His Excellency Dr. Rajendra Prasad, opened the conference and declared it a unique event for the Orient, with its wide display of racial and cultural backgrounds. Special Bahá'í delegations called upon the President, the Vice-President and on Prime Minister Nehru of India. The Hand of the Cause Clara Dunn encouraged the seventy-four pioneers who arose with these words: 'If we have faith we can conquer the whole world!' Following the conference, at Shoghi Effendi's request the Hands of the Cause who had been present carried out teaching journeys throughout Asia, Africa and Australasia.

A highlight of all the conferences was the Guardian's comprehensive world survey of the Faith to 1952, and a detailed charting of the new plan. His colorful map depicted the goals of the twelve National Spiritual Assemblies and helped Bahá'is to quickly relate to this awe-inspiring, world-embracing plan.

The Ten Year World Crusade (1953–1963)

'When we look back a hundred years ago,' said the Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem at the Stockholm conference, 'Bahá'u'lláh was alone (in the Siyáh-Chál), but now His lovers all around the world, in 2,500 localities in 129 countries, speak of Him in ninety different languages.' Looking ahead ten years, the lovers of Bahá'u'lláh would be calling His name in over 11,000 localities and in more than 300 languages!

The Ten Year Crusade is a story filled with heroism, love, sacrifice and with deep sorrow too—but especially a story of a great victory won by the Bahá'is through steadfast faith in Bahá'u'lláh and in the guidance of Shoghi Effendi. The first phase of the plan, covering a year, saw the opening of a hundred countries and territories from the Arctic Circle to the Indian Ocean. Only eight virgin goals remained to be opened, outside the places where political conditions prevented the entry of pioneers.

At this time the Bahá'is in the cradle of the Faith were steadily building up their Temple Fund and acquiring the sites of historic significance to the Faith. The Siyáh-Chál that had once held the Manifestation of God in chains was acquired in 1954. Then, in 1955, without warning, a shattering blow was struck against the

¹ Shoghi Effendi, *Citadel of Faith*, p. 106.

Persian believers. Bahá'ís were killed, their property seized, crops destroyed, the teachings distorted in the press, and the dome of the beautiful, national Ḥaẓratu'l-Quds in Ṭihrán was demolished. This vicious attack, spurred on by fanatical religious leaders, came as a deep shock to many people of the world as well as to Bahá'ís. Under the Guardian's direction, the Bahá'í world rallied immediately to the support of their assailed brothers and sisters. Appeals were directed to the Sháh and to the Iranian Parliament and registered with the United Nations. World leaders raised their voices in protest—Eleanor Roosevelt, Pandit Nehru and Professor Toynbee, to name a few. The Secretary-General of the United Nations sent a representative to the Iranian delegate to confer on the matter and seek redress. The persecution began to diminish, although it would take two years and another appeal to the United Nations to bring it to a halt. For the first time in Persia an attack upon the Bahá'ís had reached the eyes and ears of the whole world and to its highest seat of justice. It was, in effect, a wide proclamation of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. The building of the Temple in Persia, however, had to be postponed. Shortly thereafter Shoghi Effendi announced that, instead, two Temples would rise, one in the heart of Africa at Kampala and one in Australasia at Sydney.

By Riḍván 1956 the Faith had reached two hundred and forty-seven countries and major territories. The buildup of National and Regional Assemblies began with three additional ones in Africa, making four in all. Latin America expanded from two to four Assemblies in 1957. New National Assemblies were formed in South East Asia, North East Asia, the Arabian Peninsula, Alaska, New Zealand, Pakistan and three in Western Europe. The Guardian's Riḍván message of 1957 was filled with joy, listing the many victories. He was moved to prepare a new map listing the achievements—many far beyond the original scope of the plan.

His message of June 4, 1957 asked the Hands of the Cause to assume their 'primary obligation to watch over' and protect the Bahá'í community, as well as prosecute the World Crusade, in close collaboration with the National Assemblies. In October he appointed eight more Hands of the Cause, making a total of twenty-seven: Enoch Olinga, William Sears, John Robarts (Africa); Ḥasan Balyuzi, John Fer-

raby (British Isles); Collis Featherstone, Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir (Pacific) and Abu'l-Qásim Faizí (Arabian Peninsula).

Since earlier appointees William Sutherland Maxwell, Siegfried Schopflocher, Dorothy Baker, Valiyu'lláh Varqá and George Townsend had passed away, they were replaced by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, 1952; Jalál Kházeh, 1953; Paul Haney, 1954; 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá, 1955; and Agnes Alexander, 1957.

October 1957 brought the good news from the Guardian that five Intercontinental Conferences would be held in 1958, midpoint of the Crusade, to give thanks to Bahá'u'lláh and to consult on remaining goals. This last letter to the Bahá'ís of the world also designated the Hands of the Cause 'Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth', a mandate whose incalculable blessings were so shortly and so tragically to appear. The last half of this plan, he stated, must be marked by the entry of large numbers of believers into the Cause. He concluded this letter with a plea for all Bahá'ís to 'bestir themselves (toward) hastening the establishment of His Kingdom in the hearts of men'.

The Passing of Shoghi Effendi

These were Shoghi Effendi's last words to his followers around the globe. November 4 brought the heartbreaking cable from Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum—the Guardian had passed away suddenly in London. The beloved commander of Bahá'u'lláh's 'Army of Light' that had followed him trustingly into every unknown field had fallen. Stunned, grief stricken, the Bahá'ís gathered in London as this 'priceless pearl' given to them by the Master was laid to rest in British soil. Only those who remembered the Master's passing thirty-six years earlier could compare the sorrow. Yet, after the first shock and grief had lifted, Bahá'ís rose to their feet and went to work, assured by those Chief Stewards, the Hands of the Cause, and moved by the courageous example of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum.

The first of the five conferences opened two months later in Kampala with Rúḥíyyih Khánum as the Guardian's chosen representative, followed by conferences in Sydney, in March, with Mason Remey; Chicago, in May,



(Courtesy of Conrad Rothman)

Silhouette of the monument rising above the resting place of Shoghi Effendi in the Great Northern London Cemetery, New Southgate.

with Ugo Giachery; Frankfurt, in July, with Amelia Collins; and Singapore (moved from Djakarta at the last moment), in September, with Leroy Ioas. Each conference received precious gifts, previously arranged by the Guardian himself: the blessed portraits to view, earth from the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh for Temple foundation ceremonies in Kampala and Sydney, and the Guardian's mid-Crusade map, so recently come from his hands. Bahá'ís vowed to bring complete victory in the name of the Guardian by April 1963.

The Hands of the Cause as Chief Stewards

The Hands of the Cause gathered in the Holy Land immediately following the passing of Shoghi Effendi. A proclamation issued on November 25 informed the Bahá'í world that Shoghi Effendi had left no heir and had made no appointment of another Guardian. Nine Hands were chosen to remain at the World Centre. The proclamation was signed by twenty-six of the Hands, Mrs. Corinne True, ninety-six years of age, not being present. The major task for Bahá'ís now was to complete the goals of the Crusade. The Hands of the Cause held a conclave each autumn in the Holy Land, from 1958 through 1962, and in the spring of 1963. Bahá'ís were informed of all developments throughout each year. Most of the Hands traveled ceaselessly now, encouraging the believers in their work, giving of themselves in full measure. The blessing Bahá'u'lláh had conferred upon the Hands of the Cause in the *Tablet to the World* took on deeper meaning—those *through whom the light of fortitude hath shone forth and the truth hath been established that the authority to choose rests with God*. . . The defection of Mason Remey in April 1960, through his claim to be the 'hereditary Guardian', failed to create a division in the Faith. He was expelled from the ranks of the faithful, along with a small handful of misguided followers. He spent his last days in obscurity, unrepentant and abandoned by nearly all his erstwhile followers.

The passing of four Hands of the Cause was to transpire before completion of the World Crusade: Horace Holley (1960) and Amelia Collins (1962) in the Holy Land; Clara Dunn (1960) in Australia; and Corinne True (1961) in the United States.

Election of the International Bahá'í Council

The Hands of the Cause called for the election of the International Bahá'í Council at Rídván 1961, in accordance with this stage of its development as outlined by Shoghi Effendi. In this first Bahá'í election on a world scale, the National Assemblies of the world cast their ballots by mail and elected the following members: Jessie Revell, 'Alí Nakhjavání, Luṭfulláh Ḥakím, Ethel Revell, Charles Wolcott, Sylvia Ioas, Mildred Mottahedeh, Ian Semple and H. Borrah Kavelin. The newly elected Council continued the work of the former Council, with various added duties. They assisted Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum to complete the furnishing and arrangement of the International Archives building in 1961 so that it could be opened for pilgrims. The Bahá'í World Congress (Most Great Jubilee) could not be held in Baghdád and the Hands of the Cause announced London as the site for this great gathering of Bahá'ís. The Council, assisted by a committee in England, assumed the work of preparing for this Most Great Jubilee.

The Crusade forged ahead. The Temples in Kampala and Sydney were dedicated by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum in January and in September, 1961.* More National Spiritual Assemblies were formed: France, 1958; Austria, Burma, Turkey and the South Pacific Islands, 1959; twenty-one republics of Latin America and the Antilles in 1961. Only the eleven Western European Assemblies, and Ceylon, remained to be elected in 1962.

The Historic First Election of the Universal House of Justice

From the beginning of his Guardianship, Shoghi Effendi pointed the sights of the Bahá'ís toward the future establishment of the Universal House of Justice, ordained by Bahá'u'lláh in His Most Holy Book, and described by the Master in His *Will and Testament* as the *source of all good and freed from all error*. Each National Assembly that was formed became one more pillar to 'share in sustaining the weight and in broadening the foundation of

*The Mother Temple of Europe in Frankfurt, Germany, almost completed by the end of the World Crusade, was dedicated by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum in July 1964.



Delegates to the first International Convention for the election of the Universal House of Justice held in April 1963 gathered at the Bahá'í International Archives building on Mount Carmel for the official convention photograph. Present were 288 delegates representing fifty-one National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies.

the Universal House of Justice', which, along with its 'manifold auxiliary institutions' was 'destined to arise and function and remain permanently established in (the) close neighborhood of (the) Twin Holy Shrines'.

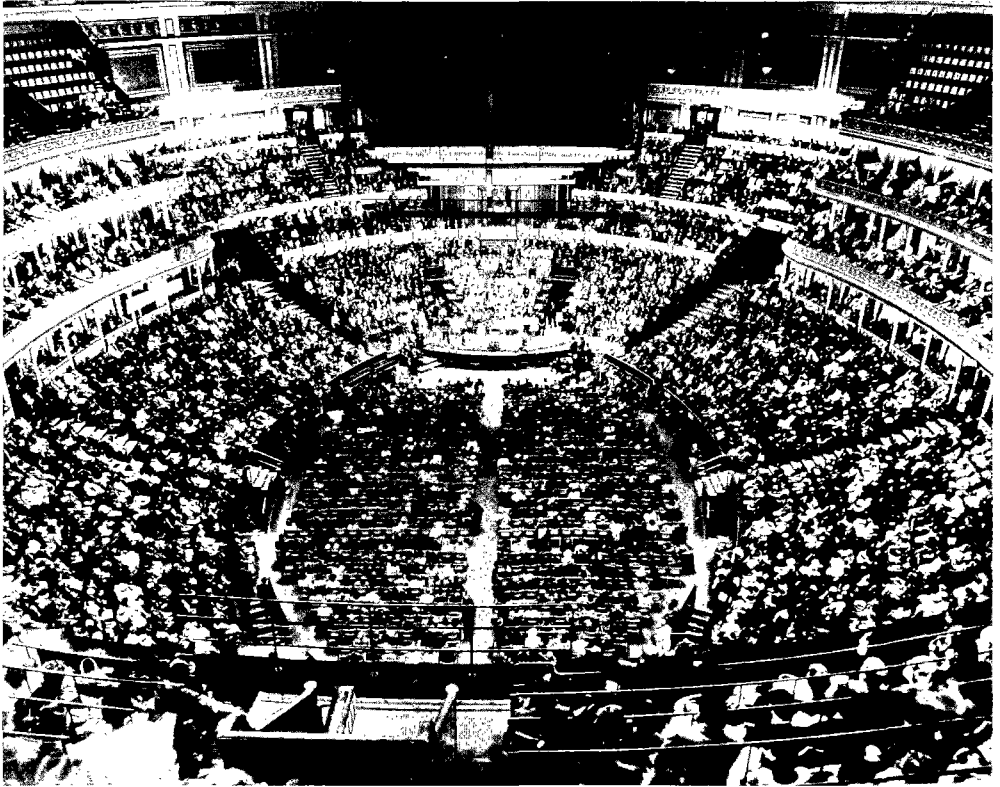
As Ridván 1963 approached, the International Bahá'í Council, first appointed by the Guardian, then elected by the National Spiritual Assemblies in 1961, was about to 'effloresce' into the Universal House of Justice. Five hundred and four delegates from fifty-six National Assemblies participated in the election of whom two hundred and eighty-eight delegates from fifty-one National Assemblies assembled in the Holy Land in April when the election of this Supreme Administrative Institution of the Bahá'í world took place.

The members elected to this first Universal House of Justice were: Charles Wolcott, 'Alí Nakhjavání, H. Borrah Kavelin, Ian Semple,

Luţfu'lláh Ḥakím, David Hofman, Hugh Chance, Amoz Gibson and Hushmand Fath-eazam. The Hands of the Cause joyously cabled this news to all National Assemblies. It was the crowning achievement of a magnificent epoch—the first epoch of the Divine Plan, and the second of the Formative Age.

The Bahá'í World Congress (April 28–May 2, 1963)

Nearly 7,000 jubilant Bahá'ís gathered in London to observe the centenary of Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration in the Garden of Ridván, near Baghdád, and to pay homage to their beloved Guardian at his resting place. The newly elected Universal House of Justice greeted the believers who had laid 'this glorious harvest of victory' in the World Crusade, in the name of the Guardian, 'at the feet of the Blessed



View of the several thousand Bahá'ís gathered in the Royal Albert Hall, London, for the World Congress commemorating the centenary of 'the formal assumption by Bahá'u'lláh of His Prophetic Office.' 28 April-2 May 1963.

Beauty'. They paid a loving tribute to the Hands of the Cause who had 'kept the ship on its course'.

It seemed as if the whole human race were represented there, like a flower garden of humanity. The London press bore witness to the blend of races, nationalities, costumes and warm fellowship that so colorfully marked this Most Great Jubilee. Bahá'ís listened to remembrances of Shoghi Effendi tenderly shared by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum and by the other Hands of the Cause who were present. Victories were recounted, the Riḍván Feast was celebrated, and songs were sung by the African friends—all to become memories forever written upon the hearts. The most sacred moment for each believer was a visit to the beloved Guardian's grave, now adorned with its marble column, globe and golden eagle. Only the knowledge that several fellow Bahá'ís were held in a Moroccan prison, some condemned to death for

their belief in Bahá'u'lláh, marred the joy of the believers. It would be eight more months before the good news of their release would come.

Now all three of the Divine Charters* were in effect. The Supreme Administrative Body, the Universal House of Justice, was seated in the Holy Land. The Divine Plan had been carried forward to cover the continents and islands of the seas; and a strong administrative foundation had been laid based upon fifty-six National Spiritual Assemblies, an increase of forty-four in ten years!† Deep assurance filled the hearts of the believers as they left this congress under the protective wings of their Universal House of Justice, ready to follow its lead for the 'onward march of the Cause'.

*See 'Three Divine Charters', p. 64.

†By late 1957 arrangements had been made for eleven National Assemblies to have branches in the Holy Land, legally entitled to hold property, and recognized by the State of Israel, thus achieving a goal set by Shoghi Effendi for the World Crusade.

THE THIRD EPOCH OF THE FORMATIVE AGE

A New, Nine Year Plan

WHEN the Ten Year Crusade had opened, Shoghi Effendi described ten separate stages of the 'vast majestic process' for the salvation of mankind since the time of Adam, like a Jacob's ladder to heaven. The first part was the whole 6,000 year Prophetic Cycle from Adam to the Báb. This was a preparatory stage, 'the slow and steady growth of this tree of divine revelation', given to mankind through a 'series of progressive dispensations, associated with Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, Muḥammad and other Prophets'. The next six stages covered the Heroic Age of the Bahá'í Faith, two of which were the Mission and Martyrdom of the Báb, and Bahá'u'lláh's Mission in Tíhrán, in Baghdád, in Adrianople and 'Akká, which brought the Faith to thirteen countries in the Asiatic and African continents. The Ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá made the seventh stage at which time the light of the Faith reached more than thirty countries including the continents of North America and Europe. The eighth step, covering the first thirty-two years of the Formative Age to 1953, brought the Faith to one hundred and twenty-eight countries, and marked the beginning, in 1937, of the systematic prosecution of the Divine Plan. The Ten Year Crusade alone was the ninth step in this drama of salvation, more than doubling the number of countries and major territories opened to the Faith. The tenth part, Shoghi Effendi stated, would extend far into the future and would include many worldwide plans. It would lead to the Golden Age and to that long-awaited, 'Christ-promised Kingdom of God on Earth', and to a 'world civilization, incomparable in its range, its character and potency, in the history of mankind'.¹

The tenth part of this 'vast majestic process' began with an announcement from the Universal House of Justice of a new, Nine Year Plan to begin at Riḍván 1964, and to end with the one hundredth anniversary of the revelation of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* in 1973. Its twin objectives were (1) a huge expansion of the Cause, and (2) universal participation, with every believer taking part. The goals included opening seventy

virgin territories, raising the number of National Assemblies to one hundred and eight (later increased to one hundred and thirteen), and the number of Local Assemblies to fourteen thousand, building two Temples (Panama and Tíhrán), acquiring sixty-two Temple sites and fifty-two national Haẓíratu'l-Quds. The number of schools, publishing trusts, and translations would all be greatly augmented. World Centre goals involved further strengthening of the relationship with the United Nations, the development of the institution of the Hands of the Cause with a view to the extension of their appointed functions of protection and propagation into the future, and the development of the physical properties at the World Centre.

Universal participation could be achieved and bring 'a source of power and vitality as yet unknown to us', the Supreme Body advised, if every Bahá'í would teach the Cause, try to live up to its laws and standards, contribute to the Fund, and strive to deepen his understanding of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation. 'All can pray, fight their own spiritual battles and contribute to the Fund.'²

The hundredth year of Bahá'u'lláh's Proclamation from Adrianople to the kings and rulers of the world would be observed through a number of intercontinental and oceanic conferences, the Universal House of Justice announced.

Worldwide Proclamation

A vital part of this new plan quickly became evident: teaching among the masses of humanity, the unsophisticated and unlettered souls who make up the majority of the world's peoples. The entry of 'troops' promised by the Master had had a beginning in East Africa even before the Ten Year Plan. It spread in the 1960s to the Congo, to South-East Asia, to a number of Pacific Island groups and to the Bolivian Indians. India enrolled over 30,000 believers from Riḍván to November 1962. By the start of the Nine Year Plan, the flame was spreading to

² The Universal House of Justice, *Wellspring of Guidance*, p. 38.

¹ Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Bahá'í World*, pp. 154-155.

many lands. The Guajiros of Colombia and Venezuela, the Mayans of Yucatan (Mexico), tribes in the jungles of Brazil and other Latin American lands, as well as the *campesinos* (country people), in large numbers showed an eagerness to embrace the Cause. West Africa awakened, following a lead in the Cameroons and Nigeria. In all these areas the believers were greatly inspired by visits of the Hands of the Cause and their Auxiliary Board members who encouraged the Bahá'ís to reach the villages and people removed from large centers of civilization.

Bahá'í youth throughout the world were called upon by the Universal House of Justice to plan their education and their lives toward service to the Faith, to participate fully in community life, and especially to learn the 'wonderful skill of Bahá'í consultation'. 'The achievements of Bahá'í youth,' wrote the House of Justice in 1966, 'are increasingly advancing the work of the Nine Year Plan.'

A 'new dimension' for spreading the Faith was opened by the Supreme Body—worldwide proclamation. As an exile in Turkey, Bahá'u'lláh had fearlessly proclaimed His Faith to the powerful rulers of His day. Now the time had come to proclaim it to 'every stratum of society'. The six Intercontinental Conferences held in October 1967 put this heightened dimension into motion. *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh*, compiled and published by the Universal House of Justice, was presented on its behalf to Heads of State around the world. National and Local Assemblies continued the process on other levels.

The observance of the hundredth anniversary of the revelation of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets to the Kings began in Adrianople at the site of His House where the 'most momentous Tablet' was revealed. Six Hands of the Cause met there on behalf of the Universal House of Justice and then dispersed to the six conferences. To each conference they carried a special message from the Supreme Body for the assembled believers. The Hand of the Cause Amatu'l Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm laid the foundation stone of the Temple in Panama, with over two hundred Indian Bahá'ís from many tribes lending a special grace and color to the event. Native music with the heartbeat of Africa welcomed the Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan and other Bahá'ís to Kampala. India did its usual

masterful job of contacting national leaders, aided by the Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizí. The Lord Mayor of Sydney opened the Australian conference with a reception honoring the Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery and other Bahá'ís. African, Middle and Far Eastern, North and South American faces all blended with their European brothers and sisters at the Frankfurt conference to greet the Hand of the Cause Paul Haney.

'The time is ripe', the Universal House of Justice declared. 'We are not alone nor helpless . . . the "Army of Light" can achieve such victories as will astonish posterity.'¹

The Hand of the Cause Ṭarázu'lláh Samandarí, ninety-two years of age, shared his memories of Bahá'u'lláh at the Chicago conference, and with amazing power poured forth loving exhortation to the believers. He followed this with a journey throughout North America through many harsh and changing climates. Leading religious journalists across the land were uniquely drawn to him and remarkable publicity resulted. It seemed a special gift of Providence to this heroic standard-bearer of the Cause that he was able to lay down his banner for all time in the Holy Land while Bahá'ís from all over the world assembled to observe the centenary of Bahá'u'lláh's journey to 'Akká in August of 1868.

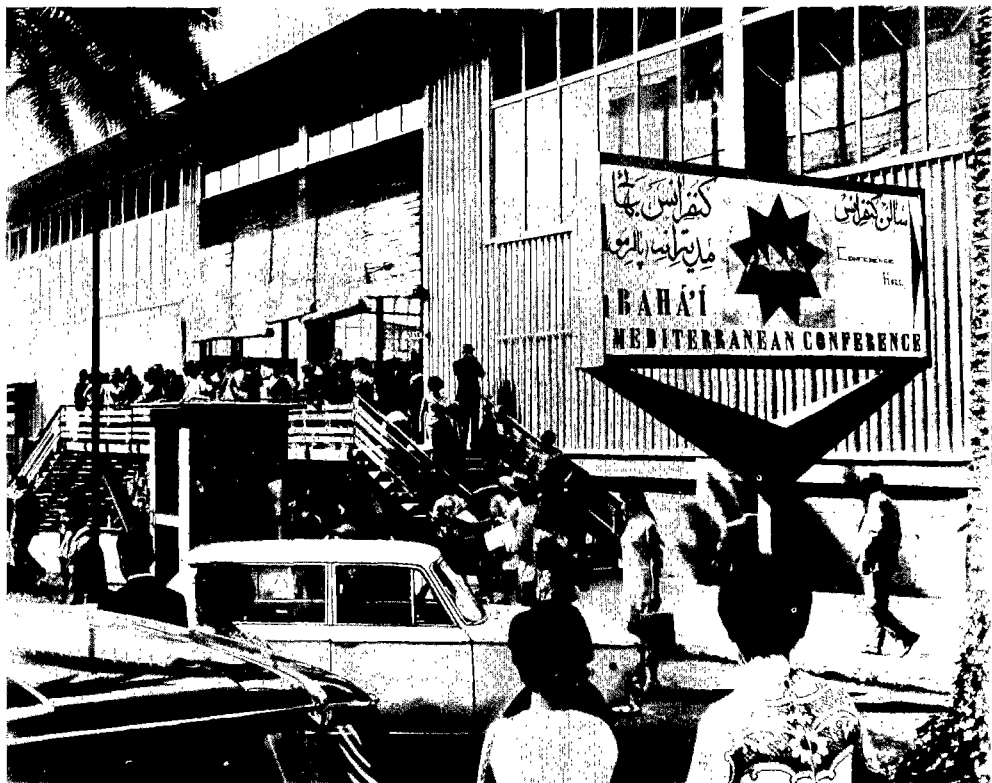
This Holy Land observance was held immediately following the first Oceanic Conference, in Palermo, Sicily, which commemorated Bahá'u'lláh's voyage across the Mediterranean Sea to the Most Great Prison.

Riḍván of 1968 had brought a second international convention to the Holy Land to elect the Universal House of Justice, at which time Dr. David Ruhe was elected to this body. Luṭfulláh Ḥakim had resigned his membership before the election due to reasons of health. Dr. Ḥakim, who had served both the Master and the Guardian for many years in the Holy Land, passed away in August a few weeks prior to the centenary event there.

Appointment of the Continental Boards of Counsellors

Eleven Continental Boards of Counsellors were appointed in June 1968 by the Universal

¹ The Universal House of Justice, *Wellspring of Guidance*, p. 120.



Bahá'ís gathering at the first oceanic conference of the Bahá'í world held in Palermo, Sicily in August 1968 in commemoration of the centenary of Bahá'u'lláh's voyage across the Mediterranean Sea from Gallipoli, Turkey to His exile in 'The Most Great Prison' in 'Akká. More than 2,300 Bahá'ís from sixty-seven countries attended the conference.

House of Justice: three each in Africa, and in Asia; one each in North America, Central America, South America, Australasia and Europe. This historic step was taken to extend into the future the functions of protection and propagation which had been conferred upon the Hands of the Cause, and which would now also be exercised by the Boards of Counsellors. The Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land were named as the liaison between the Boards and the House of Justice. The Auxiliary Board members were to serve the Counsellors, who would appoint them in the future.* The Hands of the Cause were now released from the administrative duties of their institution to carry out

*For elucidation of the collaborative functioning of the Hands of the Cause of God, the Counsellors and Auxiliary Boards, with the National and Local Spiritual Assemblies, see Messages from the Universal House of Justice to the Continental Boards of Counsellors and National Spiritual Assemblies, dated 1 October 1969 and 24 April 1972.

special missions for the World Centre and to teach throughout all parts of the world. Their continued responsibility to consult with the National Assemblies, as well as with the Counsellors, was stressed.

Midpoint of the Plan

As the Nine Year Plan reached its midpoint in 1968, a progress report was published by the Universal House of Justice. Eighty-one of the 113 National Assemblies had now been formed. The Faith had reached 314 countries, 135 of these being independent nations. Tribes and minority groups in the Faith had more than doubled since 1963. More than half the Teaching Institutes called for in the plan had been acquired in the mass-teaching areas.

But the teaching field stretched endlessly; an immense harvest lay waiting. April of 1969 brought a call for 733 more pioneers. Youth



パハハイ北太平洋会議・札幌・1971

BAHÁ'Í NORTH PACIFIC OCEANIC CONFERENCE · SAPPORO · 1971

were entering the Cause in larger numbers, especially in America. Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm interrupted her African teaching journey to meet with more than 2,000 American youth gathered in the shadow of the Temple in Wilmette in June 1970. The youth were in process of fulfilling a Five Year Plan given to them at their own request by the National Assembly. It called for deployment of 500 from their ranks to fill homefront and foreign goals, doubling the number of Bahá'í College Clubs, increasing the number of High School Clubs, and engaging in extensive travel-teaching programs. Teaching the masses began to develop in the deep south of the United States and believers enrolled in large numbers.

*Oceanic and Continental Conferences
(1970-1971)*

Mass teaching was a leading subject at the eight Oceanic and Continental Conferences held in 1970-1971. Members of eleven Indian tribes from Surinam to Argentina were among the Bahá'ís who greeted Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm as representative of the Universal House of Justice at the Bolivian conference in August 1970. The Indian Ocean conference in Mauritius, held at the same time,

brought forth a record number of 212 pioneers for Africa under the inspiration of the Hand of the Cause William Sears. Singapore Bahá'ís blanketed their city with half a million pamphlets in three languages preceding the conference, and welcomed a first visit from the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga, in January 1971. Simultaneously, the conference held in Monrovia, Liberia was highlighted by discussions on mass teaching led by both Rúhíyyih Khánúm and the official representative of the House of Justice, the Hand of the Cause Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir, each drawing on their wide experience in this field. A cruise ship, which made teaching stops along the way, carried 600 Bahá'ís from the United States to the Jamaican conference held in May 1971, where the Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem represented the Universal House of Justice. Its counterpart, the Fijian conference, with the Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone as official representative of the House of Justice, was marked by a complete confidence that the Faith 'would sweep through the far-flung scattered islands' of the Pacific. The Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan represented the Universal House of Justice at the conference in Sapporo, Japan in September 1971. A follow-up conference in Korea, with the Hand of the

Cause Collis Featherstone present, drew 500 believers. John Robarts, Hand of the Cause, read the message from the Universal House of Justice, as its official representative to the Icelandic conference held in Reykjavik, also in September.

During the closing days of the Oceanic conferences news came of the passing of the Hand of the Cause Músá Banání, in Africa. Other revered Hands of the Cause who had passed on during the Nine Year Plan were: Leroy Ioas (1965), ʿArázu'lláh Samandarí (1968), Hermann Grossmann (1968) and Agnes Alexander (1971).

The Teaching Journeys of the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum

No account of the Nine Year Plan, or indeed of the Formative Age of the Faith, would be complete without a review, however brief, of the epic teaching journeys of the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum. Even prior to the Nine Year Plan, and after the passing of the beloved Guardian, she had made journeys to all continents, inspiring the Bahá'ís, dedicating Temples, meetings Presidents, Emperors, Prime Ministers and other world leaders, and teaching the Cause to people from every walk of life. She taught thousands of unlettered people who were deeply moved by her manner and spirit. Her journey to Asia in 1964 lasted nine months and extended 55,000 miles by plane, auto, jeep, boat and on foot, through India, Ceylon, Nepal and Sikkim. Hundreds of villages, often difficult to reach, received her visits. Most countries of Latin America and the Caribbean were her hosts during her two conference visits in 1967 and 1970, where again she reached out to the remote areas. On all her journeys, she was respectfully received by many outstanding dignitaries and leaders of public opinion, and was widely interviewed in the press and on radio and television. Large audiences, often in schools and universities, listened attentively to her addresses on the Faith.

But the crowning glory of her travels was the African Safari, planned during nine years and begun in August 1969. Throughout her journey she was accompanied by Violette Nakhjavání, her courageous and devoted companion on many previous journeys. When the tour was completed in January 1973 these intrepid travellers

'had driven 36,000 miles by Landrover, the majority over expanses which could scarcely qualify for description as roads, flown unnumbered miles by air and voyaged vast distances by watercraft, passing through every conceivable climate and terrain'. They had visited more than thirty countries.

In her summary of this great teaching journey, Violette Nakhjavání wrote of Rúhíyyih Khánum: 'I firmly believe that future generations will study her life, her services and her travels in those lands honored by her visits, and pattern their conduct on her example, inspired to follow in her footsteps.'

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum had taken her leave from the resting place of Shoghi Effendi in London. She returned there at the completion of her African safari to lay her services and her victories at his feet. The Universal House of Justice expressed the grateful appreciation and admiration of the entire Bahá'í world in its cable: 'Your travels African continent unique unparalleled in number countries visited heads state interviewed extensive publicity obtained loving encouragement spiritual stimulation imparted standard heroism example self-sacrifice evinced over such long period under such arduous conditions . . .' She returned to the Holy Land in time to open the third International Bahá'í Convention held at Riqván 1973, which also marked the triumphant conclusion of the Nine Year Plan.

Conclusion of the Nine Year Plan

'A new horizon, bright with intimations of thrilling developments in the unfolding life of the Cause of God, is now discernible', wrote the Universal House of Justice at Riqván 1971 . . . 'We are confident that the "Army of Light", growing in strength and unity will, by 1973, . . . have scaled the heights of yet another peak in the path leading ultimately to the broad uplands of the Most Great Peace.'

A review of the first half century of the Formative Age would fall short of its purpose if it failed to record the significant accomplishments of the Bahá'í Faith in the last years of the Nine Year Plan. The concluding years of this second global campaign, the first inaugurated by the Universal House of Justice, were filled with such momentous events as to exhilarate the hearts of believers throughout the world. It had



Members of the Continental Boards of Counsellors gathered in the precincts of the Shrine of the Báb during their visit to Haifa for the International Convention at Ridván 1973 and consultations with the Universal House of Justice and the Hands of the Cause in preparation for the Five Year Plan.

surpassed its goals for expansion and 'achieved a truly impressive degree of universal participation'. The systematic formation of National Spiritual Assemblies culminated in a final 113, exceeding the goal by five. Ninety of these achieved incorporation and 112 acquired their national headquarters. Bahá'ís were now spread throughout almost 70,000 localities of the world with over 17,000 Local Spiritual Assemblies established. The Faith had penetrated 335 countries, significant territories and islands—a gain of ninety-five in nine years. The number of publishing trusts, national endowments, Temple sites and translations had approximately doubled.

The spirit animating the Bahá'í community was most vividly demonstrated in the response made to the call for pioneers: a total of 1,344 had been called for—3,553 responded, with 2,265 still at their posts as the plan concluded.

The Universal House of Justice named three 'highly portentous developments' resulting from the nine-year campaign: the large number of inter-National Assembly assistance projects carried out which had served 'to strengthen the

bonds of unity between distant parts of the Bahá'í world with different social, cultural and historical backgrounds'; the increase in the financial resources of the Faith; and the advance of youth to the forefront of the teaching work. This spiritual vitality of the youth was abundantly evident at a conference in Fiesch, Switzerland in the summer of 1971. It drew 1,200 youth from five continents who were not only inspired by the Hands of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum and Dr. Adelbert Mühlischlegel, but succeeded in making a far-reaching proclamation of the Faith.

The fiftieth anniversary of the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá was observed throughout the Bahá'í world in November 1971, poignancy being lent by the presence of believers who had met the Master. A few weeks later, on December 19, the Universal House of Justice shared news of the erection of an obelisk on Mount Carmel to mark the site of the future Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, a project originally initiated by Shoghi Effendi.

In April 1972, Rúhíyyih Khánum again interrupted her African journey to officiate at the

dedication of the first House of Worship in Latin America in Panama. The Hand of the Cause *Dhikru'lláh Khádem* and 4,000 other Bahá'ís participated in the dedication ceremonies, public meetings, banquets and a two-day teaching conference. One month later Bahá'ís were apprised of plans at the World Centre for the construction of a majestic edifice on Mount Carmel—a building to serve as the permanent seat of the Universal House of Justice. A special fund was established for the participation of all believers.

November 26, 1972 brought news of great, historic import to the world community of Bahá'ís: the formulation of the Constitution of the Universal House of Justice, hailed, in anticipation, by Shoghi Effendi as the Most Great Law of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. The publication of *A Synopsis and Codification of the Laws and Ordinances of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas* coincided with the centenary of the revelation of this Most Holy Book of Bahá'u'lláh and was described by the Supreme Body as 'another significant step path leading (the) Bahá'í community (to) full maturity (in the) establishment (of the) World Order (of) Bahá'u'lláh.'

There was special joy to Bahá'ís in learning that the Mansion of Mazra'ih, cherished home of Bahá'u'lláh for two years after leaving the prison-city of 'Akká, had been purchased. This Mansion, one of twin historic Houses inhabited by Bahá'u'lláh, had been leased by Shoghi Effendi in 1950 and made a place of pilgrimage. Additional land was now acquired and plans made for beautification of the surrounding area.

A few days following the holding of the third International Convention which resulted in the re-election of the nine members of the Universal House of Justice, this Body released the news of an event which crowned all the victories of the Nine Year Plan. A reigning monarch, His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II, the Head of State of the independent nation of Western Samoa, had accepted the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh! His letter addressed to those assembled at the convention in the Holy Land expressed his cherished hope 'for the rapid establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth and the unity of all the peoples of the world'.

International Teaching Centre Established in the Holy Land

A cable of June 5, 1973 from the Universal House of Justice announced the establishment of the International Teaching Centre in the Holy Land, one of the institutions 'ordained by Bahá'u'lláh anticipated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá elucidated by Shoghi Effendi'. This act brought to fruition the work of the Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land, provided for its extension into the future, linked the institution of the Boards of Counsellors more intimately with that of the Hands of the Cause of God and powerfully reinforced the discharge of the rapidly growing responsibilities of the Universal House of Justice.

Although all the Hands of the Cause of God are included in the membership of the International Teaching Centre, most of them are occupied with service in other parts of the globe. It was therefore decided that there should be a nucleus established in the Holy Land to carry on the vital operations at the World Centre. This nucleus is composed of any Hands present in the Holy Land at any time, together with three Counsellors appointed to the Body—Mr. Hooper Dunbar, Mrs. Florence Mayberry and Mr. 'Aziz Yazdí. The Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land—Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhiyyih Khánun, 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, Paul Haney and Abu'l-Qásim Faizí—are the ones most usually serving on the nucleus, but other Hands have contributed valuably to its deliberations from time to time when visiting Haifa. The immediate responsibilities of the International Teaching Centre are to direct the work of the Continental Boards and act as liaison with the Universal House of Justice; to be informed of the situation of the Cause throughout the world and make reports and recommendations for action; and to determine needs for literature, pioneers, traveling teachers, and work out teaching plans with the approval of the Universal House of Justice.

The International Teaching Centre, destined to evolve into one of those 'world-shaking, world-embracing, world-directing administrative institutions' was now seated in the Holy Land!

God's Holy Purpose for Mankind

The centennial year of the revelation of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, which had yielded so many historical advances for the Cause of God, climaxed over a half century of the Formative Age of the Bahá'í Faith—a period fraught with many challenges and crises but laden with ultimate victory.

In the early days of the Formative Age, a youthful Guardian wrote to his 'fellow-laborers in the Divine Vineyard' urging them to pray 'that in these days of world-encircling gloom, . . . when the most precious fruits of civilization are undergoing severe and unparalleled tests, we may all realize, . . . that though a mere handful amidst the seething masses of the world, we are in this day the chosen instruments

of God's grace, that our mission is most urgent and vital to the fate of humanity, and, fortified by these sentiments, arise to achieve God's holy purpose for mankind.'¹

At Riḍván 1973, the Universal House of Justice wrote: 'The progress of the Cause of God gathers increasing momentum and we may with confidence look forward to the day when this community, in God's good time, . . . shall have raised on this tormented planet the fair mansions of God's Own Kingdom wherein . . . the hatreds and violence of this time shall be transmuted into an abiding sense of world brotherhood and peace. All this shall be accomplished within the Covenant of the everlasting Father, the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh.'

¹ Shoghi Effendi, *Bahá'í Administration*, p. 52.

PART THREE
INTERNATIONAL SURVEY OF
CURRENT BAHÁ'Í ACTIVITIES
1973-1976

I

THE HOUSE OF 'ABDU'LLÁH PÁSHÁ

JOYOUSLY ANNOUNCE SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION LENGTHY DELICATE NEGOTIATIONS RESULTING ACQUISITION BY PURCHASE HOLY HOUSE CENTRE CONVENANT ABDULBAHA BIRTHPLACE BELOVED GUARDIAN SHOGHI EFFENDI STOP HISTORIC PROPERTY ADJACENT BARRACKS MOST GREAT PRISON COMPRISES LAND AREA APPROXIMATING SEVEN THOUSAND SQUARE METRES INCLUDES OTHER STRUCTURES WITHIN COMPLEX ASSURING PERMANENT PROTECTION HOUSE VISITED BY MANY PILGRIMS TURN CENTURY SCENE HISTORIC VISIT FIRST GROUP WESTERN PILGRIMS STOP PLANS BEING PREPARED RESTORATION HOLY HOUSE BEAUTIFICATION GROUNDS AS ADDITIONAL PLACE PILGRIMAGE WORLD CENTRE WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES FUNDS PERMIT STOP OFFER HUMBLE THANKSGIVING BAHAUULLAH THIS GREAT BLESSING. *Universal House of Justice*

(Cablegram to all National Spiritual Assemblies, dated 14 January 1975)

SOME of the most poignant, dramatic and historically significant events of the Heroic Age of our Faith are associated with the house of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá, which derives its name from the Governor of 'Akká who built it and used it as his official residence during his term of office, from 1820 to 1832. It stands just inside the north-western corner of the sea wall of 'Akká, in the close neighbourhood of the citadel where Bahá'u'lláh was confined. The main building is L-shaped, facing south and east on its outer prospects. The structure, though chiefly on two storeys, is irregular and on the inside angle has balconies, uncovered stairways, a bath house and a well. The entire property comprises large courtyards and is bounded on the west, or seaward side by a wall, which turns due east at its southern angle and continues towards the heart of 'Akká, forming after a few yards, the wall of a narrow street; at the eastern terminus of this wall, and within the property, is an imposing house which was occupied by that Governor of 'Akká whose incumbency coincided with 'Abdu'l-Bahá's residence in the main building, and whose northern windows permitted him to maintain a constant surveillance of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's activities. Beyond this house is a small mosque. The eastern boundary of the property is a row of houses giving directly, on its western aspect, to the courtyard and offering many additional vantage points for observing the Master. A similar row of houses extends from the north-eastern corner along the northern boundary until they terminate at the longitudinal wing of the main building which, at

this point, projects northwards into several conjoined buildings, making a large irregular outcrop on the northern boundary. The western end of the northern boundary is a short stretch of wall completing the enclosure at the north-western corner of the west wall. Large stables, coach houses and store rooms line the southern boundary.

In this house, fifty lunar years after the Báb's martyrdom, in January 1899, the casket containing His sacred and precious remains was received by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Who successfully concealed it until it was possible to inter it, with all honours, in its permanent resting-place in the bosom of Carmel. In this house 'Abdu'l-Bahá was confined during the period of His renewed incarceration. Shoghi Effendi, in *God Passes By*, testifies to the conditions of His life at that time:

'... Even His numerous friends and admirers refrained, during the most turbulent days of this period, from calling upon Him, for fear of being implicated and of incurring the suspicion of the authorities. On certain days and nights, when the outlook was at its darkest, the house in which He was living, and which had for many years been a focus of activity, was completely deserted. Spies, secretly and openly, kept watch around it, observing His every movement and restricting the freedom of His family...'

Yet during these troublous times, and from this house He directed the construction of the Báb's sepulchre on Mount Carmel, erected under its shadow His own house in Haifa, and later the Pilgrim House, issued instructions for the restoration of the Báb's holy House in

Shíráz and for the erection of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhikár of the world in the city of 'Ishqábád. Again the Guardian is our reference for the Master's ceaseless activity at that time:

'... Eye witnesses have testified that, during that agitated and perilous period of His life, they had known Him to pen, with His own Hand, no less than ninety Tablets in a single day, and to pass many a night, from dusk to dawn, alone in His bed-chamber engaged in a correspondence which the pressure of His manifold responsibilities had prevented Him from attending to in the day-time.'

It was in this house that His celebrated table talks were given and compiled, to be published later under the title *Some Answered Questions*.¹ In this house and in the darkest hours of a period which the beloved Guardian describes as 'the most dramatic period of His ministry', 'in the hey-day of His life and in the full tide of His power' He penned the first part of His Will and Testament, which delineates the features and lays the foundations of the Administrative Order to arise after His passing. In this house He revealed the highly significant Tablet addressed to the Báb's cousin and chief builder of the 'Ishqábád Temple, a Tablet whose import can be appreciated and grasped only as future events unfold before our eyes, and in which, as testified by Shoghi Effendi, 'Abdu'l-Bahá 'in stirring terms proclaimed the immeasurable greatness of the Revelation of the Báb, sounded the warnings foreshadowing the turmoil which its enemies, both far and near, would let loose upon the world, and prophesied, in moving language, the ascendancy which the torch-bearer of the Covenant would ultimately achieve over them.'

The Guardian's childhood and upbringing in that house are referred to by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm in *The Priceless Pearl*:

'It may sound disrespectful to say the Guardian was a mischievous child, but he himself told me that he was the acknowledged ring-leader of all the other children. Bubbling with high spirits, enthusiasm and daring, full of laughter and wit, the small boy led the way in many pranks; whenever something was afoot, behind it would be found Shoghi Effendi! This boundless energy was often a source of anxiety as he would rush madly up and down the long

flight of high steps to the upper story of the house, to the consternation of the pilgrims below, waiting to meet the Master. His exuberance was irrepressible and was in the child the same force that was to make the man such an untiring and unflinching commander-in-chief of the forces of Bahá'u'lláh, leading them to victory after victory, indeed, to the spiritual conquest of the entire globe. We have a very reliable witness to this characteristic of the Guardian, 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself, Who wrote on a used envelope a short sentence to please His little grandson: "Shoghi Effendi is a wise man—but he runs about very much!" ...

'In those days of Shoghi Effendi's childhood it was the custom to rise about dawn and spend the first hour of the day in the Master's room, where prayers were said and the family all had breakfast with Him. The children sat on the floor, their legs folded under them, their arms folded across their breasts, in great respect; when asked they would chant for 'Abdu'l-Bahá; there was no shouting or unseemly conduct. Breakfast consisted of tea, brewed on the bubbling Russian brass samovar and served in little crystal glasses, very hot and very sweet, pure wheat bread and goats' milk cheese.'

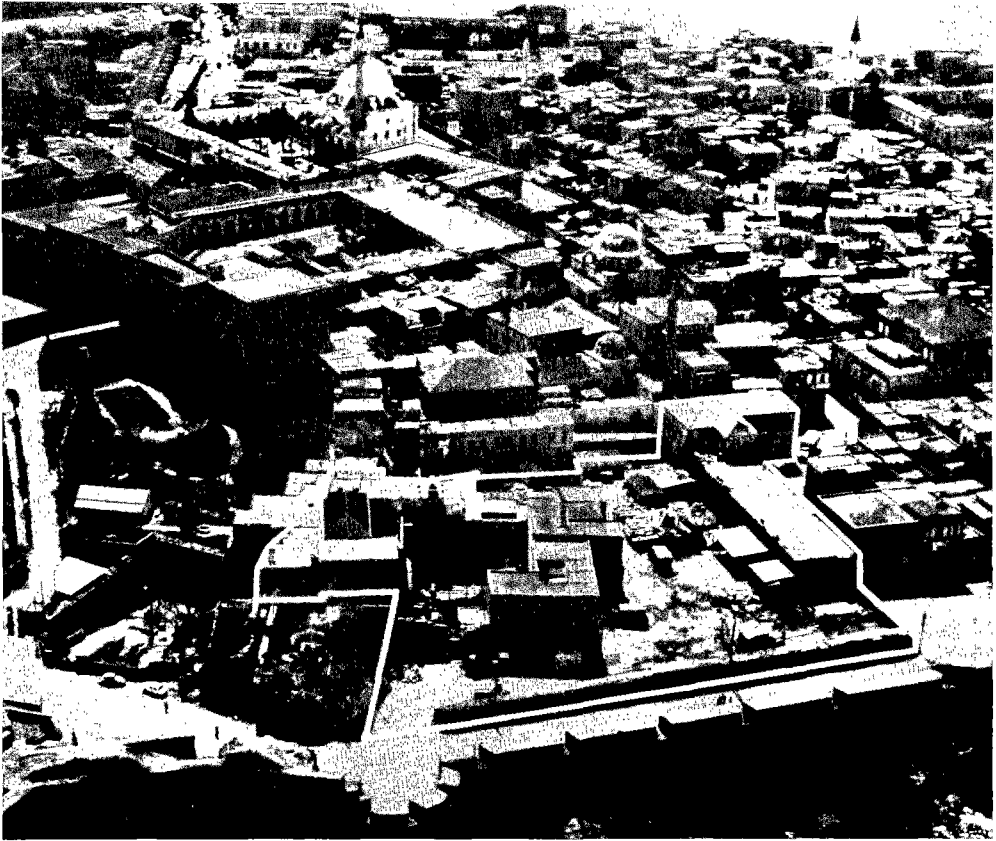
It was to this house that that historic first group of pilgrims from the West came to see the Master in the winter of 1898–1899, and in which many more from both East and West sought His presence. Some of them have left memorable descriptions of their experiences with 'Abdu'l-Bahá and His household in that home. Ella Goodall Cooper, one of the very earliest American believers, records the following:

'One day ... I had joined the ladies of the Family in the room of the Greatest Holy Leaf for early morning tea, the beloved Master was sitting in His favourite corner of the divan where, through the window on His right, He could look over the ramparts and see the blue Mediterranean beyond. He was busy writing Tablets, and the quiet peace of the room was broken only by the bubble of the samovar, where one of the young maidservants, sitting on the floor before it, was brewing tea.'

Thornton Chase, the first American believer, records in his memoir *In Galilee*:

'We did not know we had reached our destination until we saw a Persian gentleman, and then another and another, step out at the entrance and smile at us. We alighted and they

¹ See 'In Memoriam', Laura Clifford Dreyfus-Barney, p. 535.



The House of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, which was His official residence from 1897 to 1908, and in which Shoghi Effendi was born, is shown in this aerial photograph of the north-western quarter of the city of Akká. The borders of the extensive property are outlined in white. It is known locally as the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá and it was here that 'Abdu'l-Bahá received the pilgrims, including that first group from the West (who arrived on 10 December 1898). Seen nearby are the prison citadel with the windows of Bahá'u'lláh's cell clearly visible, the barracks square, and the mosque of Jazzár.

conducted us through the arched, red brick entrance to an open court, across it to a long flight of stone steps, broken and ancient, leading to the highest story and into a small walled court open to the sky, where was the upper chamber assigned to us, which adjoined the room of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The buildings are all of stone, whitewashed and plastered, and it bears the aspect of a prison.

'Our windows looked out over the garden and tent of 'Abdu'l-Bahá on the sea side of the house. That garden is bounded on one side by the house of the Governor, which overlooks it, and on another by the inner wall of fortification. A few feet beyond that is the outer wall upon the sea, and between these two are the guns and

soldiers constantly on guard. A sentry house stands at one corner of the wall and garden, from which the sentry can see the grounds and the tent where 'Abdu'l-Bahá meets transient visitors and the officials who often call on Him. Thus all His acts outside of the house itself are visible to the Governor from his windows and to the men on guard. Perhaps that is one reason why the officials so often become His friends. No one, with humanity, justice, or mercy in his heart, could watch 'Abdu'l-Bahá long without admiring and loving Him for the beautiful qualities constantly displayed.'

Mary Hanford Ford published an account of her pilgrimage to this house in *Star of the West*, vol. XXIV:

'The little room in which I stayed and in which the significant conversations with 'Abdu'l-Bahá took place, was of the simplest description. The floor was covered with matting, the narrow iron bed and the iron wash stand with larger and smaller holes for bowl and pitcher were of that vermin-proof description with which I had become familiar. Everything was scrupulously clean, and there was an abundant supply of sparkling water for bathing and drinking. A wide window looked over the huge town wall upon the blue Mediterranean and before this stretched a divan upon which 'Abdu'l-Bahá sat when He came to see me.'

The palpable victory which 'Abdu'l-Bahá had wrested from the persecution, intrigue, hatred, vilification even, directed against Him during His twelve years in the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá, was signally apparent when, upon His release from incarceration in 1908, He moved to His new residence in Haifa. At that time the future Guardian was a boy of eleven, but his appointment, although a carefully guarded secret, had already been made by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the part of His Will and Testament revealed in that house.

As we contemplate the extraordinary focussing of powerful forces and events upon this house, we eagerly anticipate the day when it will be restored and made ready for pilgrims, who may inhale from its atmosphere, its grounds and sacred walls, the fragrances of a glorious past.

During the twelve years of His residence in this house, 'Abdu'l-Bahá demonstrated the true nobility of His divine nature, overcame hatred with love, pursued without rest against ever-mounting opposition, the direction of His Father's Cause, maintained in the face of fanaticism, jealousy and bitterness His unceasing care of the poor and sick and overcame, with unruffled equanimity, the severest crisis of His life. The Guardian's words testify to these things:

'... At His table, in those days, whenever there was a lull in the storm raging about Him, there would gather pilgrims, friends and enquirers from most of the afore-mentioned countries, representative of the Christian, the Muslim, the Jewish, the Zoroastrian, the Hindu and Buddhist Faiths. To the needy thronging His doors and filling the courtyard of His house every Friday morning, in spite of the perils that environed Him, He would distribute alms with

His own hands, with a regularity and generosity that won Him the title of "Father of the Poor". Nothing in those tempestuous days could shake His confidence, nothing would be allowed to interfere with His ministrations to the destitute, the orphan, the sick, and the downtrodden, nothing could prevent Him from calling in person upon those who were either incapacitated, or ashamed to solicit His aid . . .

'So imperturbable was 'Abdu'l-Bahá's equanimity that, while rumours were being bruited about that He might be cast into the sea, or exiled to Fízán in Tripolitania, or hanged on the gallows, He, to the amazement of His friends and the amusement of His enemies, was to be seen planting trees and vines in the garden of His house, whose fruits when the storm had blown over, He would bid His faithful gardener, Ismá'il Áqá, pluck and present to those same friends and enemies on the occasion of their visits to Him.'

In this house was born the child ordained to hold the destiny of the Faith in his hands for thirty-six years and to become its 'beloved Guardian', the child named 'Shoghi' by his Grandfather, who grew up under His loving and solicitous care and became the recipient of His Tablets.

When Bahá'u'lláh ascended, in 1892, the Mansion at Bahjí remained in the occupancy of the arch-breaker of the Covenant, the Master's half-brother Muḥammad-'Alí, and members of that branch of Bahá'u'lláh's family. 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the members of His family, including His illustrious sister the Greatest Holy Leaf, remained in the House of 'Abbúd, which continued to be 'Abdu'l-Bahá's official residence. In the course of the fifth year after Bahá'u'lláh's passing the marriage of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's two eldest daughters took place and it quickly became apparent that the portion of the House of 'Abbúd available for occupation was woefully inadequate to the enlarged family. With characteristic vigour 'Abdu'l-Bahá took action and in the months preceding the birth of Shoghi Effendi arranged to rent the main building, and subsequently the subsidiary wings, of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá's house and He established it as His official residence. Thus it came about that, in 1897, Shoghi Effendi was born in the same house (in an upper room of the wing facing south) that witnessed events of such vital importance to the Faith and the future of mankind.

II

THE FIVE YEAR INTERNATIONAL TEACHING PLAN 1974–1979

1. THE LAUNCHING OF THE FIVE YEAR PLAN

Excerpts from the message of the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of the world,
Naw-Rúz 1974

‘A span of eighteen years separates us from the centenary of Bahá'u'lláh's Ascension and the unveiling of His Almighty Covenant. The fortunes of humanity in that period no man can foretell. We can, however, confidently predict that the Cause of God, impelled by the mighty forces of life within it, must go on from strength to strength, increasing in size and developing greater and greater powers for the accomplishment of God's purpose on earth.

‘The abundant evidences of Divine confirmation which have rewarded the strenuous and dedicated efforts of the Bahá'í community during the past decade are apparent throughout the earth and give incontrovertible assurance of its capacity to win the good pleasure of Bahá'u'lláh and answer every call made upon it in His service.

‘The Five Year Plan to which this community is now summoned is the opening campaign of these critical years. It is the third global plan embarked upon by the Army of Light in its implementation of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan, that world-encompassing programme disclosed in His perspicuous Tablets and described by the Guardian of the Cause of God as the Charter for the propagation of the Faith throughout the world. It was the Guardian himself, the beloved 'sign of God', who, through his exposition and interpretation of the Revelation, through his discipline and education of the Bahá'í community and through a series of national plans assigned to the various units of that community, forged the Administrative Order of the Faith and made it an instrument for the carrying out of this great Charter, and he himself designed and launched the first global plan, the unique,

brilliant and spiritually glorious Ten Year Crusade. The victories of that crusade implanted the banner of Bahá'u'lláh throughout the planet and the following Nine Year Plan reinforced and extended the bastions of the Faith and raised the number of National Spiritual Assemblies—the supporting pillars of the Universal House of Justice—to one hundred and thirteen, a number increased to one hundred and fifteen . . . at this Ridván . . .

‘This Five Year Plan has three major objectives: preservation and consolidation of the victories won; a vast and widespread expansion of the Bahá'í community; development of the distinctive character of Bahá'í life particularly in the local communities. The achievement of these overall aims requires the accomplishment of particular tasks at the World Centre of the Faith, and by national and local communities.

‘At the World Centre work will continue on the collation and classification of the Sacred Texts; authorized translations of three compilations of Scripture will be made and published, namely, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, prayers and extracts from the Writings of the Báb, greatly augmenting the fragments of His Utterance now available in the West, and of the Master's works comprising a wide selection from the vast range of subjects illumined by His Divine wisdom; construction will begin on the building on Mount Carmel to serve as the seat of the Universal House of Justice and it is hoped to complete it during the Five Year Plan; further extension and beautification of the gardens and lands surrounding the Holy Places will take place; strengthening of the relationship between

the Bahá'í International Community and the United Nations will continue; and efforts will be constantly made to protect the Faith from persecution and to free it from the restraints imposed by religious orthodoxy.

'In the international sphere the erection of two *Mashriqu'l-Adhikárs*—one in India and one in Samoa—will be initiated; eight International Teaching Conferences will be held during the middle part of the Five Year Plan; two for the Arctic, one in Anchorage and one in Helsinki during July 1976, one in Paris in August 1976, one in Nairobi in October 1976, one in Hong Kong in November 1976, one in Auckland and one in Bahia, Brazil in January 1977 and one in Mérida, Mexico in February 1977.

'Sixteen new National Spiritual Assemblies will be formed, . . . their national *Hazíratu'l-Quds*, Temple sites and endowments must be acquired; the dissemination of news and messages, so vital to the knowledge, encouragement and unity of the Bahá'í community, must be made efficient and rapid, and in anticipation of a vast expansion in the number of believers, of Local Spiritual Assemblies and of localities where Bahá'ís reside a coordinated programme of translating and publishing Bahá'í literature with the eventual aim of providing the Sacred Text and the teachings of the Faith to all mankind is to be developed—a programme which will include the founding of six Bahá'í Publishing Trusts and the continued subvention of Bahá'í literature, 409 inter-Assembly assistance projects are scheduled and, at the outset of the plan, 557 pioneers are called for . . .

'The proclamation of the Faith, following established plans and aiming to use on an increasing scale the facilities of mass communication must be vigorously pursued. It should be remembered that the purpose of proclamation is to make known to all mankind the fact and general aim of the new Revelation, while teaching programmes should be planned to confirm individuals from every stratum of society.

'The vast reservoir of spiritual energy, zeal and idealism resident in Bahá'í youth, which so effectively contributed to the success of the Nine Year Plan, must be directed and lavishly spent for the proclamation, teaching, and consolidation of the Cause. Spiritual Assemblies are urged to provide consultation and the offer of guidance to Bahá'í youth who seek to plan

their lives in such a way as to be of utmost service to the Cause of God.

'The education of children in the teachings of the Faith must be regarded as an essential obligation of every Bahá'í parent, every local and national community and it must become a firmly-established Bahá'í activity during the course of this plan. It should include moral instruction by word and example and active participation by children in Bahá'í community life.

'This Five Year Plan must witness the development in the world-wide Bahá'í community of distinctive Bahá'í characteristics implanted in it by Bahá'u'lláh Himself. Unity of mankind is the pivotal principle of His Revelation; Bahá'í communities must therefore become renowned for their demonstration of this unity. In a world becoming daily more divided by factionalism and group interests, the Bahá'í community must be distinguished by the concord and harmony of its relationships. The coming of age of the human race must be foreshadowed by the mature, responsible understanding of human problems and the wise administration of their affairs by these same Bahá'í communities. The practice and development of such Bahá'í characteristics are the responsibility alike of individual Bahá'ís and the administrative institutions, although the greatest opportunity to foster their growth rests with the Local Spiritual Assemblies.

'The divinely ordained institution of the Local Spiritual Assembly operates at the first levels of human society and is the basic administrative unit of Bahá'u'lláh's World Order. It is concerned with individuals and families whom it must constantly encourage to unite in a distinctive Bahá'í society, vitalized and guarded by the laws, ordinances and principles of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation. It protects the Cause of God; it acts as the loving shepherd of the Bahá'í flock.

'Strengthening and development of Local Spiritual Assemblies is a vital objective of the Five Year Plan. Success in this one goal will greatly enrich the quality of Bahá'í life, will heighten the capacity of the Faith to deal with entry by troops which is even now taking place and, above all, will demonstrate the solidarity and ever-growing distinctiveness of the Bahá'í community, thereby attracting more and more thoughtful souls to the Faith and offering a

refuge to the leaderless and hapless millions of the spiritually bankrupt, moribund present order . . .

'During the Five Year Plan Local Spiritual Assemblies which are being formed for the first time, are to be formed whenever there are nine or more adult believers in the relevant area, thereafter they must be elected or declared at *Riḍván*. National Spiritual Assemblies are called upon to assign, and encourage the Local Spiritual Assemblies to adopt goals within the overall framework of the Five Year Plan, to consult with them and to assist them to make great efforts to gradually assume their proper function and responsibilities in the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. The friends are called upon to give their whole-hearted support and cooperation to the Local Spiritual Assembly, first by voting for the membership and then by energetically pursuing its plans and programmes, by turning to it in time of trouble or difficulty, by praying for its success and taking delight in its rise to influence and honour. This great prize, this gift of God within each community must be cherished, nurtured, loved, assisted, obeyed and prayed for.

'Such a firmly-founded, busy and happy community life as is envisioned when Local Spiritual Assemblies are truly effective, will provide a firm home foundation from which the friends may derive courage and strength and loving support in bearing the Divine Message to their fellow-men and conforming their lives to its benevolent rule.

'The deeds and programmes, all these multifarious world-wide activities to which you are summoned have but one aim—the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth. At every stage of this process and at all levels of Bahá'í responsibility, whether individual, local or national, you will be encouraged, advised and assisted by the divinely ordained institution of the Hands of the Cause of God, an institution powerfully reinforced by the successful estab-

lishment of the International Teaching Centre. Through the emergence of this Centre the seal has been set on the accomplishment of the goal, announced nearly ten years ago, of ensuring the extension into the future of the specific functions of protection and propagation conferred upon the Hands of the Cause in the Sacred Text. Through the work of the International Teaching Centre, which supervises and co-ordinates the work of the Boards of Counsellors around the world, the love, the guidance, the assistance of the Hands, through the Boards of Counsellors, their Auxiliary Board members and their assistants, permeates the entire structure of Bahá'í society.

'The Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic world commonwealth have indeed assured to that growing community, the care for its welfare, for the development of its character, for its spiritual encouragement which are among the duties of their high office.

'As the old order gives way to the new, the changes which must take place in human affairs are such as to stagger the imagination. This is the opportunity for the hosts of the Lord. Undismayed and undeterred by the wreckage of "long-cherished ideals and time-honoured institutions", now being "swept away and relegated to the limbo of obsolescent and forgotten doctrines", the world community of Bahá'is must surge forward eagerly, and with ever-increasing energy, to build those new, God-given institutions from which will be diffused the light of the holy principles and teachings sent down by God in this day for the salvation of all mankind.'

Each National Spiritual Assembly received a separate message setting forth the details of its respective goals, and these, together with the World Centre goals, are summarized in the analysis which follows.



Interior view of Kiel Auditorium, St. Louis, Missouri, during the first United States National Bahá'í Conference of the Five Year Plan held 29 August-1 September 1974, when more than 10,000 Bahá'ís gathered to dedicate themselves to achieving the goals of the Plan.



The first Teaching Conference of the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions of Europe was held in Torshavn, Faroe Islands, 11-18 August 1974 with forty-three Bahá'ís in attendance. Mrs. Betty Reed of the European Board of Counsellors is seen standing on the right behind the second row.

2. ANALYSIS OF THE FIVE YEAR INTERNATIONAL TEACHING PLAN 1974-1979

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, in innumerable passages of His Revelation, exhorted His followers to teach His Cause. 'Abdu'l-Bahá was the leading exemplar of this activity and in fourteen Tablets addressed to the Bahá'ís of North America, known as the *Tablets of the Divine Plan*, revealed the charter for teaching. Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, established the pattern of teaching plans, at first national in scope and then, in several instances, extending beyond national boundaries until in 1953 he launched the Ten Year International Plan, the first global venture undertaken by the followers of Bahá'u'lláh. This world crusade not only succeeded in implanting the Faith throughout the planet but witnessed, through the election in 1963 of the Universal House of Justice, the completion of its administrative structure.

The Universal House of Justice, one year after its inception, called the Bahá'í world community to a further plan of nine years' duration and indicated its intention of pursuing a series of plans designed to implement in its entirety the Divine Plan of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The Five Year Plan detailed in the following pages is the current phase of this process.

I

MAJOR OBJECTIVES OF THE FIVE YEAR PLAN

1. The preservation and consolidation of past victories.
2. A vast and widespread expansion of the Bahá'í community.
3. The development of the distinctive character of Bahá'í life, particularly in the local communities.

gardens and lands surrounding the Holy Places.

5. Continued strengthening of the relationship between the Bahá'í International Community and the United Nations.
6. Constant efforts to protect the Faith from persecution and to free it from the restraints imposed by religious orthodoxy.
7. The holding of eight International Teaching Conferences—from July 1976 to February 1977.

II

WORLD CENTRE GOALS

1. Continued collation and classification of the Sacred Texts.
2. The preparation and publication of authorized translations of three compilations of Scripture:
 - (a) Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*
 - (b) Prayers and extracts from the Writings of the Báb
 - (c) Selections from the works of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.
3. Initiation of the construction of the building on Mount Carmel to serve as the seat of the Universal House of Justice.
4. Further extension and beautification of the

III

GENERAL AIMS AND GUIDELINES

1. A great increase in the number of believers, Local Spiritual Assemblies and localities where Bahá'ís reside.
2. The planning of teaching programmes aimed at confirming individuals from every stratum of society.
3. The need to have the Bahá'í community represented broadly across the geographical areas of national jurisdiction.
4. The offering of guidance to Bahá'í youth, lending support to their activities, and utilizing their spiritual energy, zeal and idealism in promoting the Cause and in carrying out projects for specific periods of weeks, months, even a year or more.
5. The education of children in the teachings of

- the Faith to become a firmly established Bahá'í activity.
6. The provision of efficient and rapid dissemination of news and messages.
 7. A co-ordinated programme of publishing, subventing and disseminating Bahá'í literature.
 8. Bahá'í communities at present dependent on outside help to aim at becoming self-supporting.
 9. Ensuring that increasing numbers of Local Spiritual Assemblies are 'broadly based', 'securely grounded', and 'efficiently functioning'.
 10. The adoption by Local Spiritual Assemblies of goals of their own choosing within the framework of the plan, or the assignment by National Spiritual Assemblies of such goals to Local Assemblies.
 11. Extension teaching goals to be spontaneously adopted by or assigned to an increasing number of Local Spiritual Assemblies to help the work of groups, isolated believers, or other Spiritual Assemblies in their neighbourhoods.
 12. The encouragement of the believers by Local Spiritual Assemblies to gather each day during the hours between dawn and two hours after sunrise, in localities where such gatherings would fit into the pattern of the friends' lives, to listen to the reading and chanting of the Holy Word.
 13. The convening of teaching conferences designed to take advantage of the presence of friends *en route* through various countries to attend the eight International Conferences.
 14. The fostering of cordial relations with people of prominence and those in authority.
 15. The need to be alert and seize opportunities to increase the recognition of the Faith through the incorporation of Spiritual Assemblies and the recognition of Bahá'í marriage certificates and of Bahá'í Holy Days.
 16. Increasing the use of mass communication facilities, wherever possible, to proclaim and teach the Faith.

¹ In Persia, towards the fulfilment of the goal of the Ten Year Crusade to erect a *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* in Tíhrán, preliminary steps are to be adopted to pave the way for its eventual construction, circumstances permitting.

² Known as Benin since 1976.

IV

SUMMARY OF SPECIFIC GOALS
ASSIGNED TO NATIONAL
SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

- IV. 1. National Spiritual Assemblies which are to make plans to accommodate the International Teaching Conferences of 1976/1977

AFRICA (1)

Nairobi, Kenya, October 1976

AMERICAS (3)

Anchorage, Alaska, July 1976

Bahía, Brazil, January 1977

Mérida, Mexico, February 1977

ASIA (1)

Hong Kong, B.C.C., November 1976

AUSTRALASIA (1)

Auckland, New Zealand, January 1977

EUROPE (2)

Helsinki, Finland, July 1976

Paris, France, August 1976

- IV. 2. Countries where the construction of *Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs* is to be initiated¹

India

Samoa

- IV. 3. National Spiritual Assemblies to be established

(National Spiritual Assembly responsible for goal in brackets)

AFRICA (9)

Burundi, with seat in Bujumbura (National Teaching Committee of Burundi)

Mali, with seat in Bamako (Ivory Coast, Mali and Upper Volta)

Mauritania, with seat in Nouakchott (upper West Africa)

Niger, with seat in Niamey (Dahomey,² Togo and Niger)

Upper Volta, with seat in Ouagadougou (Ivory Coast, Mali and Upper Volta)

Sénégal, with seat in Dakar (Upper West Africa)

Sierra Leone, with seat in Freetown (West Africa)

Somalia, with seat in Mogadishu (North East Africa)

Togo, with seat in Lomé (Dahomey, Togo and Niger)



Bahá'is attending the Teaching Conference of the Mediterranean Area, Cagliari, Sardinia; 27 December 1973-2 January 1974.



Bahá'is from Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia and Chile who attended the Teaching Conference held in Lima, Peru; July 1974. The Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizi is seen fifth from the left in the second row from the back.



*Bahá'is attending the National Teaching Conference, Apia, Western Samoa; August 1974.
The Hand of the Cause William Sears is seen standing in the centre of the last row.*



Bahá'is attending the National Teaching Conference, Oruro, Bolivia; September 1974.

AMERICAS (3)

Bahamas, The, with seat in Nassau (United States)

French Antilles, with seat in Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe (Leeward and Virgin Is.)

Surinam and French Guiana, with seat in Paramaribo, Surinam (Guyana, Surinam and French Guiana)

ASIA (1)

Jordan, with seat in 'Ammán (Near East)

AUSTRALASIA (1)

New Hebrides, with seat in Vila, Efate (South West Pacific Ocean)

EUROPE (2)

Cyprus, with seat in Nicosia (United Kingdom)

Greece, with seat in Athens (Germany)

IV. 4. National Spiritual Assemblies to be incorporated

(National Spiritual Assembly responsible for goal in brackets)

AFRICA (8)

Ethiopia (North East Africa)

Gambia (Upper West Africa)

Mali (Ivory Coast, Mali and Upper Volta)

Mauritania (Upper West Africa)

Réunion (Réunion)

Sénégal (Upper West Africa)

Sierra Leone (West Africa)

Upper Volta (Ivory Coast, Mali and Upper Volta)

AMERICAS (2)

French Antilles (Leeward and Virgin Is.)

Surinam (Guyana, Surinam and French Guiana)

ASIA (4)

Hong Kong (Hong Kong)

Nepal (Nepal)

Singapore (Singapore)

Turkey (Turkey)

AUSTRALASIA (1)

New Hebrides (South West Pacific Ocean)

EUROPE (3)

Austria (Austria)

Cyprus (United Kingdom)

Portugal (Portugal)

IV. 5. Bahá'í Publishing Trusts to be formed

ASIA (4)

Japan

Korea

Malaysia

Philippine Islands

AUSTRALASIA (2)

Australia

Fiji Islands

IV. 6. National Spiritual Assemblies responsible for the translation and publication of Bahá'í literature in one or more of the major languages of their areas¹*AFRICA*

Benin (2)

Botswana (1)

Burundi (1)

Central African

Republic (1)

Chad (1)

Ethiopia (3)

Ghana (2)

Ivory Coast, Mali

and Upper

Volta (2)

Kenya (3)

Lesotho (1)

Liberia and

Guinea (1)

Madagascar (1)

Malawi (1)

AMERICAS

Argentina (3)

Bolivia (1)

Brazil (1)

Chile (2)

Colombia (2)

ASIA

Bangladesh (1)

Burma (1)

Hong Kong (1)

India (15)

Japan (1)

Korea (1)

Laos (1)

Near East (1)

AUSTRALASIA

Fiji Islands (1)

Gilbert Islands and Tuvalu (1²)

Tonga (1)

Niger (2)

Nigeria (6)

Rhodesia (1)

Rwanda (1)

Sierra Leone (1)

South and West

Africa (2)

Sudan (1)

Swaziland, Mozam-

bique and Angola

(1)

Tanzania (2)

Togo (2)

Uganda (2)

Upper West Africa (2)

Zaire (3)

Zambia (1)

Ecuador (1)

Panama (2)

Paraguay (2)

Peru (1)

Venezuela (2)

Nepal (1)

Pakistan (4)

Persia (9)

Sikkim (2)

Sri Lanka (1)

Thailand (1)

Turkey (1)

Vietnam (1)

¹ This list includes languages in which selections from Bahá'í Writings are to be recorded for the friends to memorize.² Known as Gilbert and Ellice Islands until 1976.

EUROPE

Austria (5)	Italy (1)
Belgium (1)	Netherlands (2)
Denmark (2)	Norway (1)
Finland (2)	Spain (1)
France (1)	Sweden (3)
Germany (8)	Switzerland (1)
Iceland (2)	United Kingdom (1)

IV. 7. Properties to be acquired

A. National Ḥaẓiratu'l-Quds

AFRICA (10)

Central and East Africa (2)
Western Africa (8)

AMERICAS (4)

Central America (2)
North America (1)
South America (1)

ASIA (2)

South Eastern Asia (1)
West Asia (1)

AUSTRALASIA (1)*EUROPE* (2)

B. National Temple Sites

AFRICA (15)

Central and East Africa (3)
Southern Africa (1)
Western Africa (11)

AMERICAS (5)

Central America (3)
North America (1)
South America (1)

ASIA (3)

South Central Asia (1)
South Eastern Asia (1)
Western Asia (1)

AUSTRALASIA (6)

Australasia (2)
North East Asia (4)

EUROPE (2)

C. National Endowments

AFRICA (13)

Central and East Africa (3)
Southern Africa (1)
Western Africa (9)

AMERICAS (5)

Central America (3)
North America (1)
South America (1)

ASIA (3)

South Central Asia (1)
South Eastern Asia (1)
Western Asia (1)

AUSTRALASIA (3)*EUROPE* (2)

D. Summer Schools

AFRICA (1)

North East Africa (1)

AUSTRALASIA (1)E. District Ḥaẓiratu'l-Quds and Institutes¹*AFRICA* (73)

Central and East Africa (38)
Southern Africa (19)
Western Africa (16)

AMERICAS (12)

Central America (7)
North America (1)
South America (4)

ASIA (75)

South Central Asia (21)
South Eastern Asia (43)
West Asia (11)

AUSTRALASIA (5)

Australasia (1)
North East Asia (4)

EUROPE (1)F. Local Ḥaẓiratu'l-Quds²*AFRICA* (811)

Central and East Africa (476)
Southern Africa (167)
Western Africa (168)

AMERICAS (295)

Central America (111)
North America (6)
South America (178)

¹ District Ḥaẓiratu'l-Quds are intended to be rather more substantial structures than the average local Ḥaẓiratu'l-Quds, and should be located in areas which form easily accessible, central gathering places for districts in which large numbers of Bahá'ís are living. Such a building can be used for district gatherings, for the holding of teaching institutes, conferences, deepening classes, etc. for the larger area, and could possibly accommodate the office of the district teaching committee.

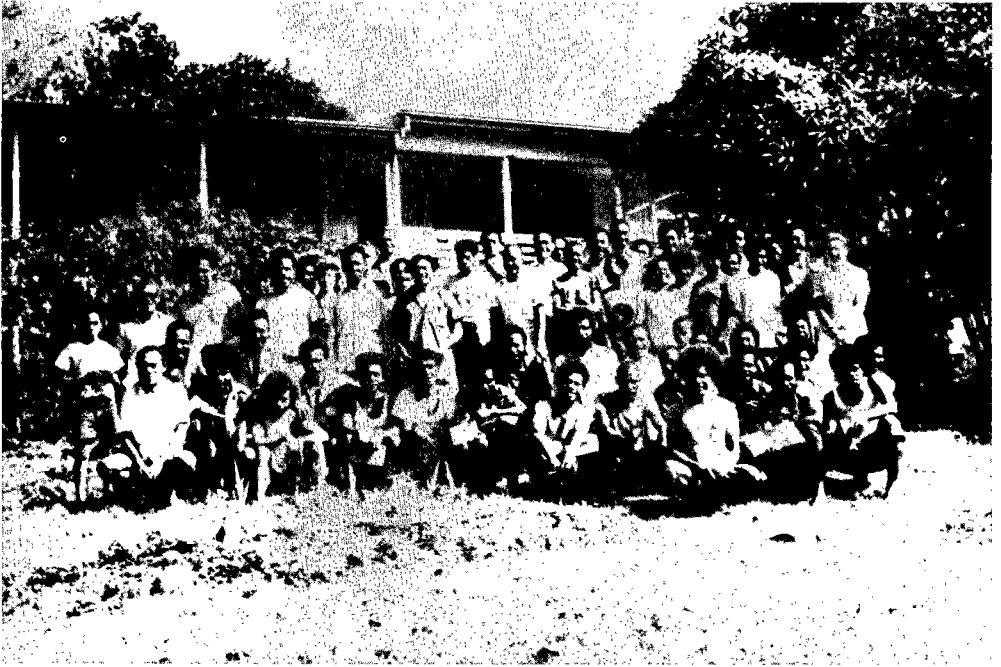
² Local Ḥaẓiratu'l-Quds called for in the plan should be very simple structures to serve as focal points and meeting places for the local communities.



Bahá'ís attending a teaching conference held in Kigali, Rwanda, to study the significance and purpose of Bahá'í institutions; October 1974. Seen seated in the second row (left to right) are Auxiliary Board member Peter Mutabazi, Counsellor Kolonario Oule, Counsellor Isobel Sabri and, at the extreme right, standing, Auxiliary Board member, Dr. 'Atá'u'lláh Ta'id.



Bahá'ís of Chile attending the annual National Teaching Conference sponsored by the Continental Board of Counsellors in South America, held in Valparaíso, Chile; December 1974. The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir is seen, hand uplifted, in the centre. To the left are the Counsellors Leonora Armstrong, Athos Costas, Raúl Pavón and Donald Witzel; in the same row, second from the right, Mas'úd Khamsí.



Bahá'ís attending the National Teaching Conference held at Sogeri Teaching Institute, Papua; 28 April 1975.



Bahá'ís attending the Regional Teaching Conference held in Bahá'í Hall, Karachi, Pakistan; 6 April 1975.

ASIA (119)
 South Central Asia (54)
 South Eastern Asia (55)
 West Asia (10)
AUSTRALASIA (84)
 Australasia (65)
 North East Asia (19)
EUROPE (6)

EUROPE
 Europe 513 2,567
 (10 circum-
 stances
 permitting)
 Grand Totals 23,941 90,035

G. Local Endowments

AFRICA (1,269)
 Central and East Africa (714)
 Southern Africa (343)
 Western Africa (212)
AMERICAS (354)
 Central America (151)
 North America (7)
 South America (196)
ASIA (47)
 South Central Asia (30)
 South Eastern Asia (2)
 West Asia (15)
AUSTRALASIA (5)
 Australasia (1)
 North East Asia (4)
EUROPE (2)

IV. 9. Incorporation of Local Spiritual Assemblies to be achieved

AMERICAS (892)
 Alaska (25)
 Argentina (9)
 Belize (10)
 Bolivia (18)
 Brazil (35)
 Canada (150)
 Chile (9)
 Colombia (40)
 Dominican Republic (9)
 Ecuador (14)
 El Salvador (6)
 Guatemala (15)
 Guyana, Surinam and French Guiana (6)
 (Guyana 3; Surinam 2; French Guiana 1)
 Honduras (15)
 Jamaica (12)
 Leeward and Virgin Islands (6)
 (Virgin Islands 2; Leeward Islands 2;
 Guadeloupe 1; Martinique 1)
 Nicaragua (9)
 Panama (18)
 Paraguay (9)
 Peru (36)
 Puerto Rico (6)
 Trinidad and Tobago (6)
 United States (400)
 Uruguay (6)
 Venezuela (16) (plus 1 on Curaçao Island)
 Windward Islands (6) (Barbados 1;
 Grenada 1; Grenadines 1; St Vincent 1;
 St Lucia 1; Dominica 1)
ASIA (1086)
 Bangladesh (30)
 Hong Kong*
 India (500)
 Laos (8)
 Malaysia (250)
 Pakistan (50)
 Philippines (36)
 Singapore (4)
 Taiwan (8)
 Vietnam (200)

IV. 8. Local Spiritual Assemblies to be established and localities to be opened

	Local Spiritual Assemblies	Localities
<i>AFRICA</i>		
Central and East Africa	4,691	15,868
Northern Africa	35	145
Southern Africa	955	3,983
Western Africa	913	2,722
Total in Africa	6,594	22,718
<i>AMERICAS</i>		
Central America	969	3,145
North America	1,757	8,700
South America	2,291	8,760
Total in the Americas	5,017	20,605
<i>ASIA</i>		
South Central Asia	7,280	31,175
South Eastern Asia	2,272	9,001
Western Asia	1,357	488
Total in Asia	10,909	40,664
<i>AUSTRALASIA</i>		
Australasia	553	1,971
North East Asia	355	1,510
Total in Australasia	908	3,481

*Incorporate all L.S.A.s.

AUSTRALASIA (167)

- Australia (50)
- Fiji Islands (10)
- Gilbert and Ellice Islands (15)
- Hawaiian Islands*
- New Zealand (15)
- Papua New Guinea (10)
- Samoa (15)
- Solomon Islands (15)
- South West Pacific Ocean (6) (New Caledonia 2; Loyalty Islands 2; New Hebrides 2)
- Tonga and the Cook Islands (3) (all on the Cook Islands)

EUROPE (183)

- Austria (5)
- Belgium (6)
- Denmark (8)
- France (5)
- Germany (45)
- Iceland (3)
- Ireland (4)
- Italy†
- Luxembourg (4)
- Spain (33) (including 1 on the Balearic Islands and 3 on the Canary Islands)
- Switzerland (20)
- United Kingdom (50)

IV. 10. Inter-Assembly collaboration projects

Legend:

- A. Acquisition of properties
- B. Teaching projects
- C. Enrichment of literature
- D. Settlement of pioneers
- E. Travelling teachers

Assisting zones are shown in block capital letters: e.g. CENTRAL AND EAST AFRICA

Receiving zones are indented and appear in upper and lower case roman letters: e.g. Southern Africa

Letters in brackets indicate type of project; figure following letter indicates number of National Spiritual Assemblies being assisted: e.g. (C1, D2, E2)

*Example:**ASIA***WESTERN ASIA**

(C3, E5)

South Central Asia

(A1, D4, E2)

The first entry indicates that the National Spiritual Assemblies in the zone of Western Asia are assisting three National Spiritual Assemblies within that zone in the enrichment of literature, and are assisting five National Spiritual Assemblies by sending them travelling teachers.

The second entry means that in the zone of Western Asia, the National Spiritual Assemblies there are assisting, in the zone of South Central Asia, one National Spiritual Assembly to acquire properties, four by offering them pioneers and two by sending them travelling teachers.

*AFRICA***CENTRAL AND EAST AFRICA**

(A1, B2, C3, D2, E6)

Southern Africa

(C1, D2, E2)

Western Africa

(E2)

NORTHERN AFRICA

Western Africa

(D2) (circumstances permitting)

SOUTHERN AFRICA

(C4, D2, E10)

WESTERN AFRICA

(A2, C4, E6)

Central and East Africa

(C2, D2, E2)

Southern Africa

(D2)

Europe

(D1)

*AMERICAS***CENTRAL AMERICA**

(B3, D5, E13)

North America

(E1)

South America

(D2, E4)

Europe

(E1)

*Incorporate all L.S.A.s.

†Pursue incorporation of L.S.A.s.



*Bahá'is attending the Regional Teaching Conference held in Victoria, Cameroon; 18 May 1975.
The Hand of the Cause Dr. Rahmatu'lláh Muhájir is seen in the centre of the last row.*



Bahá'is attending the National Teaching Conference held in Bangalore, India; 23-26 May 1975.

NORTH AMERICA

(E3)

Central and East Africa
(D5, E5)
Southern Africa
(D8, E4)
Western Africa
(A3, D9, E11)
Central America
(A3, D12, E14)
South America
(A1, D12, E12)
South Central Asia
(D3, E2)
South Eastern Asia
(D5, E5)
Western Asia
(D1, E1)
Australasia
(A2, D5, E10)
Europe
(A1, B1, C1, D6, E14)

SOUTH AMERICA

(C1, D1, E11)

Southern Africa
(A1, D2, E1)
Western Africa
(D2, E3)
Central America
(D1, E4)
North America
(E1)
Europe
(D1, E3)

ASIA

SOUTH CENTRAL ASIA

(A1, B1, C1, D4, E5)

Central and East Africa
(E2)
Southern Africa
(E3)
Western Africa
(D1, E2)
North America
(E1)
South America
(E2)
South Eastern Asia
(E5)
Western Asia
(E1)

SOUTH EASTERN ASIA

(C1, D1, E5)

Central and East Africa
(E2)
Southern Africa
(E2)
Western Africa
(E4)
North America
(E1)
South America
(D1)
South Central Asia
(C1, E1)
Australasia
(D2, E4)

WESTERN ASIA

(C3, E5)

Central and East Africa
(A2, D11, E4)
Northern Africa
(E1)
Southern Africa
(A2, D10, E1)
Western Africa
(A4, D9, E7)
Central America
(D6)
South America
(D9)
South Central Asia
(A1, D4, E2)
South Eastern Asia
(D4)
Western Asia
(E5)
Australasia
(B1, D3)
Europe
(A2, B1, C1, D3, E1)

AUSTRALASIA

AUSTRALASIA

(A3, B1, C3, D14, E13)

Central and East Africa
(E2)
Southern Africa
(D1, E3)
Western Africa
(A1)
North America
(E3)

South America
(E1)
South Central Asia
(D1, E2)
South Eastern Asia
(A1, C2, D4, E6)

*EUROPE***EUROPE**

(A1, B13, C1, D2, E15)
Central and East Africa
(A2, D3, E5)
Northern Africa
(E1)
Southern Africa
(A1, D4, E9)
Western Africa
(A2, D8, E6)
Central America
(A2, D3, E2)
North America
(E3)
South America
(A1, D4, E4)
South Central Asia
(D2)
South Eastern Asia
(D1)
Western Asia
(E1)
Australasia
(A1, B1, D3, E1)

Lesotho
Madagascar
Malawi
Mauritius
Nigeria
North East Africa
Réunion
Rhodesia
Rwanda
Seychelles
South and West Africa
Swaziland and Mozambique
Tanzania
Uganda
Upper West Africa
West Africa
Zaire
Zambia

AMERICAS (11)

Argentina
Bolivia
Brazil
Chile
Colombia
Ecuador
Panama
Paraguay
Peru
Uruguay
Venezuela

ASIA (12)

Bangladesh
Burma
India
Laos
Malaysia
Nepal
Pakistan
Persia
Sikkim
Sri Lanka
Thailand
Vietnam

IV. 11. Miscellaneous untabulated goals

A. NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES TO SELECT ONE OR MORE BELIEVERS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITIES, AND TO TRAIN THEM TO HELP IN DEEPENING THEIR FELLOW BELIEVERS AND IN CONSOLIDATING THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

AFRICA (29)

Botswana
Burundi
Cameroon Republic
Central African Republic
Chad
Congo Republic
Dahomey, Togo and Niger
Equatorial Guinea
Ghana
Ivory Coast, Mali and Upper Volta
Kenya

B. NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES WHICH ARE TO ORGANIZE BAHÁ'Í ACTIVITIES FOR WOMEN

AFRICA (31)

Botswana
Burundi



The Hands of the Cause of God John Robarts and William Sears, Counsellor 'Aziz Yazdí of the International Teaching Centre, members of the Continental Board of Counsellors in North America, Auxiliary Board members and members of the National Spiritual Assemblies of Alaska, Canada and the United States are seen gathered on the steps of the House of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois during a significant conference held in July 1975 to discuss the progress of the Five Year Plan. Also attending the conference, but not present for the taking of the photograph, was the Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem.



Bahá'ís attending the Regional Teaching Conference held at Mamfe, Cameroon; 25-26 January 1975. Dr. Mihdí Samandari of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Western Africa is seen at the extreme left, third row.

Cameroon Republic
 Central African Republic
 Chad
 Congo Republic
 Dahomey, Togo and Niger
 Equatorial Guinea
 Ghana
 Ivory Coast, Mali and Upper Volta
 Kenya
 Lesotho
 Madagascar
 Malawi
 Mauritius
 Morocco (circumstances permitting)
 Nigeria
 North East Africa
 Réunion
 Rhodesia
 Rwanda
 Seychelles
 South and West Africa
 Sudan (circumstances permitting)
 Swaziland and Mozambique
 Tanzania
 Uganda
 Upper West Africa
 West Africa
 Zaïre
 Zambia

AMERICAS (26)

Argentina
 Belize
 Bolivia
 Brazil
 Chile
 Colombia
 Costa Rica
 Dominican Republic
 Ecuador
 El Salvador
 Guatemala
 Guyana, Surinam and French Guiana
 Haiti
 Honduras
 Jamaica
 Leeward and Virgin Islands
 Mexico
 Nicaragua
 Panama
 Paraguay
 Peru
 Puerto Rico

Trinidad and Tobago
 Uruguay
 Venezuela
 Windward Islands¹

ASIA (17)

Bangladesh
 Burma
 Hong Kong
 India
 Korea
 Laos
 Malaysia
 Near East
 Nepal
 Pakistan
 Philippine Islands
 Sikkim
 Sri Lanka
 Taiwan
 Thailand
 Turkey
 Vietnam

AUSTRALASIA (6)

Fiji Islands
 Gilbert and Ellice Islands
 North West Pacific Ocean
 Solomon Islands
 South West Pacific Ocean
 Tonga and the Cook Islands

C. NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES WHICH ARE SPECIFICALLY CALLED UPON TO EXPAND THE USE OF RADIO AND/OR TELEVISION

AFRICA (1)

Central African Republic

AMERICAS (25)

Alaska
 Argentina
 Belize
 Bolivia
 Brazil
 Canada
 Chile
 Colombia
 Costa Rica
 Ecuador

¹ Name changed in 1975 to National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Barbados and the Windward Islands.

El Salvador
 Guatemala
 Honduras
 Jamaica
 Mexico
 Nicaragua
 Panama
 Paraguay
 Peru
 Puerto Rico
 Trinidad and Tobago
 United States
 Uruguay
 Venezuela
 Windward Islands

ASIA (1)

Japan

AUSTRALASIA (2)

New Zealand
 Papua New Guinea

EUROPE (10)

Denmark
 Finland
 Germany
 Iceland
 Netherlands
 Norway
 Spain
 Sweden
 Switzerland
 United Kingdom

D. NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES WHICH ARE SPECIFICALLY CALLED UPON TO HOLD NATIONAL TEACHING CONFERENCES

AFRICA (29)

Botswana
 Burundi
 Cameroon Republic
 Central African Republic
 Chad
 Congo Republic
 Dahomey, Togo and Niger
 Equatorial Guinea
 Ghana
 Ivory Coast, Mali and Upper Volta
 Kenya
 Lesotho

Madagascar
 Malawi
 Mauritius
 Nigeria
 North East Africa*
 Réunion
 Rhodesia
 Rwanda
 Seychelles
 South and West Africa
 Swaziland and Mozambique
 Tanzania
 Uganda
 Upper West Africa
 West Africa
 Zaïre
 Zambia

AMERICAS (20)

Alaska
 Argentina
 Bolivia
 Brazil*
 Chile*
 Colombia
 Dominican Republic
 Ecuador
 Guyana, Surinam and French Guiana
 Haiti
 Jamaica
 Leeward and Virgin Islands
 Panama
 Paraguay
 Peru*
 Puerto Rico
 Trinidad and Tobago
 Uruguay
 Venezuela
 Windward Islands

ASIA (15)

Bangladesh
 Burma
 Hong Kong
 India†
 Japan
 Korea
 Laos
 Malaysia‡

*Summer school also specified.

†Goal is to hold at least 3 major inter-state Teaching Conferences.

‡Goal is to hold at least 2 regional Teaching Conferences for South East Asian countries.



Bahá'ís attending the National Teaching Conference, Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic; 18-19 October 1975. Auxiliary Board member R. Pepín is seen seated in the last row on the extreme right.



Bahá'ís attending the third Inter-Assembly Conference of Western Asia, Tíhrán, Irán; 11 December 1975. In attendance at the conference were Hands of the Cause and representatives of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Western Asia.

Near East
 Philippine Islands
 Sikkim §
 Singapore
 Sri Lanka
 Taiwan
 Thailand

AUSTRALASIA (11)

Australia
 Fiji Islands
 Gilbert and Ellice Islands
 Hawaiian Islands
 New Zealand
 North West Pacific Ocean
 Papua New Guinea
 Samoa
 Solomon Islands
 South West Pacific Ocean
 Tonga and the Cook Islands

EUROPE (5)

France
 Ireland
 Italy
 Luxembourg
 Portugal

E. NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES WHICH ARE
 TO DEVELOP AND CONDUCT CORRESPONDENCE
 COURSES

AMERICAS (6)

Argentina
 Bolivia
 Brazil
 Panama
 Uruguay
 Venezuela

ASIA (9)

Bangladesh
 India
 Japan
 Malaysia
 Pakistan
 Persia
 Sri Lanka
 Thailand
 Vietnam

F. NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES CALLED
 UPON TO INCREASINGLY TEACH AND ENROL
 PEOPLE FROM SPECIFIC MINORITIES AND OTHER
 GROUPS

AFRICA (1)

Zaire (Pygmies)

AMERICAS (7)

Alaska (Eskimos, Indians, Aleuts)
 Belize (Mayas)
 Chile (Easter Islanders)
 Panama (immigrants from British West
 Indies)
 Peru (Negroes and Chinese)
 United States (those of Armenian, Basque,
 Chinese, Greek, Japanese and Spanish-
 speaking background)
 Uruguay (Negroes)

ASIA (2)

Japan
 Sikkim

AUSTRALASIA (3)

Australia (Aboriginals and those of Chinese,
 Greek and Turkish background)
 Fiji Islands (Rotumans, Indians, Chinese and
 Euronians)
 New Zealand (Maoris and other Polynesians)

EUROPE (15)

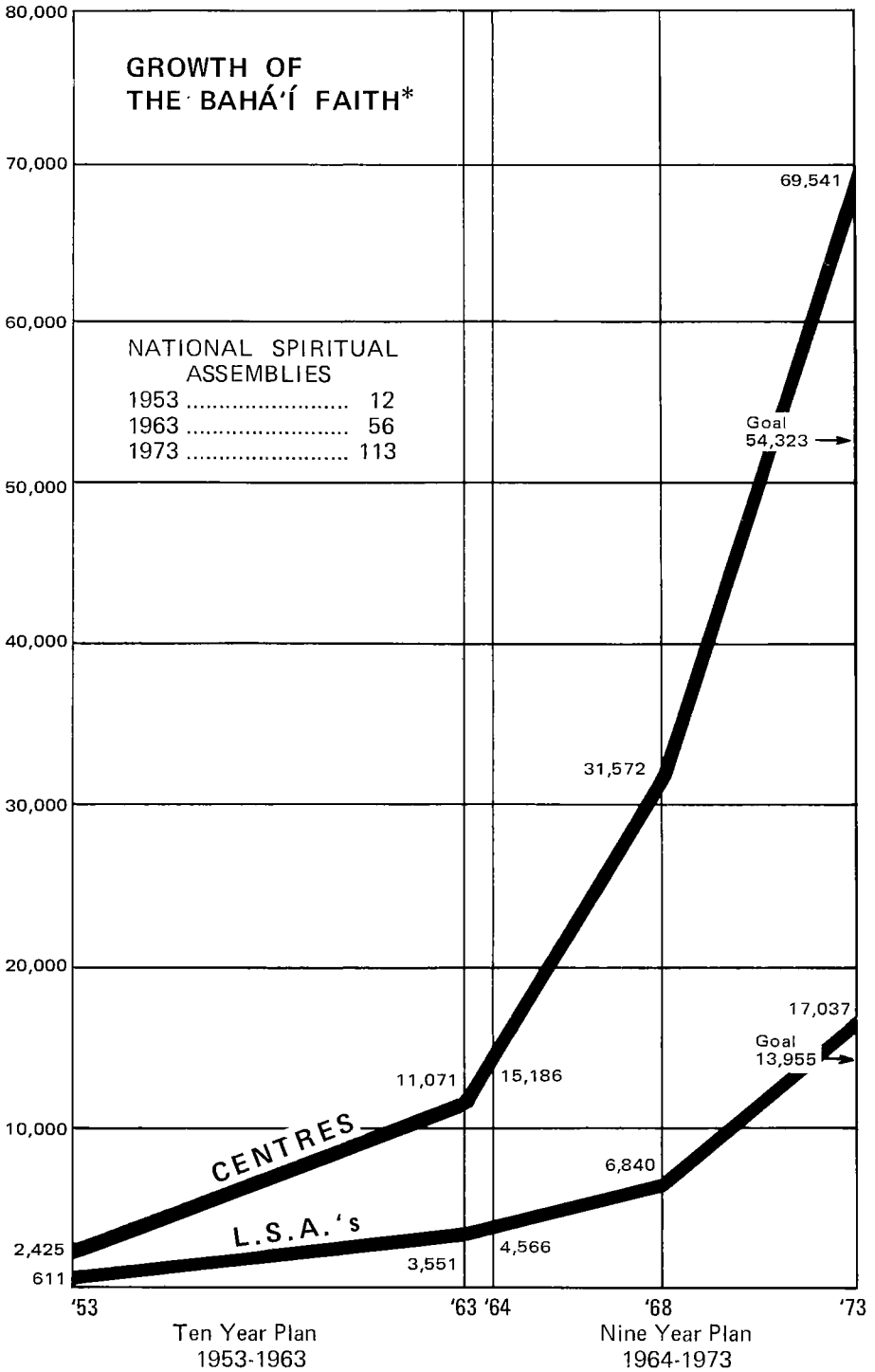
Austria (Gypsies)
 Belgium (students and visitors from former
 Belgian colonies in Africa)
 Denmark (visitors from Greenland and the
 Faroe Islands)
 Finland (Lapps and Gypsies)
 France (Gypsies)
 Germany (Gypsies and workers from Tur-
 key, Greece and from countries of Eastern
 Europe)
 Ireland (Gypsies)
 Italy (Gypsies)
 Luxembourg (Portuguese and other migrant
 workers)
 Netherlands (Gypsies and people of Indo-
 nesian background)
 Norway (Lapps)
 Portugal (Gypsies)
 Spain (Basques and Gypsies)
 Sweden (Lapps, Gypsies and Finns)

§Goal is to hold a National Teaching Conference inviting
 Bahá'ís residing on the Himalayan Ranges.

United Kingdom (Indians, Pakistanis, West Indians, visiting African students and Gypsies)

G. MISCELLANEOUS

- (a) Transfer the remains of members of the Holy Family of the Báb (Persia)
- (b) Continued acquisition of Bahá'í Holy Sites
- (c) Establish an Institute of Higher Studies of the Faith (Persia)
- (d) With a view to attracting great numbers to the Cause, develop intensive teaching and consolidation plans in at least three of the States visited by 'Abdu'l-Bahá (United States)
- (e) Assume a major role in promoting the spread of the Faith in the Far East (Japan)
- (f) Greatly intensify the teaching work along the Black Sea Coast (Turkey)
- (g) Develop the New Era and Rabbani Schools, and increase the number of village tutorial schools (India)
- (h) Develop the Bahá'í Education Trust recently established (Persia)
- (i) Develop the existing Bahá'í schools (Sikkim)
- (j) Study and implement as far as possible the use in schools and colleges of specially prepared text books on the Faith (United Kingdom)
- (k) Cultivate opportunities for courses on the Faith in Canadian institutions of higher learning (Canada)



* A similar chart appearing in *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, on p. 168, illustrated the number of local Spiritual Assemblies established and centres where Bahá'is resided as of February 1973. The figures given above illustrate the position as of Riqdán 1973.

III

INTERNATIONAL SURVEY OF CURRENT BAHÁ'Í ACTIVITIES

1973–1976

The progress of the Cause of God gathers increasing momentum and we may with confidence look forward to the day when this Community, in God's good time, shall have traversed the stages predicated for it by its Guardian, and shall have raised on this tormented planet the fair mansions of God's Own Kingdom wherein humanity may find surcease from its self-induced confusion and chaos and ruin, and the hatreds and violence of this time shall be transmuted into an abiding sense of world brotherhood and peace. All this shall be accomplished within the Covenant of the everlasting Father, the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh.

The Universal House of Justice
Riḍván 1973

THE Nine Year Plan launched by the Universal House of Justice at Riḍván 1964 was successfully completed at Riḍván 1973. This period witnessed an increase in the number of National Spiritual Assemblies from 56 to 113, an increase in the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies from 4,566 to 17,037 and an increase in the number of localities where Bahá'ís reside from 15,186 to 69,541. Recognizing that such a vast and widespread expansion of the Faith throughout the Bahá'í world called for an intensive period of consolidation during which continued expansion would also take place, the Universal House of Justice, as early as 14 January 1973 wrote to all National Spiritual Assemblies:

'As the Bahá'í world approaches the triumphant conclusion of the Nine Year Plan it gives us the utmost gratification to see that a few National Spiritual Assemblies have already formulated plans for activity during the coming Bahá'í year.

'The next global plan will be launched at Riḍván 1974 and you will therefore have twelve months to prepare for it. We call upon you to take the greatest possible advantage of that year to:

'Strengthen the foundations of your achievements through developing and enriching Bahá'í community life, fostering youth activity and through all means suited to your circumstances; and continue expansion of the Faith, trying new

openings and possibilities not fully explored when you were under the pressure of other priorities.'

In its message to the Bahá'ís of the world at Naw-Rúz 1974¹ the Universal House of Justice revealed the broad outlines of the Five Year Plan which is to terminate at Riḍván 1979. The three major objectives were stated to be: 'Preservation and consolidation of the victories won; a vast and widespread expansion of the Bahá'í community; development of the distinctive character of Bahá'í life particularly in the local communities.'

The achievement of these overall aims, the Universal House of Justice explained, 'requires the accomplishment of particular tasks at the World Centre of the Faith, and by national and local communities.'

The progress of the Bahá'ís of the world towards meeting the objectives and goals of the Five Year Plan is summarized in the survey which follows, and which records, first, achievements at the World Centre and then, by continent, achievements reported to the World Centre by National Spiritual Assemblies grouped under the zones of the Continental Boards of Counsellors.

¹ See 'The Five Year International Teaching Plan 1974–1979', pp. 107–109 and 'Analysis of the Five Year International Teaching Plan 1974–1979', pp. 111–129.



Aerial view of Mount Carmel showing the arc before the commencement of construction of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice. The site is in the lower left-hand corner of the photograph across from the wide path marking the central axis.

1. THE WORLD CENTRE

THE ACQUISITION OF THE HOUSE OF 'ABDU'LLÁH PÁSHÁ

In a cablegram dated 14 January 1975¹ the Universal House of Justice announced to the Bahá'í world the successful conclusion of lengthy and delicate negotiations which resulted in the acquisition by the Bahá'í World Centre of this historic site in 'Akká. The purchase of this house, which derives its name from the Governor of 'Akká who built it and used it as his official residence during his term of office, from 1820 to 1832, is a supplementary achievement of the Five Year Plan. In an article prepared at the World Centre and distributed to all National Spiritual Assemblies on 4 March 1975,² it was explained that 'some of the most poignant, dramatic and historically significant events of the Heroic Age of our Faith are associated with this house' which for twelve years served as the home of 'Abdu'l-Bahá during the period of His renewed incarceration'. Here, in January 1899, the casket containing the sacred remains of the Báb were concealed for a time until it was possible to inter it in its permanent resting-place on Mount Carmel. Here, too, Shoghi Effendi was born in 1897. Part of his childhood was spent there. It was to this house that the first group of pilgrims from the West came to see the Master in the winter of 1898-1899 and in which many more from both East and West sought His presence. It was here that parts of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament were penned and *Some Answered Questions* was revealed.

In anticipation of the time when pilgrims to the Holy Land may visit it, the House of Justice adopted the preliminary measures to restore the house, in faithful detail, to its condition at the time of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's occupation.

THE PERMANENT SEAT OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE³

'Construction will begin on the building on Mount Carmel to serve as the seat of the

Universal House of Justice and it is hoped to complete it during the Five Year Plan,' the House of Justice advised the Bahá'ís of the world in its message at Naw-Rúz 1974.

In the period under consideration in this survey, Riḍván 1973-1976, the following further announcements were made:

DELIGHTED ANNOUNCE APPOINTMENT HUSAYN AMANAT BRILLIANT YOUNG BAHAI ARCHITECT CRADLE FAITH AS ARCHITECT OF BUILDING FOR UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE.

18 September 1973

JOYFULLY ANNOUNCE ACCEPTANCE EXQUISITE DESIGN CONCEIVED BY HUSAYN AMANAT FOR BUILDING TO SERVE AS PERMANENT SEAT UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE MOUNT CARMEL STOP DECISION MADE TO PROCEED NEGOTIATE CONTRACTS CONSTRUCTION THIS NOBLE EDIFICE SECOND THOSE BUILDINGS DESTINED ARISE AROUND ARC CONSTITUTE ADMINISTRATIVE CENTRE BAHAI WORLD.

7 February 1974

WORLD CENTRE FAITH . . . WILL EARLY WITNESS ON CONSECRATED SOIL SLOPES MOUNT CARMEL INITIATION EXCAVATION FOUNDATIONS PERMANENT SEAT UNIVERSAL HOUSE JUSTICE AND IN ITALY SIGNATURE CONTRACT MARBLE REQUIRED MAJESTIC EDIFICE . . .

Riḍván 1975

JOYFULLY ANNOUNCE COMMENCEMENT EXCAVATION SITE UNIVERSAL HOUSE JUSTICE BUILDING ARC MOUNT CARMEL STOP CONTRACT ENTAILS REMOVAL FORTY THOUSAND CUBIC METRES ROCK AND EARTH AT COST APPROXIMATELY TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS STOP INVITE ALL BELIEVERS CONTRIBUTE UNSTINTINGLY BUILDING FUND ENSURE UNINTERRUPTED PROGRESS HISTORIC UNDERTAKING.

17 June 1975

ANNOUNCE DELEGATES ASSEMBLED NATIONAL CONVENTIONS GLAD TIDINGS COMPLETION EXCAVATION MOUNT CARMEL PREPARATORY RAISING MAJESTIC CENTRE LEGISLATION GODS

¹ See p. 103 for text of cablegram.

² See 'The House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá', p. 103.

³ The text of the announcement to the Bahá'ís of the world by the Universal House of Justice of the initiation of construction of its permanent seat may be seen on p. 397. See also 'The Permanent Seat of the Universal House of Justice', by Husayn Amánat, p. 399.

FAITH THAT SACRED SPOT SIGNATURE ITALY
 FIVE AND HALF MILLION DOLLAR CONTRACT FOR
 SUPPLYING OVER TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUN-
 DRED CUBIC METRES PENTELIKON MARBLE FROM
 GREECE AND FASHIONING THEREFROM THE
 COLUMNS FACINGS ORNAMENTATION BEFITTING
 MONUMENTAL BUILDING STOP DEEPLY MOVED
 ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE BELIEVERS ALL PARTS
 WORLD THIS CHALLENGING GLORIOUS TASK . . .

Naw-Rúz 1976

PROTECTION OF THE RESTING-PLACE OF SHOGHI EFFENDI

A further supplementary accomplishment during the first half of the Five Year Plan was announced by the Universal House of Justice in its cablegram of 5 February 1975 to all National Spiritual Assemblies:

ANNOUNCE PURCHASE STRIP LAND GREAT
 NORTHERN LONDON CEMETERY FACING
 BELOVED GUARDIANS RESTING PLACE EN-
 SURING PROTECTION SACRED PLOT STOP
 PRAYERS GRATITUDE OFFERED DIVINE
 THRESHOLD.

The negotiations for this purchase were conducted on behalf of the Universal House of Justice by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom.

The plot, in size, is 166 yards to a depth of 10 yards and is located between the two roads running south-east from the road which passes the front gate of the Guardian's grave.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CENTRE IN THE HOLY LAND

A major goal of the Universal House of Justice in the Nine Year Plan was to devise a way, within the Administrative Order, of developing 'the institution of the Hands of the Cause with a view to extension into the future of its appointed functions of protection and propagation.' On 21 June 1968 the House of Justice announced to the Bahá'ís of the world the establishment of the Continental Boards of Counsellors,¹ and alluded to the time in the future when it would be possible to form in the Holy Land the International Teaching Centre foreshadowed in the writings of Shoghi Effendi.

In a letter addressed 'To the Bahá'ís of the World' on 8 June 1973² the Universal House of

Justice stated that 'the time is indeed propitious for the establishment of the International Teaching Centre, a development which, at one and the same time, brings to fruition the work of the Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land and provides for its extension into the future, links the institution of the Boards of Counsellors even more intimately with that of the Hands of the Cause of God, and powerfully reinforces the discharge of the rapidly growing responsibilities of the Universal House of Justice.' In that letter the House of Justice also delineated 'the duties now assigned to this nascent institution' and stated that 'all the Hands of the Cause of God will be members of the International Teaching Centre. Each Hand will be kept regularly informed of the activities of the Centre . . . and will be able, wherever he may be residing or travelling, to convey suggestions, recommendations and information to the Centre and, whenever he is in the Holy Land, to take part in the consultations and other activities of the Centre.'

Mr. Hooper Dunbar, Mrs. Florence V. Mayberry and Mr. 'Aziz Yazdí, who had served with distinction as Counsellors in South America, North America and Central and East Africa respectively, were appointed to membership of the International Teaching Centre with the rank of Counsellor. They immediately took up residence in Haifa and, together with the Hands of the Cause presently residing in the Holy Land, constituted the nucleus of the operations of the Centre.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONTINENTAL BOARDS OF COUNSELLORS

In the period under review a number of significant steps were taken relating to the development of the Continental Boards of Counsellors, details of which appear elsewhere in this volume.

In addition to the appointment of Counsellors in the field to replace those who became members of the International Teaching Centre the institution was strengthened from time to time through increasing from the original thirty-six to sixty-one the total number of Counsellors excluding those at the World Centre; through increasing the original number of zones from eleven to thirteen, with some regrouping of Boards of Counsellors and territories; through

¹ For a full report see *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, pp. 611-620.

² See p. 413 for text of this letter.

increasing from the original 135 to 378 the number of Auxiliary Board members, 117 of whom now serve on the Protection Board and 261 on the Propagation Board; and through the authorization accorded Auxiliary Board members to appoint assistants, a measure which the House of Justice prayed would 'lead to an unprecedented strengthening of the Local Spiritual Assemblies throughout the world.'¹

COLLATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF THE BAHÁ'Í SACRED SCRIPTURES

The continued collaboration of National Spiritual Assemblies, particularly of Persia and the United States, and the response of Bahá'ís throughout the world, has enabled the World Centre to achieve further progress in fulfilling this long-term objective. In the period covered by this survey the number of original Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, together with the original letters of Shoghi Effendi, preserved at the World Centre, has been augmented from 10,900 to 12,600. Of these 3,169 are Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, 6,643 of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and 2,788 are letters of Shoghi Effendi. Moreover, from both East and West there have so far been received authenticated copies of 4,000 Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, 10,000 Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and 12,500 letters of Shoghi Effendi, representing an increase from 18,600 to 39,000 in the total number of such documents held. These are being studied and important passages from them excerpted and classified, and the subject matter indexed for ready reference under several hundred titles. This work in the Holy Land has continued to be supported and enriched by the labours of a special committee appointed by the Persian National Spiritual Assembly.

The World Centre has continued to issue compilations from the Writings on various subjects and these have been shared either with all National Spiritual Assemblies or with National Assemblies in specific areas. One particularly significant compilation included Bahá'í prayers and Tablets for children, the release of which, it was thought, would greatly reinforce the efforts of Bahá'í communities in establishing Bahá'í classes for children, a specific goal of the Five Year Plan.

PRESERVATION OF SACRED TEXTS

Provisions have been made to microfilm the originals or verified copies of the Tablets and letters of the Central Figures of the Faith, the letters and writings of the beloved Guardian, the letters and statements of the Universal House of Justice, as well as all other available documents associated with the history of the Faith. Most of the microfilming of the Tablets and letters of the Central Figures has been completed and duplicate copies have been deposited for safekeeping in security storage. Eventually the complete files of materials at the World Centre will be microfilmed and will be indexed for retrieval.

EXTENSION AND BEAUTIFICATION OF THE GARDENS AT THE WORLD CENTRE

The development of the Bahá'í Faith throughout the world is reflected in the growth of its institutions. At the World Centre a visible manifestation of this development is the beautification of the Bahá'í properties and particularly the extension of the gardens surrounding the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, the holiest spot on earth.

Developments at Bahjí

On 4 December 1973 the Universal House of Justice announced in a cablegram sent to all National Spiritual Assemblies:

REJOICE ANNOUNCE FRIENDS BEAUTIFICATION
DURING CONFLICT AGITATING MIDDLE EAST
FOURTH QUADRANT AREA SURROUNDING MOST
HOLY SHRINE EMBRACING OLIVE GROVE SOUTH-
WEST PILGRIM HOUSE BAHJI STOP BLESSED
SHRINE AND MANSION NOW COMPLETELY EN-
CIRCLED BEAUTIFUL GARDENS INSPIRED BY
PATTERN HARAM-I-AQDAS CREATED BY BELOVED
GUARDIAN STOP PRAYING SHRINES SUPPORTERS
MOST GREAT NAME EVERY LAND MAY REDOUBLE
EFFORTS PROMOTE INTERESTS PRECIOUS FAITH IN
ANTICIPATION FIVE YEAR GLOBAL PLAN SOON TO
BE LAUNCHED.²

Careful attention was paid to designing the gardens of this quadrant in such a way as to be compatible with the pattern created by Shoghi Effendi and to incorporate in a harmonious whole the olive trees which for so long have been an integral part of the landscape surrounding the

¹ Letter from the Universal House of Justice 'To the Bahá'ís of the World', 7 October 1973.

² See frontispiece.

Shrine. It was not found necessary to remove any of these ancient trees which were the silent witnesses of many stirring events in the lives of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

In April 1973 an imposing pillared entrance with wrought iron railings and gate was erected on the western boundary of the property at Bahjí. The path leading from this gate to the vicinity of the Ḥaram-i-Aqdas has been enhanced with floral borders and other plantings which incorporate and complement the old olive trees which line the path.

Developments at Mazra'ih

The Universal House of Justice announced to the Bahá'ís of the world in March 1973 the purchase of the Mansion of Mazra'ih where Bahá'u'lláh spent approximately two years (*circa* 1877–1879) after leaving the prison city of 'Akká. The purchase included a land area of approximately 24,000 square metres.

The Mansion, a site beloved by all pilgrims to the Holy Land, was the first residence of Bahá'u'lláh after His release from His nine-year confinement within the walled prison city of 'Akká, and is associated with the joy experienced by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in knowing that after so long a deprivation Bahá'u'lláh could once again gaze upon verdure.

The pastoral setting of Mazra'ih has been beautified through the planting of a flower garden on the eastern side of the Mansion and the creation of an extensive orchard of various kinds of citrus trees, an avocado grove and other decorative, evergreen trees such as mango.

A pathway dividing the orchard has been bordered with araucaria trees and the fences defining the land blaze with plantings of colourful bougainvillea.

Facilities for the reception of pilgrims were expanded during the period.

EFFORTS TOWARD THE EMANCIPATION OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

Early in February 1975, through a misunderstanding as to the true nature and purpose of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, the Arab Boycott Office at its meeting in Cairo announced that the Bahá'í Faith had been placed on its blacklist.

The following statement was released through

the Bahá'í International Community in New York on 25 February 1975:

'News reports indicate that the Bahá'í Faith has been placed on the blacklist of the Arab Boycott Office. Since we are a purely religious organization, neither political nor commercial, there is obviously some misunderstanding, which may arise from the fact that our World Centre is in Haifa. Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder of our Faith, was exiled in 1868 to the Holy Land at a time when it was under Ottoman rule, and ever since that time the Bahá'í World Centre has been established in the two cities of 'Akká and Haifa. The Bahá'í Holy Places in these two cities consist of the Shrines of the Founders of the Faith and historic sites associated with them. It was Bahá'u'lláh Who ordained that the World Centre of His Faith should be in the neighbourhood of these Shrines.

'Press reports further indicate that a factor weighing with the Arab Boycott Office was that the Bahá'í World Centre receives money from outside Israel. Among the religions in that country, Bahá'ís are not an exception in this respect, inasmuch as all religious organizations in the Holy Land undoubtedly receive money from outside the country for the upkeep of their Holy Places. In the case of the Bahá'ís, however, as they have their World Centre in Israel, obviously the international funds of their Faith are administered by that Centre, but the greater part of these funds is directed to and expended in developing and impoverished countries, where the majority of the Bahá'ís reside.

'Another factor cited is that the Bahá'ís are engaged in propaganda to discredit Arabs. Such an accusation cannot justifiably be levelled against the Bahá'ís, the fundamental principles of whose religion require them to abstain, by word and deed, from all political activity and to promote the oneness of mankind.'

The decision of the Arab Boycott Office was subsequently modified to state that only the businesses of individual Bahá'ís and companies owned by them would be boycotted.

The full emancipation of the Bahá'í Faith from the fetters of religious orthodoxy and its recognition as an independent world religion is an objective that continues to be an active concern of the World Centre.

Some of the countries where the Faith is presently being persecuted or is suffering proscription are noted below.

BURUNDI

The Faith was recognized in Burundi in the concluding months of the Nine Year Plan. In 1974 a reversal was experienced in the fortunes of the Faith in that country when the Egyptian *chargé d'affaires* made inaccurate statements about the Faith to the newly-appointed Minister of Justice of Burundi, recommending that he seek authority from the President to repeal the former decree. This was obtained and the new decision was announced on the radio and released as a news item in a semi-official bulletin. The same bulletin also published a harshly abusive article vilifying the Faith as a dangerously political movement, the text of the article being provided by the staff of the Egyptian Embassy in Burundi.

At the request of the Universal House of Justice and through the able intervention of Mr. 'Aziz Navídí several representations were made to the Government. In 1975 the President withdrew the ban that had been placed upon Bahá'í activities. The Bahá'ís became free in principle to resume their activities, but provincial and local officials had discretionary powers which required the Bahá'ís to obtain from the Ministry of the Interior specific confirmation of the lifting of the ban before permitting the resumption of Bahá'í activities. In Provinces where the local authorities did not object, Local Spiritual Assemblies were re-established and Bahá'í work quietly was pursued. In other areas, however, which included Bujumbura itself, the activities of the friends continued to be restricted. When approached, the Minister of the Interior promised that the requested permission would soon be issued.

EGYPT

In the period under review all efforts to vindicate the rights of the Bahá'ís in Egypt appeared to be thwarted and the situation threatened to seriously deteriorate. In 1975 the Supreme Constitutional Court of Egypt announced its decision that the 1960 decree of President Nasser banning all Bahá'í activities in Egypt was constitutional, and therefore the application of the Bahá'ís for annulment of the decree was dismissed.

During the month of May 1975 it was reported that when one of the Bahá'ís in Cairo applied for a new identity card he was asked to declare his

religion as Muslim. He refused and protested, but his objections were disregarded. A few days later, however, he was called in by the same authorities and told that they were now prepared to register him as a Bahá'í, and this was done.

INDONESIA

As the ban imposed upon Bahá'í activity in Indonesia prohibits only the operation of administrative institutions, teaching continued quietly on an individual basis and Bahá'í publications in Indonesian languages steadily increased. A number of enthusiastic and zealous new believers of Muslim background, knowledgeable in the Qur'án and in Arabic literature, entered the Faith; several derived from prominent families. Reaction from fanatical elements brought brief imprisonment to a number of the new believers, but in prison they were able to capture the hearts of their fellow prisoners and a few of their gaolers. Later four were again put in prison where, with high spirit, they continue their ardent teaching. One of these, a former mullá, was named religious instructor and counsellor of the prison by the chief gaoler.

IRÁQ

In May 1970 the 'Iráqí Government issued a decree disbanding all Bahá'í institutions and banning all Bahá'í activities. The attempts of the local friends to explain the Bahá'í position to the authorities were of no avail. For nearly three years, although the authorities carefully watched the conduct of the Bahá'ís, nothing apparently gave cause for interference in their personal lives and the imposition of fresh restrictions.

In mid-December 1973 an incident occurred which sparked a fire of persecution and adversity in whose flames many of the dedicated Bahá'ís of 'Iráq were engulfed and whose future course seems unpredictable. A teenage *Shí'ih* Muslim girl learned of the Faith from one of her Bahá'í school classmates and, together with her older sister, became seriously interested in the teachings. When the Bahá'í Faith was referred to during a discussion of religion in class in one of the Government schools in Baghdád the girl rose to her feet in defence of the Cause. When questioned by the teacher she announced her belief in Bahá'u'lláh, an assertion which created a stir in the class. The students spoke of the incident the same day to their parents, among

whom was the Minister of Education, who, the following day, ordered an investigation to be made, himself went to the school, dismissed the headmaster, and following the intervention of the Minister of the Interior ordered the arrest of the girl, together with that of three Bahá'í girls studying at that school. A chain of arrests, totalling almost fifty, followed in the course of the next few months. The trial began on 4 March 1974 and although the hearings of the court were postponed several times its verdict exonerated the Bahá'ís. Dissatisfied with the verdict the Revolutionary Council ordered the case of the Bahá'ís to be reopened in a military court. In his initial presentation to the military court the Attorney-General asked for the death sentence for all the Bahá'í detainees.

On 23 April 1974 the court sentenced fourteen believers (thirteen men and one girl) to life imprisonment; three (one man and two girls) were sentenced to fifteen years; and nine (two men and seven women) to ten years. Thirteen of the friends were fined and released. On 20 May 1974 the same military court handed down *in absentia* sentences of life imprisonment on ten individuals known to be Bahá'ís, two of whom had passed away and a number of whom were of other nationalities or 'Iráqís not resident in the country. The list was circulated to all Government offices as well as to 'Iráqí embassies and consulates with a request for information as to the whereabouts of the said individuals; those withholding information from the authorities would be prosecuted.

Within a few short weeks there were further grave developments: twenty-four additional believers had their properties confiscated; one of these was sentenced to ten years in prison and another to twenty years. Although orders confiscating the properties had been publicly gazetted, no reference to the imprisonments appeared in the press or on the radio. Efforts to seek alleviation of the grievous actions against the Bahá'ís continued to be made by the Universal House of Justice but were limited by the danger of bringing down further repression.

In January 1975 another Bahá'í was arrested and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. During the same month one of the believers, Dr. 'Abbás Baghdádí, passed away in the prison hospital after a long illness; it was reported that

there were twenty-nine Bahá'ís imprisoned at the time, nineteen men and ten women, as some had been released in the meantime.

In July 1975 a partial amnesty reducing the terms of imprisonment by fifteen per cent had been granted on the occasion of one of 'Iráq's national events to all those imprisoned in 'Iráqí prisons, including the Bahá'ís. By September 1975 the friends incarcerated in Baghdád were still in custody although some improvement was reported in the conditions under which they were being held.

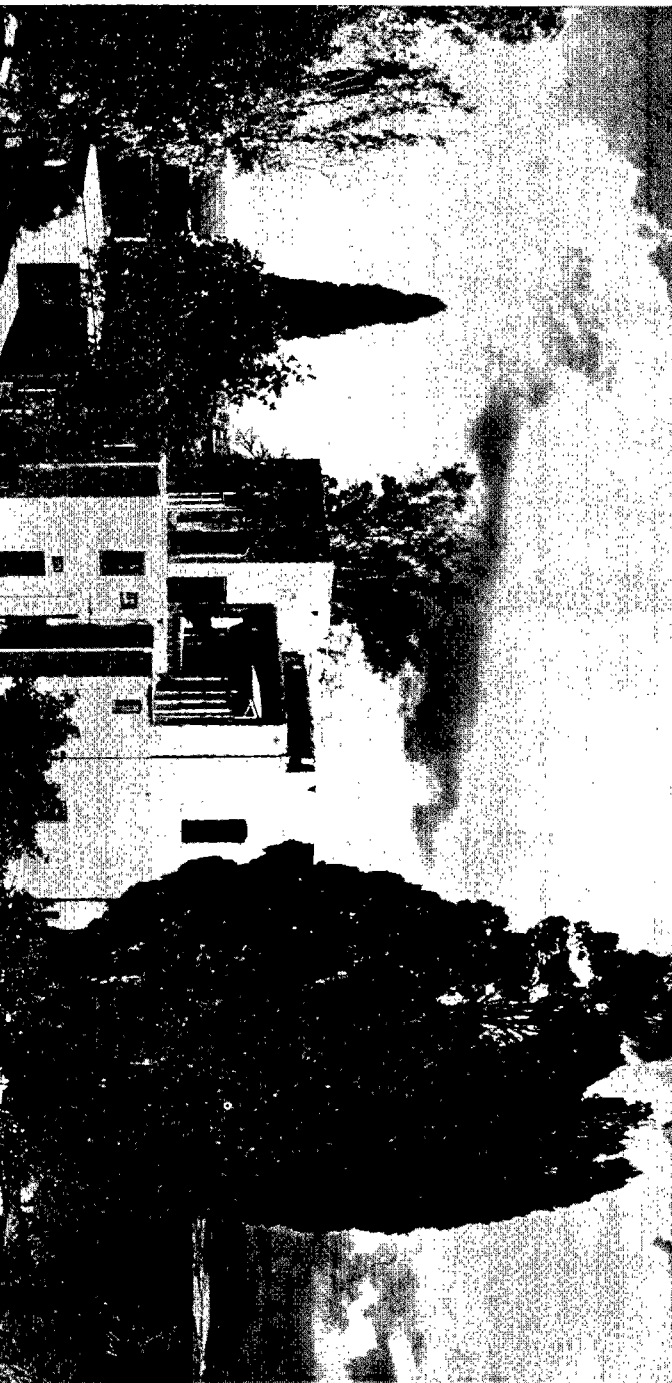
Subsequently a young Bahá'í in 'Iráq when applying for a position as a draughtsman specified in his form that his religion was Bahá'í. He was immediately detained, interrogated, beaten, asked to recant his faith, tried by a revolutionary court and, upon his standing firm, summarily sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. His non-Bahá'í lawyer was not given the opportunity to present his defence and in fact was rebuked by the judge for defending a Bahá'í.

The Bahá'ís in prison suffered psychological effects from their prolonged imprisonment aggravated by the fact that political prisoners were executed in the vicinity of the quarters occupied by the Bahá'ís. On several occasions the Bahá'í prisoners have been asked to recant their faith so that they might be released at once and be restored to their former jobs or to higher and better positions.

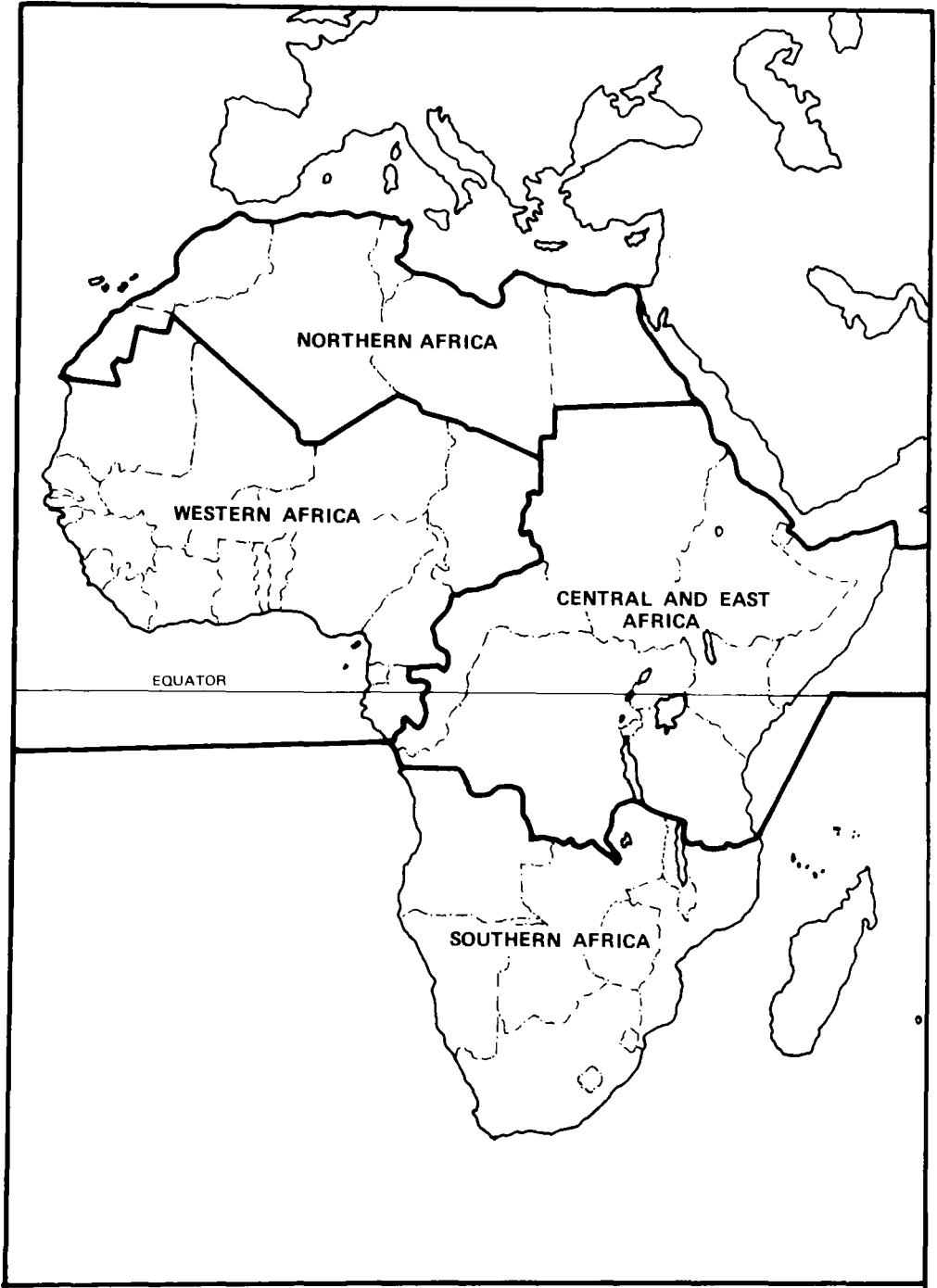
At the time of writing the Bahá'í prisoners are anxiously awaiting the day when the authorities will be assured of their innocence and will appreciate the true position of the Faith in its recognition of the divine origin of Islám and its injunction upon the believers to be loyal to the Government and avoid involvement in any political or subversive activity.

THE KHMER REPUBLIC (CAMBODIA)

With the conclusion of warfare and the establishment of the new regime all Bahá'í activity in Cambodia is at a standstill, as far as can be ascertained. For a time the National Teaching Committee secretary wrote of continuing teaching activity among the believers and enquirers but there are now no available channels of communication and there has been no recent news of the fate of the Khmer Bahá'ís.



INTERNATIONAL SURVEY OF BAHIA



2. SURVEY BY CONTINENTS

1973-1976

A. AFRICA

A total of eight new National Spiritual Assemblies are to be formed in Africa during the Five Year Plan. Four of these were formed at Riḡván 1975:

- Niger with its seat in Niamey
- Sierra Leone with its seat in Freetown
- Togo with its seat in Lomé
- Upper West Africa with its seat in Dakar, S n gal

A National Spiritual Assembly was formed in Equatorial Guinea in July 1973 in response to the requirement of Government recognition of the Faith¹ but had to be disbanded within the year because of difficult local circumstances.

For the purposes of the work of the Continental Boards of Counsellors the continent of Africa is divided into four zones:

- Central and East Africa
- Northern Africa
- Southern Africa
- Western Africa

Set out below are excerpts from reports received from some of the National Spiritual Assemblies in these zones relating to progress made in the period under review towards achievement of the Five Year Plan goals assigned to them:

Central and East Africa

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

'Two years after the Bah '  Faith was officially recognized by the Government in 1971, the Bah '  community along with the other major religions in the country was accorded the privilege of presenting weekly radio broadcasts over Radio Bangui, whose programmes reach not only all of the Central African Republic but the neighbouring countries of equatorial Africa as well. The first programme, on 1 April 1973, was entitled "What is the Bah '  Faith?" and

was presented by Gbague Robert and Toleque-Koy Michel. Since that time the Bah '  broadcasts have continued regularly, usually alternating between French and the national language, Sango. They have presented a wide range of Bah '  teachings and history together with interviews with Bah '  visitors and travelling teachers. The result is that today almost the entire population of the Central African Republic has some knowledge of the Faith, and listeners among the non-Bah '  population can often be heard singing songs with Bah '  themes as they go about their work. Almost everywhere in the country it is no longer necessary to introduce the Faith in a teaching situation; rather, it involves building upon the knowledge gleaned from the radio broadcasts by the public.

'At the end of 1975 His Excellency Marshal Jean-B del Bokassa, Life President of the Republic, authorized all religions to present regular television programmes. Since then the Bah ' s have televised a semi-weekly programme of twenty or thirty minutes' duration, which reaches a small but educated audience. The Bah '  series has received very favourable comments from cabinet ministers, members of the Government and other leading citizens.

'In addition, the Bah '  community is invited to send representatives to major events sponsored by the Government, including the parades marking the commemoration of Independence Day and Mother's Day and has been especially commended for being virtually the sole racially-mixed group participating in these events. The Bah '  community has also been invited to assist in the annual devotional programme commemorating the death of the founder of the Central African Republic, Barthelemy Boganda. This programme is held at his graveside.

'Steady efforts have been made to consolidate and expand the Faith within the framework of the goals of the Five Year Plan. The number of localities now opened to the Faith exceeds two hundred and all but two of the most remote

¹ Cablegram from the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies, 18 July 1973.



Bahá'ís of the Central African Republic are seen participating for the second successive year in the parade commemorating Independence Day; 1 December 1975. In the foreground carrying the placard are Mr. Sabone Pierre, chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly, and Mrs. Meherangiz Munsiff, an international travelling teacher who was visiting the country during the celebrations.

Departments of the country have been opened. Although some Local Spiritual Assemblies in new key localities have been established much remains to be done to achieve our goal of seventy-five Local Spiritual Assemblies. Tribute is paid to those Bahá'í travelling teachers who have visited our communities and made valuable contributions to our deepening and consolidation programme.

'The goals of building local centres, the holding of gatherings for morning prayers, the education of children and the increased participation of women in Bahá'í life are gradually being brought to the attention of the friends as part of their local activities. Several communities have either started the construction of their local Centres or are collecting materials for their construction, and members of the National Youth Committee are actively helping with the building of some Centres. A teaching course for children's classes has been translated into French and is being distributed not only to localities in the Central African Republic but is also being sent to other French-speaking National Spiritual Assemblies in Africa. This

material is designed primarily for the guidance of the teachers of classes for children.

'Considerable progress has been made in increasing the participation of Bahá'í women in the work of the community. A most successful Bahá'í Women's Conference was held in March 1976 with representatives from the Cameroon Republic and Chad in attendance. A group of more than twenty Bahá'í women marched in the Mother's Day Parade. Bahá'í women have also been invited to participate in several welcoming ceremonies at the airport to greet officials and visiting Heads of State.'

CONGO REPUBLIC

'Since 1953 when the Faith was first established in the Congo Republic by Mr. Max Kanyerezi, the first pioneer, the progress has sometimes seemed slow, but through the dedicated efforts of various friends over the years a foundation has been securely laid and in the period from 1973 to 1976 great strides were made. Our efforts were aided by the visit of the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga in 1974, the arrival of some pioneers, the tireless efforts of the

member of the Auxiliary Board and many other friends, and the visits of travelling teachers. A teaching and deepening institute was organized, national conferences have been held each year, fireside meetings and study classes were conducted and teaching trips were undertaken. Cassette recordings were made in the vernacular languages, including the language of one Pygmy tribe, of excerpts from the Bahá'í Writings and prayers. Statistically, the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies increased from twenty to thirty-four, the membership of eight of these being composed of representatives of one or other of the two Pygmy tribes who have embraced the Faith.

'By early 1973 we had secured in Brazzaville a Temple site, a national Centre, a national endowment and a Bahá'í cemetery. Since then local Centres have been constructed and two local endowments have been acquired.

'Although handicapped by a lack of material for the education of Bahá'í children, classes have been held weekly at the national Centre.

'A salient feature contributing to the progress of the work has been the regular visit of the members of the Continental Board of Counsellors for our zone, as well as the appointment of a National Youth Committee and a national committee whose attention is directed to teaching and deepening.'

ETHIOPIA

'In 1973 the region of North East Africa was comprised of the countries of Ethiopia, Somalia and Afars and Issas Territory. Considering all the forces of change and transition which have been taking place throughout the world, this community has had its share of difficulty in surmounting a number of obstacles in the establishment of the Faith in this region. Nevertheless, there has been measureable and significant progress in certain areas of the region and particularly in Ethiopia.

'The beginnings of entry by troops, first witnessed in 1969 in the south-eastern region of Ethiopia, steadily gained momentum. By 1973 there was a remarkable gain in the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies represented by the mass teaching area. Whereas there had been only nine Local Assemblies in that area in 1972, by Ridván 1973 the number had increased to fifty-six. Since then enrolments into the Faith have increased in these regions yearly and our greatest

efforts have necessarily been directed towards them.

'The majority of the Bahá'ís in the years prior to 1969 were for the most part youthful students living in the urban areas whose religious background was most frequently Christian or more rarely Muslim. Subsequent to 1969 and more notably between the years 1973-1976 the majority who have accepted the Faith were of the rural population and many came from a background of traditional African religious belief.

'Another significant trend of this period is that the greater share of responsibility in teaching, financial commitment and administration is now carried by the local believers rather than by the pioneers. Many of the youth who embraced the Faith during the Ten Year Crusade or in the years previous to that now occupy administrative posts and are engaged in steering the activities and meeting the needs of a rapidly growing community comprising, by Ridván 1976, 120 Local Spiritual Assemblies and 250 localities. Particularly significant has been the positive response of the community in its attempt to understand and meet the challenging requirements of this phase of the development of the Faith which holds the promise of further expansion and unprecedented mass entry into the Faith.

'The increased participation of women, youth and children, both as individuals and as family units, has shown remarkable progress in the first two years of the Five Year Plan. Many Bahá'í women, some of whom enrolled only recently, are taking a full and active part in most of the affairs of the community. Women are represented both nationally and locally on Assemblies and committees, are active in organizing fund-raising projects, conducting children's classes, extending hospitality; they are committing themselves to serve in whatever way will further the work of the Faith.

'The youth also have greatly enriched the community life, not only as a separately organized teaching unit but equally through their serving alongside other members of the community. They have aided in a number of teaching, administrative and consolidation activities.

'Noteworthy strides have been made in the translation and publication of Bahá'í literature. *The Hidden Words* has been translated and

published in Tigrinya and Amharic. A number of prayers and other Bahá'í Writings including *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf* and *A Synopsis and Codification of the Laws and Ordinances of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas* have been translated and are now in process of being formally approved. Supplementary achievements for this goal include the translation and publication of literature in Italian; some translations have been made into Sidamigna, a language of the mass teaching area. In a category by itself is the publication of *Yemitseat Dewel*, an account of the early history of the Faith. This book, written by one of the Ethiopian friends, is the first Bahá'í publication to have been written directly in the Amharic language.

'Other Five Year Plan goals either fully accomplished or partially fulfilled include providing pioneer assistance to six named countries. Some posts have been filled and a number of volunteers are presently seeking to settle. The goal of constructing three local Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds, each large enough to accommodate the activities of surrounding communities, was partially fulfilled with the completed construction of one such Centre in 1975.

'Between 1973 and 1976, one Regional Teaching Conference and two National Teaching Conferences were held. The first conference devoted to a greater understanding of the institutions of the Faith was held in 1975, jointly sponsored by the National Spiritual Assembly and the Continental Board of Counsellors for Central and East Africa. At each of these conferences the friends of this region pledged substantial financial contributions to support the teaching activities and to meet their goals.

'In 1975 the Universal House of Justice changed the name of the National Spiritual Assembly of North East Africa to the National Spiritual Assembly of Ethiopia, the only difference in the area of jurisdiction being that it no longer included Somalia.'

KENYA

'After the completion of the local one year plan in 1973-1974, the Five Year Plan was launched in Kenya by the beloved Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga when he read the messages from the Universal House of Justice at the 1974 national convention. In 1974 a National Teaching Conference was held to discuss the goals of the Five Year Plan, following which

seventeen regional conferences were held with a total attendance of approximately 1,000. Teaching work aimed at winning the goals of the plan was carried out through such means as the inspiration of national and local teaching and consolidation conferences; the attempted strengthening of the work of the Regional Teaching Committees; the extension teaching undertaken by several Bahá'í communities, particularly Nairobi; and the work of local Bahá'í travelling teachers in many parts of the country, as well as of travelling teachers from other countries, notably Írán. As a result, more than 4,000 new believers were added to those on record, but the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies dropped considerably before beginning to rise again. In 1976 it was reported that the first member of the Turkana tribe to become a Bahá'í had declared his belief. The goal of opening two or more islands in Lake Victoria, in co-operation with the National Spiritual Assemblies of Tanzania and Uganda, was won partially through a successful youth teaching project. Travelling teachers and a pioneer were sent to Zaíre. The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir played a key role in inspiring the Bahá'ís of Kenya to greater teaching efforts. Mrs. Florence Mayberry of the International Teaching Centre addressed a well-attended meeting in Nairobi in September 1974. Among those attending were several new blind believers. As a result of the teaching activity of a pioneer who settled in Kenya, approximately fifteen blind individuals from a school near the pioneer's home embraced the Faith.

'The Faith was proclaimed and brought to the attention of the public in Kenya in several ways. Each year at the Nairobi Show, the attractive Bahá'í booth drew hundreds of enquirers. Bahá'í activity at the Rachuonyo Agricultural Show was quite fruitful. Nationwide radio and television programmes had Bahá'í participants on several occasions. Bahá'í efforts in support of United Nations activities in Kenya were successful, with Bahá'í observances of World Environment Day, United Nations Day, and Human Rights Day being held in both urban and rural communities. Ties were strengthened with the United Nations Environment Programme, which has its headquarters in Nairobi; this strengthening resulted particularly from Bahá'í activities in connection with UNEP Governing Council sessions.

'An outstanding American Bahá'í, Mr. John Birks "Dizzy" Gillespie, one of the world's leading jazz musicians, visited Kenya in December 1973 at the invitation of the State Department of the United States Government to participate in the Kenya *Uhuru* (Independence) celebration, held to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the country's independence. The Nairobi newspaper *Daily Nation* in its issue of 19 December carried a lengthy article about Mr. Gillespie which, in addition to containing an appreciation of his stature as a musician, contained several references to his association with the Bahá'í Faith and stressed his assertion of the relevance of the Bahá'í teachings to the social and spiritual problems of the times.

'Deepening of the knowledge of the friends was carried out to a considerable extent through conferences, courses and seminars organized largely by national committees, with particular success during the one year plan when more than 800 friends participated in deepening courses. A series of conferences designed to aid the friends to form new Local Spiritual Assemblies and reclaim lost ones was held in 1973-1976; some of these were highly successful. Teaching and deepening activities took place at the three permanent Bahá'í institutes, with Menu Bahá'í Institute being the most effectively utilized. The marked expansion and growing effectiveness of the Bahá'í correspondence courses during this period not only led to the deepening of many believers but helped to attract enquirers to the Cause. Courses were given in English and Swahili.

'The development of Bahá'í community life in Kenya tended to be a slow but gradual process, but certain communities and Local Spiritual Assemblies clearly gained some strength.

'Several new publications were made available, notably, new pamphlets in Luo and Luyore plus the English language booklets *Bahá'í Classes for Women* and *Bahá'í Classes for Children*.

'Bright spots among youth activities included a national youth deepening conference, a youth teaching conference, a youth seminar, and several regional youth conferences. Greatly increased emphasis on women's and children's activities was reflected in the formation in 1974 of the National Committee for Women and Children. Four conferences for women were held in 1975. The Kenya Bahá'í community was

deeply honoured when one of its most able and distinguished believers, Mrs. Catherine M'Boya, was invited to participate in the International Women's Year Conference in Mexico in June 1975. Children's activities were on the increase, with several local Bahá'í communities conducting children's classes by 1976.

'The site for the future Temple and the national endowment were both acquired in April 1973. The buildings for two new permanent Bahá'í institutes, at Kilifi and Mugweko, were completed, and the institutes began functioning. A beautiful new large Bahá'í Centre was built in Nakuru, and steps were taken towards completion of another at Tongaren. A few smaller local Bahá'í Centres were built in 1976. Construction started on the much-needed extension of the national *Ḥaẓiratu'l-Quds* in Nairobi and two new residential buildings on the property. Progress was made in the registration of Bahá'í plots of land in Kenya.

'Preparations began in 1974 for the great Bahá'í International Conference to be held in Nairobi in October 1976. Many Bahá'ís were devoting considerable time and effort to ensuring the success of the conference.

'Generally, Bahá'í activities in Kenya during the period under survey advanced irregularly; perhaps it may be regarded as a period of gathering strength for a future widespread advance of the Cause in this country and the winning of many great victories. Certainly, there were ample indications that this could very well be the case.'

RWANDA

'The foundation of the Bahá'í community has been considerably strengthened in the period under review as evidenced by the increase in the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies from forty-seven at Riḍván 1973 to one hundred and six at Riḍván 1976. The Faith was established in one hundred and forty-four localities at Riḍván 1973 and in five hundred and eighty-one localities at Riḍván 1976. This process of growth was reinforced by a series of one-week deepening institutes held each year. Various topics were discussed at these well-attended meetings, including Bahá'í administration and the importance of Bahá'í education for children. The visits of Counsellors Mihdí Samandarí and Oloro Epyeru further stimulated the friends toward the

achievement of the goals of the Five Year Plan. In February 1974 Mr. Sa'íd Nahvi of Írán spent two weeks visiting various centres in Rwanda. He was interviewed for thirty minutes on Radio Rwanda and gave a well-received lecture at Kigali College. Three members of the National Spiritual Assembly were invited to present a Bahá'í talk at a Catholic teachers' training college in Save-Butare. Approximately three hundred students plus teachers attended the lecture and many expressed interest in the Faith.

'Early in 1974 the National Spiritual Assembly approved for publication in the Kinyarwanda language a Bahá'í children's book containing twenty-seven lessons. The outline, written by Mrs. Za'hirih Ta'íd, a member of the National Assembly, was produced by the Bahá'í Publishing Trust of Uganda and widely circulated throughout Rwanda for use in the large number of Bahá'í children's classes held there. A Bahá'í prayer book in Kinyarwanda was also produced in the period. Forty Local Spiritual Assemblies met regularly for dawn prayers.'

TANZANIA

'The Five Year Plan was received and launched with great enthusiasm. Meetings were held to explain the goals to the friends and everyone was filled with zeal, pledging themselves to accomplish the task within a shorter period than five years.

'Shortly after the launching of the plan the Bahá'í community of Tanzania was blessed by the visit, in May 1974, of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir. Dr. Muhájir also visited Tanzania in July 1975. On both occasions he contributed valuable suggestions about achieving the goals. During his second visit he outlined suggestions which led to the formation of a programme of progressive teaching in the Mara region around Lake Victoria, a project anticipating the co-operation of the neighbouring Bahá'í communities of Uganda and Kenya. The project was also to be undertaken in the Kunduchi area on the coast. He stressed the importance of teaching Bahá'í families.

'A significant achievement was recorded in March 1976 when a Local Spiritual Assembly was established in Sumbawanga in the Rukwa region, the sole area of Tanzania not previously opened to the Faith. During the period covered by this survey the total number of tribes in

Tanzania represented in the Faith increased to one hundred and ten through the enrollment of members of the Maragoli, Tatong, Sizaki, Nyagatwa, Kami and Simbiti tribes. This period witnessed the publication of the Swahili translation of *The New Garden*. Literature was translated into other languages of the country and a compilation of prayers, including the Short Obligatory Prayer, was produced in the Haya language.

'*Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* was presented to His Excellency President Dr. William R. Tolbert, Jr. of Liberia and to some members of his retinue, when he visited Tanzania in July 1974. A copy of *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, was presented to the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, His Excellency Dr. Julius Kambarage Nyerere, through his private secretary in January, 1976, and to the Prime Minister and Second Vice-President, Alhaji Rashid Mfaume Kawawa, in March 1976.

'A discernible development in this period was the heightened recognition on the part of the friends of the meaning and purpose of the Faith and the knowledge that only by overcoming apathy and the spirit of materialism which is so prevalent in the world today can we tap the spiritual capacity of the Faith that will overcome all barriers and enable us, through universal participation, to achieve the goals of the Five Year Plan.'

UGANDA

'Mid-way through the Five Year Plan Uganda, the spiritual heart of Africa, is coming fully alive once more, despite having had to lie almost dormant for nearly two years due to circumstances beyond our control. Through the loving prayers of the Universal House of Justice and their generous encouragement and guidance, some activities were undertaken in 1973 and 1974 despite the limitations imposed by circumstances.

'Throughout this critical period the presence of the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga was a great comfort to the friends; he stood as a pillar of strength and wisdom. In addition to travelling in Central and West Africa, Mr. Olinga undertook a six-month teaching trip to almost every region of Uganda, accompanied by Mrs. Olinga, Counsellor Kolonario Oule, Auxiliary Board member Mr. Peter Mutabazi, and others,



Mr. Albert Lincoln (left), an American Bahá'í pioneer to the Central African Republic, receiving congratulations at a swearing-in ceremony marking his admission to the Bar on 1 November 1975. Mr. Lincoln is the first non-French lawyer to be honoured in this way as a result of the waiving by the President of the Central African Republic of the requirements governing the nationality of barristers in the Central African Republic. In his speech of presentation to the Court, the Attorney General said that Mr. Lincoln's knowledge of the country, its culture, and his involvement in Bahá'í activities well qualified him to serve the needs of the people.

encouraging and inspiring the believers everywhere. Mr. Olinga in his addresses assured his audiences that the Bahá'í Faith had never been banned in Uganda because the Bahá'ís are loyal to the Government and do not interfere in political matters. He dispelled any possible doubt from the minds of the people when he produced a beautifully-worded letter from the Secretary of Religious Affairs in the President's Office, dated 31 October 1975, stating that the Bahá'í Faith was not among the religions prohibited to practise in Uganda. This letter, and the announcements of Mr. Olinga's visits on the national radio, brought much comfort and relief to the Bahá'ís and their friends.

Mr. Olinga seized every opportunity to proclaim the Bahá'í Faith to Governors, District Commissioners, County Chiefs and other Government officials, presented them with Bahá'í books and answered their questions. In

several Government offices the staff members were called together by their superiors and invited to hear Mr. Olinga's presentation. Thousands of pieces of free literature about the Faith were distributed during the tour.

'In some places, even though Mr. Olinga's visit lasted only a few hours, the results were quite amazing. In the Semiliki District of Western Province we experienced entry into the Faith by large numbers of people. Meetings were usually followed by slide programmes which were an important means of educating the Bahá'ís as well as proclaiming the Faith to the masses in towns and villages where the audiences ranged from two hundred to five hundred persons. The establishing and strengthening of friendly relationships with Government officials, and the reassurance given to the Bahá'ís and their friends, prepared the way for further growth of the Cause in all Provinces of Uganda

and stand as an example and challenge to the Ugandan believers. Throughout the tour, Mrs. Olinga's major role was to gather together some women and establish a Bahá'í women's group in nearly every locality visited. Each such group elected a secretary and secured a volunteer teacher for weekly classes for women and children.

Following closely upon the visits of Mr. Olinga, representatives of the Continental Board of Counsellors, members of the Auxiliary Board and National Spiritual Assembly members participated in teaching programmes in rural communities. In 1974, training courses were held at the Gulu, Mbale and Kampala teaching institutes in an effort to consolidate Local Spiritual Assemblies. Thirty-nine Local Assemblies were represented at the courses held for Local Spiritual Assembly secretaries. During 1975 and 1976, homefront pioneers from Busoga and Semiliki spent six months in Ankole, raised five Local Spiritual Assemblies and opened eleven new localities to the Faith.

The Kampala Local Spiritual Assembly, through its Proclamation Committee, mounted a Bahá'í book exhibition at the Uganda National Museum in Kampala in 1975. Originally planned to last two weeks, the exhibit remained on view for three weeks at the request of the exhibition officer of the museum. The Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga presided over the opening of the exhibition and welcomed a group of distinguished guests including Mr. Philip Wabulya, the Commissioner for Community Development, who came to open the exhibition. Approximately 10,500 visitors were attracted to the exhibit which provided a unique opportunity for many friends in the community to teach the Faith.

The newly formed Bahá'í National Education Committee, through the guidance of Mr. Olinga, has stimulated many women into action. More than twenty-five women's groups have been formed and Bahá'í children's classes are being held in all regions. Bahá'í women participated in all levels of activity. *The Nineteen Day Star*, a newsletter for women and children, was inaugurated in the period of this survey; it serves as an important link between Bahá'í women and is read at their regular classes. Twenty-five women participated in the National Teaching Conference held in Kampala in January 1976 and their pledges of contributions

to the National Fund were all realized. The influence of the Bahá'í women in Awiri, Lango, in initiating the building of their local Ḥazíratu'l-Quds has stimulated other women's groups to offer help in this endeavour.

By quietly conducting a few weekend courses at Kikaaya, and holding weekly classes at some Secondary Schools around Kampala, the youth were able to function on a low key during 1973 and 1974. Secondary Schools and training institutions in Kitgum, Gulu, Mbale, Tororo and Soroti were visited, resulting in very outstanding youth activities at both Tororo Girls' School and St. Kizito in Soroti. A regional conference for the Central Province, held in August 1975, blessed with the presence of Mr. Olinga, drew an attendance of twenty-nine youth, including one from Finland, and set into motion a new spirit of dedication. The re-organization of the National Youth Committee in October 1975, under the careful guidance of Mr. Olinga, resulted in the forming of three departments, one for schools and colleges, one for non-student youth and one for information, each with its own secretary and responsibilities. Many youth rendered outstanding service at the Bahá'í book exhibition in November 1975 and found it a challenging experience. The following month, sixty youth from all parts of Uganda participated in the National Youth Institute and Victory Conference. A unique aspect of this institute was the narration of stories of the Dawn-Breakers by Mr. Olinga which helped instil the spirit of sacrifice in the participants. Immediately after the conference nine youth undertook a travelling teaching project for three weeks in the Western Region as a follow-up to the visits of Mr. Olinga. They travelled for the most part on foot and won over one hundred and fifty new believers. A group of Bahá'í young women spent approximately ten days in the Eastern Region. The youth have been actively engaged in teaching women's groups in rural areas, assisting in establishing or conducting children's classes and have formed sub-county Bahá'í Youth Clubs. *The Trumpet*, a newsletter for Bahá'í youth, was continued during this period, although fewer issues were produced; it is a useful source for deepening.

The Government of Uganda has undertaken the responsibility of the educational side of the Bahá'í schools at Tilling and Odusai. However, two Bahá'í teachers take all classes in Religious

Knowledge in the schools, using the syllabus which has been developed by the National Education committee in 1973-1974, and approved by the National Spiritual Assembly of Uganda. This syllabus is also used in the Bahá'í (Parents) Schools established by the Local Spiritual Assemblies of Kanonko, Nansololo and Bunankanda. The first teaching institute to instruct Bahá'ís in the use of the syllabus was held in Kampala in January 1974; a second was held at Mbale in August 1974. Since that time the Bahá'í Religious Knowledge Syllabus has been presented to the Chief Education Officer of the Ministry of Education who later requested copies for study by the panel responsible for religious education in the schools throughout the country. Other material presented included the Bahá'í Teaching Manuals, *God and His Messengers*, *The New Garden* and *Children's Stories from the Dawn-Breakers*.

'The use of mass media had come almost to a standstill until the visits of the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga reopened the way. The announcements of his visits over the national radio broadcasts were heard by many, drew people to his meetings, strengthened the friends and confirmed that the Faith is functioning in Uganda. A noteworthy radio interview with a member of the National Spiritual Assembly was broadcast at the time of the book exhibition in Kampala.

'Translations into Luganda, Luo, Ateso, Runyoro/Rutoro and Swahili of the small pocket-size prayer book *Spiritual Sustenance* were produced and published during this period. In 1974 the Luganda translation of *The Hidden Words* was published. Various other works were published in vernacular languages for other African National Spiritual Assemblies by the Publishing Trust.

'The number of believers enrolled in the Faith continued to swell, increasing by some four thousand from Riqv́n 1973 to Riqv́n 1976, and although more men than women are enrolled the present emphasis on teaching the women has already shown an increase of women who have embraced the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. The youth enrolment, which increased by more than six hundred, reflects the recent gains in the Western Region. The seeming decrease in the number of localities opened to the Faith is accounted for by the change in civil limits known as *mulukas* (parishes) as a result of which small villages are

being grouped together. Nevertheless, at Riqv́n 1976 the Faith was established in 3,448 localities throughout Uganda.'

ZAÏRE

'From the inception of the Five Year Plan until Riqv́n 1976 the Bahá'í community of Zaïre has endeavoured through conferences and institutes to advance toward the accomplishment of the goals of the plan. Aiding in this process have been the visits of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muḥájir and representatives of the Continental Board of Counsellors, the visits of travelling teachers, and the efforts of local believers.

'During this period sixteen pioneers arrived in Zaïre from the United States, Canada, Írán and Kenya, fulfilling seventy-three per cent of the pioneer goals for this country. Scattering throughout the various regions of the country, the pioneers have been a source of encouragement and reinforcement to the Zaïrian Bahá'ís. In addition, five international travelling teachers assisted in the development of the Faith during this period, teaching in Zaïre for a total of approximately twenty months. The Zaïre Bahá'í community sent three travelling teachers to the Congo for two weeks each.

'The highlight of this period was undoubtedly the visit of Dr. Muḥájir in May and June 1975. He travelled throughout Zaïre visiting Kinshasa and the regions of Haut Zaïre, Kivu and Shaba for a period of six weeks. The encouragement he offered on the subjects of teaching and the Bahá'í education of children was well received by the friends.

'Two national conferences were held during this time, the first at Bukavu in the Kivu region in November 1974 with eighty-four in attendance; the second at Kabimba, Kivu in December 1975 with more than 1,000 in attendance. These conferences served as a great source of stimulation to the teaching effort of the believers.

'During the first half of the Five Year Plan the national Bahá'í magazine *Jamál* has continued to supply news, information and encouragement to the entire Bahá'í community. In addition, three regional bulletins published in the local languages have also been established in Kivu, Shaba and Kasai.

'Two regional Ḥazíratu'l-Quds, one at Lubumbashi and one at Kisangani, were purchased

and many local Ḥazíratu'l-Quds were constructed by the friends.

'At Ridván 1976 there were 452 Local Spiritual Assemblies and 183 local Ḥazíratu'l-Quds recorded at the national Centre.

'Numerous local and regional teaching institutes have been held in the regions of Kasai, Kivu and Shaba during this period with attendance ranging from a handful to hundreds of people. Local Bahá'í women's conferences have also been held to encourage the participation of women in Bahá'í activities. New Bahá'í Centres have also been inaugurated with local conferences. These conferences are usually characterized by consultation on ways and means to teach the Bahá'í Faith, by the singing of songs with Bahá'í themes and the performing of traditional African dances. A great spirit of unity and enthusiasm has been generated by these conferences and they have proven to be a necessary and vital force in the progress of the Faith in Zaïre.'

Northern Africa

The Bahá'í communities of the countries bordering the southern shores of the Mediterranean Sea comprise the zone of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Northern Africa. The circumstances obtaining in some of these territories is described under 'Efforts Toward the Emancipation of the Bahá'í Faith', on pp. 136-138.

Southern Africa

BOTSWANA

'The many victories won in the Nine Year Plan provided the impetus, foundation and inspiration for the next few years in Botswana. During the interim year before the Five Year Plan was launched, plans were made to hold a series of village conferences. The purpose of these conferences was to bring the Faith to a great number of people in the villages who would not hear of it in any other way and to stimulate activities on the local level. Several such conferences were held. One notable conference was held in Bobonong. It was attended by forty Bahá'ís and many of their friends. The believers organized the conference themselves and donated the food for the guests.

'In October 1973 the Bahá'í Faith was accorded official recognition by the Government of Botswana. The Spiritual Assembly of Botswana and all Local Spiritual Assemblies in the country were approved for registration by the Registrar of Societies.

'A second significant event occurred in October 1973 when the Botswana Bahá'í community was blessed by a visit from the beloved Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir. During his stay he met with the Spiritual Assembly and many of the believers. Through his guidance there was evolved a teaching project designed to bring the Faith to the masses. The pioneers and local Bahá'ís converged on Selebi-Pikwe for a three-week period, divided into teaching teams, conducted public meetings and tried to reach as many people as possible. This project was highly successful: more than three hundred people accepted the Faith at that time, contacts were made with Government officials and well-attended public meetings were conducted at schools and at the local Bahá'í Centre. The Faith became very well known in Selebi-Pikwe and in surrounding areas. The effects of the project were far-reaching; many of the new believers were in transit or soon after returned to their villages, and in this way the Faith was spread to many other villages.

'At Naw-Rúz 1974 the Bahá'ís of Botswana received with great excitement and joy the new Five Year Plan. A series of conferences was held to introduce the plan to a large number of believers and every Local Spiritual Assembly, committee and individual was asked to concentrate all efforts on winning the goals as rapidly as possible.

'The first International Bahá'í Youth Conference to be held in Botswana took place in 1974 when more than one hundred youth from six countries gathered in Mahalapye for a week of intensive study. At the conclusion of the conference the youth went into the village in teams and taught many new believers. Several staff members working at the school where the conference was held became Bahá'ís as well, deeply moved by the spirit of love and unity they witnessed among the Bahá'ís. The Assistant Chief of Mahalapye attended a special proclamation meeting at the close of the conference and expressed himself as being very impressed by the wonderful spirit of the youth.



Bahá'í singing group, Nhlngano, Swaziland; June 1973.

'Mr. S. Appa, a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Southern Africa, visited Botswana in 1975. He travelled over 1,000 miles visiting and encouraging believers in many villages, spoke to several large groups of secondary school students and was interviewed on radio. Among the villages he visited was Nata, a community composed mostly of Bushmen. The Bahá'ís of Nata had been taught by a devoted believer who on his own initiative travelled to Nata, more than one hundred miles from his own home, solely for the purpose of spreading the message of Bahá'u'lláh. Counsellor Appa was the first Bahá'í, other than the original teacher, to visit this remote and admirable community.

'In Palapye, a local believer had for several years been holding children's classes the attendance at which increased from twenty to sixty. As a special proclamation effort a Children's Day was held for all the children who had attended the Bahá'í classes. The programme of singing, the games and fellowship, were much enjoyed by both teachers and children.

'In commemoration of United Nations International Women's Year the Spiritual

Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Botswana sponsored a public meeting to which many officials were invited. Mrs. Bahíyyih Winckler of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Southern Africa gave a beautiful talk about the Bahá'í teachings on the equality of men and women to an appreciative audience of more than forty people. Mrs. Emilda Mathe, Director of Tourism for Botswana and President of the Professional and Business Women's Club, shared the platform with Mrs. Winckler and moved the audience with her talk about the role of women in Botswana.

'During the two years since the beginning of the Five Year Plan some encouraging progress has been made. The believers in several villages are now meeting for early morning prayers, many children's classes have been started, the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies increased.

'Tribute is paid to our Auxiliary Board member, Miss Jean Swinney, who offered many forms of valuable assistance to all the believers.'

LESOTHO

'The Faith continued to grow and develop in the tiny mountainous country of the Basotho. By

Riqván 1976 there were thirty-eight Local Spiritual Assemblies established, and three hundred and thirteen localities had been opened to the Faith.

'Property was acquired for two regional Centres, one at Ha Rampa in the lowlands, and one at Thaba-Limpe in the mountains. During this period a celebration was held at Seqonaka commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the introduction of the Faith in Lesotho and the enrolment of the first Basotho Bahá'ís at this spot.

'National teaching conferences were held annually, as well as youth institutes and deepening conferences, at the national Centre in Maseru. An International Bahá'í Youth School was held at Maseru in 1974 with more than one hundred believers attending. Two days were devoted to teaching in nearby villages. The participants divided into teams, travelled along mountain paths on foot and welcomed a number of new believers into the Faith. Several Government officials who attended the dedication of the Bahá'í properties, which took place during the school, were presented after the ceremony with some of the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh.

'During the period under review *Bahá'u'lláh*, a booklet of the Star Study Programme, published by the United States Publishing Trust, was translated into Sesotho and printed; regular newsletters were sent out to many believers; two correspondence courses were started and a project was launched under which *The Hidden Words* and an enlarged edition of a prayer book, both in Sesotho, will be made available to the friends.'

MALAWI

'In October 1973 we were blessed with the visit of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir. Although his time in Malawi was brief, he met with many Bahá'ís in Blantyre/Limbe and encouraged us to work towards conversion of the masses.

'In the period under review there was a series of one-day conferences in village areas which enabled members of the National Spiritual Assembly to meet many village believers, and the meetings were a source of great encouragement to the Local Spiritual Assemblies. There were two National Teaching Conferences, in October 1974 and in August 1975, and both were characterized by a wonderful spirit of en-

thusiasm to learn and to teach. A three-day school was held in May 1975 following the National convention with approximately forty people in attendance. Those who participated were divided into two groups. The first group had never attended a school before and these students studied basic lessons in Bahá'í history and administration, etc. The other group studied subjects at a more advanced level. A significant contribution to the teaching work was made by several travelling teachers from such distant points as Canada, New Zealand, Japan, South Africa, Seychelles, Swaziland and the United Kingdom.

'Women's activities have been on the increase. The National Bahá'í Women's Activities Committee was invited to visit a Government homecraft school which women can attend on Government selection. The National Spiritual Assembly has offered to pay half the school fee if any Local Spiritual Assembly will select students and contribute the balance of the fee. Thus far two Bahá'í women have taken a two-week course in diet, hygiene, vegetable gardening, poultry keeping and sewing. Some Local Spiritual Assemblies have women's activities and one enthusiastic village area holds daily activities for them. Two Bahá'í women were interviewed by the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation about the Bahá'í teachings on the role of women and how these concepts are being implemented in Malawi. This resulted in two thirty-minute programmes which were broadcast throughout the country. Women are active at both the national and local levels of the administrative work of the Faith.

'Although youth activities have not yet been fully developed and we hope for great improvement in this area, some work has been done. A youth from Malawi was sponsored to the International Youth Conference in Botswana in 1974, and another attended the International Youth Conference in Rhodesia in 1975.

'Many Local Spiritual Assemblies hold children's classes; a booklet in Chichewa, the official language of Malawi, on how to conduct classes is distributed to all Local Spiritual Assemblies and larger groups.

'The Bahá'í community of Malawi now embraces representatives of all major tribes—Chewa, Yao, Tumbuka and Tonga—and of all minority tribes—Sena, Lomwe and Ngoni.

'A comprehensive outline of guidelines for

Local Spiritual Assemblies has been produced in both English and Chichewa; a selection of Bahá'í prayers was translated into Chichewa and published; and excerpts from two compilations prepared by the Universal House of Justice, *Living the Life* and *Pattern of Bahá'í Life*, have been translated into Chichewa and published in booklet form. The Bahá'í correspondence course (in co-operation with the National Spiritual Assembly of Rhodesia) has been broadened by the addition in 1975 of a new section on Bahá'í family life. National Spiritual Assemblies in various parts of the world have requested copies to assist them in producing courses of their own. The pamphlet outlining the Bahá'í teachings on loyalty to Government has been translated into Tonga and plans are current for the translation of other Bahá'í literature into Tumbuka and Tonga.

'Land is being held in lieu of a Temple site; seven of the ten Local Ḥazíratu'l-Quds called for in the Five Year Plan have now been built; and four local endowments have been acquired and registered with the Government. They are located at Maele and Chipolopolo in the Southern district of Nsanje, and Sabwela and Zamasiya in the Central district of Ntcheu. Negotiations for one in the Phalombe district are nearing completion; the land cannot be purchased but is registered on long lease.

'Although the Bahá'ís are few in relation to the potential for growth the National Spiritual Assembly is witnessing the emergence of a new group of dedicated and self-sacrificing teachers and prays that it will itself grow and develop to a higher degree in order to meet the challenge confronting it.'

MAURITIUS

'The year 1973 was devoted mostly to the consolidation of the victories won in the Nine Year Plan. Visits to various communities were undertaken and deepening classes were held on a regular basis. The National Bahá'í Youth Committee organized a forum on Human Rights Day with the participation of non-Bahá'ís.

'In May 1974 the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir spent a week in Mauritius. He met with the National Spiritual Assembly and assisted in the preparation of a six-month intensive teaching project and a series of activities aiming at the fulfilment of the goals of the Five Year Plan. The project was launched

at a meeting attended by approximately two hundred friends, and was enthusiastically received.

'The Bahá'í youth played an active part in the fields of teaching and consolidation. Study of the book *'Abdu'l-Bahá* by the Hand of the Cause Ḥasan M. Balyúzi was undertaken on a local basis. A number of communities formed committees to foster participation of Bahá'í women and among other activities encouraged the women to memorize prayers and to study *The New Garden* as a deepening aid. Children's classes were further developed and various communities gathered for morning prayers on a weekly basis. Publication of a newsletter for children, *Junior News-Sheet*, commenced in 1975. Excursions and social gatherings for children are held on Bahá'í Holy Days, providing an opportunity for children of various communities to meet, study and play together. Activities for Bahá'í youth, women and children are now well established.

'In January 1975 we were honoured by a six-month visit from Mr. Yan Kee Leong of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South-Eastern Asia whose specific mission was to establish contact with the Chinese-speaking population in Mauritius. With untiring love and devotion he taught and proclaimed the Faith among the Chinese and before his departure established a Chinese Teaching Committee to carry on the work he had started.

'In the period under review travelling teachers from South Africa, India and Australia made valuable contributions to the progress of the Faith in Mauritius, and two travelling teachers from this country visited Madagascar to assist with the work there.

'In observance of International Women's Year the National Women's Committee of Mauritius organized a forum on the theme "The Status of Women in Today's Society". Participating in the forum were Mrs. Lea Nys of Belgium, the Hon. Mrs. R. Poonoosamy, Minister for Women's Affairs, and Mr. H. Tirvengadam, Chairman of the Administrative Commission of the Municipality of Quatre-Bornes where the gathering was held. Approximately two hundred and fifty persons from all strata of Mauritian society attended, including members of the diplomatic corps, Government officials and leading citizens. The event was televised and broadcast as a news item through-

out Mauritius. Mrs. Nys was interviewed on television in advance of the forum and had the opportunity to give a broad outline of the Bahá'í teachings. She was granted cordial interviews by the Governor-General and the Chief Justice to each of whom she presented copies of *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV. Mrs. Nys was in Mauritius as part of a teaching journey of fifteen weeks' duration which took her to a large number of African countries.

'In December 1975 a successful Bahá'í Summer School was held at a youth campsite with approximately forty friends in attendance. The programme included classes on various aspects of the Faith and recreational activities. The spirit of love and unity which prevailed was memorable.

'During the period under review the booklet *Qu'est-ce que la Foi Bahá'ie?* was reproduced and the land was acquired for two district Ḥaziratu'l-Quds.'

RÉUNION

'Children's classes were held almost regularly in four localities. The book *Bahá'í Places Around the World* was translated and reproduced for use by these classes. Women served as teachers of these classes and participated in teaching work in the cities. In addition they made handicraft items for community "bring-and-buy" sales.

'The gathering of the friends for dawn prayers has been inaugurated on a weekly basis in two communities and all other communities are being encouraged to hold these meetings.

'In the period under review eight pioneers have arrived in Réunion from Canada, Persia and Mauritius and travelling teachers from Uganda, France, Hawaii and Belgium have visited. During the visit of Mrs. Lea Nys she was interviewed on radio and television, spoke at two public meetings held in Saint-Pierre and Saint-Denis and had two Bahá'í articles published in *Le Journal de la Réunion*. In addition, she spoke at firesides held in private homes. During the month-long visit of Miss Vidá 'Abássí of Uganda one new Local Spiritual Assembly was elected.

'Mr. Shidan Fat'he-Aazam and Mr. S. Appa of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Southern Africa met with the National Spiritual Assembly in 1974 and 1975. Counsellor Appa

paid regular visits and spent ten days in Saint-Benoît helping with the teaching work.

'The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir met with the National Spiritual Assembly at the very beginning of the Five Year Plan. Resulting from this consultation a six-month teaching project was organized under which six Local Spiritual Assemblies were assigned teaching goals. Under this plan a member of the National Spiritual Assembly met with each Local Assembly concerned before the launching of the project in that locality. This intensive project brought new believers and resulted in new localities being opened to the Faith. Dr. Muhájir stayed with us for three days. Meetings were scheduled in Sainte-Anne and Saint-Pierre; the meeting held in Saint-Pierre gathered friends from all the south-western localities and Saint-Denis.

'In 1974, two members of the National Spiritual Assembly attended the conference held in Salisbury, Rhodesia under the sponsorship of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Southern Africa.

'Film strips were used in teaching and in Holy Day celebrations and some visual aids were locally produced. Songs with Bahá'í themes were composed by the believers in Réunion. A presentation of "distinctive Bahá'í characteristics" was prepared in drawings by the children and presented to the adults during our first National Teaching Conference. National Teaching Conferences were held each year with representation from most localities with a Local Assembly. A winter school was held in September 1973 and in August 1975 a three-day institute was conducted under the joint auspices of the National Assembly and the Continental Board of Counsellors; an especially good attendance was registered on the third day of that activity. Various measures were adopted aimed at increasing the degree of universal participation and a special contribution was made to Maison d'Éditions Bahá'ies.

'A deepening course was prepared and reproduced by the National Teaching and Consolidation Committee. Study classes based on this outline were held in all localities with a Local Spiritual Assembly, the classes being led by visiting teachers assigned to the various areas. A special bulletin was printed for the Day of the Covenant and distributed to all Local Spiritual Assemblies.'

RHODESIA

'In the interim year before the launching of the Five Year Plan, Rhodesia sponsored a limited proclamation project which began on the first day of Riqvân 1973 in the specific areas of Umtali, Mrewa, Mtoko and Bindura. Weekend programmes were held, culminating at the national convention with the final programme on 19 May 1973. This project brought the Faith to the attention of large segments of the population in these areas of the country. Later in the year, the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir visited Rhodesia and resulting from his consultations with the National Spiritual Assembly special short-term teaching projects were carried out in the Bulawayo and Salisbury areas resulting in the enrolment of more than three hundred new believers during a three-week period of concentrated teaching. Also, during this time, two more local endowments were acquired, at Mufungo in the Gokwe area and at Filabusi in Matabeleland.

'The Five Year Plan was launched at Naw-Rúz 1974. Several conferences were held to acquaint the believers with the new goals and they were encouraged to volunteer to share in the responsibility of accomplishing the goals which were to be phased over a period of four years. The first annual National Teaching Conference was held in Mrewa Tribal Trust Land at Mudarikwa Kraal in October 1974. The goals of the Five Year Plan were reviewed and special classes on the Local Spiritual Assembly and its functions were held. There were also activities for youth and children. The Bahá'ís of Mudarikwa made special preparations such as repairing the road, posting signs, building a cooking shelter, organizing food preparation and making several homes available for guests. They were a marvellous host community and the conference was very successful.

'Rhodesia was privileged to be the venue of a special conference held in August 1974 sponsored by the Continental Board of Counsellors in Southern Africa to which members of the Auxiliary Board and National Spiritual Assembly members were invited. We were greatly honoured to have in attendance Mrs. Florence Mayberry, a member of the International Teaching Centre.

'A regional conference for Bahá'í women was

held in November 1974 at the national Ḥazíratu'l-Quds in Salisbury. Representatives from communities in the Salisbury area attended. Classes on various aspects of the role of Bahá'í women were held as well as special instruction on teaching children's classes, and crafts.

'During the second year of the Five Year Plan an exchange system of international travelling teachers was initiated and Rhodesia was able to send three such teachers to Botswana while receiving one family from Australia and two other individuals from the United Kingdom. Another first was the "Love and Fellowship Picnic" jointly sponsored by the Continental Board of Counsellors and the National Spiritual Assembly which is to become an annual event to be held each year in a different part of the country. Inaugurated in May 1975, the second such event was held in May 1976 in Que Que in Midlands Province.

'The second annual National Teaching Conference was held in Salisbury in October 1975 attended by approximately eighty-five believers representing many communities. After the weekend conference, a four-day deepening institute was organized by the National Teaching Committee for those who were able to remain.

'Youth activities, including conferences for youth, continued to be held. Of particular significance was the first International Bahá'í Youth School held near Bulawayo in December 1975 which drew an attendance of more than one hundred youth representing ten countries.

'The first National Bahá'í Children's School was held in Salisbury from 10-15 January 1976, a venture jointly sponsored by the Continental Board of Counsellors and the National Spiritual Assembly. The school began with a one-day orientation course for the teachers who were mainly youth. During the school nearly one hundred children from many communities enjoyed lessons, singing, outings, crafts, sports and fellowship. On the closing day the children, using puppets and backdrops they had created, enacted a meeting of a Local Spiritual Assembly and a Nineteen Day Feast. It was a wonderful and heartwarming experience.

'Bahá'í literature was enriched through the translation and publication of several compilations and *God's New Age* and excerpts from *The Hidden Words* in Shona; and a compilation, a booklet and a small prayer book in Ndebele.

'The arrival of eleven pioneers reinforced the teaching work in this period. Some of these friends settled in Midlands Province opening this part of the country to the Faith for the first time.

'At the end of 1975, twenty-nine new localities had been opened to the Faith and eleven communities formed Local Spiritual Assemblies for the first time. The holding of early morning prayers has been well received and supported. Many of the friends avail themselves of the correspondence courses to further their knowledge of the Faith through this medium. By Riqvân 1976, reports had been received of the formation of thirty Local Spiritual Assemblies and 6,353 believers were listed on the Bahá'í membership records.'

SEYCHELLES

'The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Seychelles was formed at Riqvân 1972 with its seat in Victoria, Mahé Island. This was a supplementary achievement of the Nine Year Plan. The Hand of the Cause of God Dr. Adelbert Mühlischlegel represented the Universal House of Justice on this occasion. Later that year the Bahá'ís of Seychelles had the inestimable bounty of receiving a visit from the beloved Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum.

'At Riqvân 1973 the Bahá'í community of Seychelles was privileged to send a representative to the International Convention in the Holy Land and several believers of the Seychelles served as travelling teachers abroad, two of them settling in Benin as pioneers. A representative of Seychelles attended the Lesotho Bahá'í Youth Conference sponsored by the Continental Board of Counsellors in Southern Africa, and in August 1974 four members of the National Spiritual Assembly attended the conference in Rhodesia for members of the Auxiliary Board and National Spiritual Assemblies, which was sponsored by the Continental Board of Counsellors. One member of the National Assembly spent a few weeks in Madagascar as a travelling teacher under the international project established to facilitate the flow of travelling teachers.

'Among those who visited Seychelles during the period of this survey were travelling teachers from South Africa, Belgium and Malaysia. We were honoured by the visits of Mr. Shidan

Fat'he-Aazam and Mr. S. Appa of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Southern Africa. Mr. Yan Kee Leong of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South-Eastern Asia, during his visit, introduced the Faith for the first time among the members of the Chinese community of Seychelles. Mrs. Helen Wilks of Rhodesia, a member of the Auxiliary Board, came especially to assist in training teachers for the education of Bahá'í children. All these visits lent a great impetus to the members of the Seychelles community in their efforts to work for the success of the Five Year Plan.

'While in the teaching field relatively nominal progress has as yet been achieved, in other fields such as participation of women, children's education and the acquisition of properties, significant progress has been made. The National Bahá'í Women's Committee established a regional Bahá'í school for children and organized several successful programmes in connection with United Nations International Women's Year including a national women's homecraft exhibition which was accorded wide publicity in the press and on the radio. Through the generosity of local believers, a national endowment has been acquired and local *Ḥazíratu'l-Quds* are under way at Anse Boileau and Bay St. Anne Praslin. Avenues continue to be explored for the acquisition of a Temple site and plots of land for the remaining local *Ḥazíratu'l-Quds*. In 1974 the Bahá'í community was successful in obtaining official recognition of the nine Bahá'í Holy Days on which Bahá'í children are exempt from attending school.

'The national community has continuously sponsored programmes in observance of international events such as United Nations Day and Human Rights Day. Two events related to the work of the United Nations were sponsored in 1975, both commemorating International Women's Year, and in both these events prominent local citizens took part.'

SOUTH AND WEST AFRICA

'The period from the end of the Nine Year Plan to the end of the second year of the Five Year Plan has witnessed some remarkable changes in the situation outside the Faith in Southern Africa. The uneven progress within the Bahá'í community has been due in part to the uncertainties created by this transition.

'The arrival of a pioneer in Angola sparked renewed activity which led to a rapid increase in the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies from one to six. The sudden turn of events in the political sphere prompted the transfer of Angola at Riḍván 1975 from the jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly of South and West Africa to that of the National Spiritual Assembly of Swaziland and Mozambique and that body was renamed accordingly. Soon after that, war conditions in the country disrupted Bahá'í activities, but it appears they are now being resumed as a result of the dedicated efforts of some of the indigenous believers.

'In South-West Africa external circumstances have made it difficult for the local believers and pioneers to maintain contact with each other, but the efforts of one or two native friends have resulted in a noteworthy number of new Bahá'ís being enrolled in the Faith. One of the most important achievements was the acquisition, with the assistance of the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany, of a fine local Ḥazíratu'l-Quds in Windhoek, which the believers are actively improving.

'At the end of the Nine Year Plan, the island of St. Helena had just formed its Local Spiritual Assembly. In 1974 the first indigenous believer from South Africa to undertake a teaching trip to St. Helena did so, was most warmly received and imparted great inspiration to the friends, particularly the youth and children.

'South Africa was blessed in October 1973 with a visit from the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muḥájir who lovingly awakened us to the many teaching possibilities in the region.

'Four international teaching projects were carried out under the plan called for by the Universal House of Justice: one to Lesotho, one to Malawi (both youth), and two to Rhodesia; we received three travelling teachers from the United Kingdom in the same period.

'Outstanding is the upsurge in youth activity. With the introduction of Youth Summer Schools and the appointment of a vigorous National Bahá'í Youth Committee, the youth have held local conferences each year and have participated with enthusiasm in administrative and teaching work, including international teaching.

'A booklet *Guidance for Local Spiritual Assemblies* and a simple brochure *First In-*

roduction to the Bahá'í Faith were produced and the compilation of the Universal House of Justice on Local Spiritual Assemblies was translated into Afrikaans.

'Two additional local Ḥazíratu'l-Quds were acquired, and one erected, in large part by the friends themselves; all have brought a new pattern to the local community life.

'We were very fortunate in finding, for national conventions and teaching conferences, new venues where the friends may associate freely and this has contributed greatly to the spirit of these occasions. The introduction of national teaching conferences has been of tremendous benefit to the community.

'The exhibition in all major centres of the country of the paintings of Reginald Turvey, named by the beloved Guardian "The Father of South Africa", will accrue to the prestige and recognition of the Faith in South Africa when the time is ripe.

'In general, this has been a period of slow progress but the momentum is now building up as evidenced by the increase in the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies formed in the last year. If maintained, this impetus will, with the confirmations of Bahá'u'lláh, lead to the successful completion of the Five Year Plan.'

SWAZILAND, MOZAMBIQUE AND ANGOLA

'The National Spiritual Assembly of Swaziland and Mozambique was renamed in the second year of the Five Year Plan when Angola was transferred to its jurisdiction. At Riḍván 1975 two Bahá'í visitors from Angola attended the national convention, contributing to the happy atmosphere. Although external circumstances have affected the progress of the Faith, at the mid-way point of the Five Year Plan three Local Spiritual Assemblies had been maintained in Mozambique and one in Angola. Swaziland has not had a significant gain in Local Spiritual Assemblies, which totalled fifty-nine at Riḍván 1976, but much has been done in spreading the knowledge of the Faith.

'The Leroy Ioas Teacher Training Institute and the beautified Temple site in Mbabane have been a constant source of enquiry both from local people and visitors. This national Centre is truly our silent teacher. It has also been the setting for a summer school for all the National



Bahá'í children serving some of the royal guests who attended the tea sponsored by the National Spiritual Assembly of Swaziland, Mozambique and Angola to mark the end of the United Nations International Women's Year; February 1976.

Spiritual Assembly regions of Southern Africa which was conducted by the Continental Board of Counsellors in this zone. The Counsellors have also used these facilities for the holding of a joint conference for Counsellors and Auxiliary Board members. The National Spiritual Assembly and the Swaziland believers are grateful that these facilities are available for use for various functions. Also at this Centre the funeral of dearly loved Christopher Kuhlase¹ was conducted with an attendance of approximately five hundred people from Government and the private sector, coming from all over Swaziland. Many expressed a deep appreciation of the spirit emanating from this spot.

There have been public meetings commemorating United Nations Day, Human Rights Day and International Women's Year, all with outstanding speakers, Bahá'ís and others. Two formal teas held at the national Centre brought wide publicity to the Faith. One was attended by eight queens of the royal family of His Majesty King Sobhuza II and several

princesses, accompanied by a "praiser" and police escort. Many ladies from Government offices and foreign embassies were also present.

For the Bahá'ís there have been national conventions, mid-year teaching conferences, teacher training institutes, women's and children's conferences, youth activities and conferences, morning devotional services, Holy Day observances, Nineteen Day Feasts, National Spiritual Assembly meetings and many other gatherings which have been of great benefit to the developing Bahá'í community.

At mid-point of the Five Year Plan land had been purchased at Hlatikulu, Swaziland for construction of one of the two regional *Ḥaẓiratu'l-Quds* to be acquired in the Five Year Plan. In spite of many difficulties we are actively pursuing our outstanding property goals. A concentrated effort has been made in the local Centre at Motshane, Swaziland which we hope will become a regional Centre for five communities. Children's classes are regularly held there and weekly activities are encouraged. The Local Spiritual Assembly at Mncitsini, where the first local *Ḥaẓiratu'l-Quds* was built, is

¹ See 'In Memoriam', p. 546.

developing into an active and self-sufficient community.

'Publicity for the Faith has been achieved in Swaziland through two radio interviews and by the weekly quotations from the Bahá'í Writings published in the *Times*, a Swaziland newspaper. For a period of six months in 1974, at the request of the William Pitcher Teacher Training College, weekly programmes have been presented by Bahá'í speakers in the auditorium of the college to the entire student body. The National Teaching Committee arranged for these talks on topics of special interest, interspersed with Bahá'í teachings, and the programmes were well received.

'For two successive years in the period under review the Bahá'í community maintained an information booth at the Manzini Trade Fair. A continuous slide programme of Bahá'í Holy Places and Bahá'í activities around the world attracted much attention and large amounts of literature were distributed.

'One noteworthy piece of literature was produced in siSwati in collaboration with the National Spiritual Assembly of India. Entitled *Inkolo Yama Bahá'í* (Religion of Bahá'ís), it is a beautiful full-colour three-fold proclamation leaflet bearing a photograph of the Shrine of the Báb. Other literature produced included: Bahá'í News (*Inzindaba Zama Bahá'í*), published bi-monthly; a magazine for women and children (*Bomake ne Bantfwana*) produced by the National Women's and Children's Committee; and a monthly Nineteen Day Feast letter in the local language and in English. The National Women's and Children's Committee has also begun translation into the local language of *Bahá'u'lláh* and *The Local Spiritual Assembly*, two booklets of the Star Study Programme published by the United States Publishing Trust. Bahá'í books have been placed in seven public libraries throughout Swaziland.

'Considerable effort was put into producing audio-visual materials. Attractive hand-painted



Bahá'í Youth Conference, Hlatikulu, Swaziland; 1973.

portable display boards depicting various Bahá'í teachings were made, as well as flip-board charts to illustrate the holding of Nineteen Day Feasts. The outline of an address on *The Hidden Words* was also produced in flip-board format. Special screens were constructed for showing filmstrips and slides in daylight.

'At the mid-way point of the Five Year Plan the Faith is well known in Swaziland among those who travel the road between the capital city of Mbabane and the industrial hub of the country, Manzini. The Area Teaching Committees are putting forth much effort to reach all rural areas. The goals of forming more Local Spiritual Assemblies, and promoting extension teaching and deepening are slow in being achieved due largely to lack of transportation and the fewness of teachers who can settle in more remote areas and demonstrate by work and deed the message of love and unity brought by Bahá'u'lláh.'

ZAMBIA

'Activities in Zambia after Ridván 1973 were off to a quick start with the visit of Mr. Greg Dahl, an American believer who visited a number of African countries. Mr. Dahl was interviewed and sang songs with Bahá'í themes on both radio and television in Zambia, which stimulated interest in the Faith. Encouraged by this, the Lusaka community quickly prepared a Bahá'í display booth for the National Agricultural Show held annually in August. During the Show which was attended by more than 54,000 people, more than 4,000 pieces of Bahá'í literature were distributed and the film on the dedication of the Panama House of Worship was shown a number of times. From this first contact with the Faith more than twenty-five people eventually became Bahá'ís.

'In September 1973 we had the blessing of a visit from the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir. Following his consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly a six-month intensive teaching project was launched centering on Kasama in the Northern Province where there were very few Bahá'ís. The project, which lasted from 20 October 1973 to 21 April 1974 resulted in the enrolment of more than 1,500 new Bahá'ís in the northern area of Zambia at the beginning of the Five Year Plan. The settlement of Miss Gretchen Border as a pioneer in Kasama for the period of the project

and the close co-operation of many teams of travelling teachers and individual Bahá'ís, including Counsellor Shidan Fat'he-Aazam, contributed to the success of the campaign.

'In preparation for the launching of the Five Year Plan the National Spiritual Assembly consulted with Mr. Shidan Fat'he-Aazam and Mrs. Bahíyyih Winckler of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Southern Africa. Counsellor Winckler introduced the Five Year Plan to the friends assembled at the national convention. Bahá'í communities all over Zambia greeted the new plan with enthusiasm. Eight area conferences were arranged through the National Teaching Committee so that each individual believer had an opportunity to attend and discuss the implications of the plan for Zambia. The reaction shown by the believers demonstrated that they understood the task ahead and many commitments were received from groups and individuals.

'In January 1975 the Bahá'ís of Zambia held their first annual National Teaching Conference. Sixty-seven Bahá'ís from many parts of the country attended this very successful event directed by the National Teaching Committee. It was evident that each of the teachers participating in the conference had put in many hours of preparation. Of special interest was the demonstration of teaching materials for children's classes. Many of the friends responded by taking the teaching outline and starting children's classes in their home areas.

'After the national convention in 1975 we were visited by Mrs. Helen Wilks, a member of the Auxiliary Board. While she was here the Hand of the Cause Dr. Muhájir arrived to consult with the National Assembly and visit the friends. After meeting with the National Assembly and offering new suggestions for teaching, Dr. Muhájir had to leave Zambia. Mrs. Wilks graciously accepted the commitments made under the programme established for Dr. Muhájir and spoke of the Faith at a number of Teacher Training Schools and a local agricultural school. She then visited the Northwestern Province where she gave a deepening course at the Bahá'í institute, training local believers to pioneer and go travelling teaching in Angola when circumstances there permit.

'General teaching has been of two types, sporadic trips by local believers to accomplish specific objectives and teaching by members of

the National Spiritual Assembly engaged in special projects between meetings of the National Assembly. Typical of the former type would be a weekend trip by two local believers and two pioneers to an established Bahá'í community in a rural area. While there they would work with the local community in an extension teaching project or offer deepening classes to the local friends on some aspect of the Five Year Plan.

'During this period several notable developments occurred in relation to national Bahá'í properties. The purchase of the national endowment property in Barlaston Park, Lusaka, initiated in the Nine Year Plan, has now been completed. At the national Ḥazíratu'l-Quds in Lusaka a handsome brick wall was completed which has improved the appearance of the building tremendously. The cost of the wall was donated by a believer and the Lusaka Local Spiritual Assembly, and the design of brick and wrought iron was conceived by a local Bahá'í architect. The lease was acquired for the Teaching Institute in the Northwestern Province and improvements to the basic structure are now under way in preparation for its use.

'The opening of the Western Province to the Faith by the settlement of a pioneer in Mongu for six months resulted in the first translation of Bahá'í literature into the Lozi language which is spoken there, the first Bahá'í material to be translated into this tongue. Translation into Bemba of *The New Garden* has been completed and is in preparation for printing. The compilation *Pattern of Bahá'í Life* has been translated into Bemba and Lunda.

'During this time several displays have been placed in the Lusaka City Library relating to the general teachings of the Faith as well as special events such as International Women's Year. These have also included an exhibit of Bahá'í books.

'Inspired by the success of the first exhibit at the National Agricultural Show the Bahá'í community again sponsored a Bahá'í booth. As a proclamation event these exhibits have been most successful in making the name of the Faith familiar to the many people who come from all over the country to visit the annual Show.'

Western Africa

BENIN

'The National Spiritual Assembly of Dahomey, Togo and Niger was formed in 1970 with its seat in Cotonou, Dahomey. At Ridván 1975 independent National Spiritual Assemblies were formed in Togo and in Niger. The National Spiritual Assembly of Dahomey became known as the National Spiritual Assembly of Benin when the name of the country was changed in 1976.

'In June 1974 the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muḥájir met with the National Spiritual Assembly to discuss ways and means of implementing the Five Year Plan in the three countries then under its jurisdiction. For Benin the principal aim was to establish the Faith for the first time in the northern provinces of Borgou and Atacora. In consultation with Dr. Muḥájir the National Spiritual Assembly pinpointed towns throughout the country which were to be opened to the Faith and where Local Spiritual Assemblies were to be established. During his visit, Dr. Muḥájir met with the communities of Porto-Novo and Cotonou and was interviewed by a reporter from the magazine *Horizons Nouveaux* which printed an article on the Faith containing extracts from the brochure *Appel Mondial Bahá'í*.

'In September 1974 the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga and Mrs. Olinga spent a week in Benin and visited the Bahá'ís of Dowa, Porto-Novo and Cotonou where meetings were held. Mr. Olinga also met with the National Spiritual Assembly to discuss the steps to be taken in implementing the Five Year Plan. Mr. Olinga then visited the paramount ruler of the area, Anatalé II, who accepted the Faith in the early 1950s when it was first brought to Agoué from Togo. On three earlier occasions Mr. Olinga had visited Anatalé II but this was the first time that he was accompanied by Mrs. Olinga.

'Both Dr. Muḥájir and Mr. Olinga were granted cordial interviews by the Minister of Information to whom they presented Bahá'í books. The Minister of Information expressed sympathy with the principles of the Faith and through his auspices an announcement was made on the national radio network about the National Teaching Conference held in December 1975.



Bahá'í Youth Institute, Agboku, Dahomey (Benin), with travelling teacher Becky Getahoun (centre); May 1973.

'We gratefully acknowledge the splendid services of homefront pioneers and local travelling teachers whose devoted activities have resulted in opening to the Faith a number of new centres and who assisted so admirably in consolidating previously won victories. We also record our warm appreciation of the contribution made by travelling teachers from abroad including a team of three youth from Switzerland. A team of youth from the United States, during July and August 1975, visited Benin on a summer project and worked closely with local youth. The fruits of their efforts were not only in the number of communities visited and the number of new Bahá'ís enrolled but in the consolidation of the local Bahá'í youth who accompanied them and were inspired by their actions and attitudes.

'So far during the Five Year Plan in Benin we have witnessed the beginning of teaching activities in the north of the country, the involvement of greater numbers of local believers in all phases of the work and an increase in the participation of Bahá'í youth in the national and local community life. Special teaching plans were made for the unopened provinces and districts of Benin and special institutes were held to prepare local teachers to go out teaching during their vacations. Often it was the newly

enrolled youth who attended these sessions and participated in the projects. As a result, groups were established in Kandí, Tanguiéta, Nikki and in villages near Parakou. Local Spiritual Assemblies were formed in Parakou and Natitingou in September 1975 and March 1976 respectively. The believers in Parakou translated the Short Obligatory Prayer into Berba and Gniandé, the first translations of Bahá'í Writings to be made in these tongues. In the period under review, one local believer pioneered to Nigeria.

'At the request of the National Spiritual Assembly the National Teaching Committee developed a project for training selected local believers who could in turn work with local communities. Mr. Vincent Aguémon, as assistant to the Auxiliary Board, responded to this need and visited several communities in the Ouémé regularly. Often he was accompanied by Mr. Georges Zinsou who also undertook frequent visits to other communities on his own, consolidating Pobé and opening areas nearby. The National Teaching Committee also organized a number of regional institutes, regrouping a few nearby communities for a Unity Feast, a deepening programme or a Nineteen Day Feast. This activity was reinforced by a Winter School in December 1974 and a youth institute in

February 1975 both held at the institute in Avrankou with Auxiliary Board member Mrs. Thelma Khelghati¹ as honoured guest. At Naw-Rúz 1976 an institute was held for representatives of various communities on the subject of conducting elections of Local Spiritual Assemblies with the result that several communities were able to form their Local Assembly without outside assistance.'

CAMEROON REPUBLIC

'At the mid-way point of the Five Year Plan the Bahá'í community of Cameroon shows signs of awakening to the urgent needs of the present hour. Although far from achieving the goals assigned by the Universal House of Justice the community is developing a new spirit of enthusiasm and determination.

'Local Spiritual Assembly goals are far behind but with increased deepening and consolidation, through the activities of Auxiliary Board members and their assistants and the extension teaching goals set for Local Spiritual Assemblies, we are hopeful of re-establishing lapsed Local Spiritual Assemblies and forming new ones. An aid in this process will be the mobile institute acquired early in 1976, a Volkswagen minibus equipped with a library and teaching materials, which will enable us to establish contact with Bahá'ís in remote villages who have not received Bahá'í visitors for years. The mobile institute will go far to solve the problem of communication, increase the accessibility to Bahá'í literature and provide the means of increasing the awareness of the needs of the Five Year Plan and universal participation in Bahá'í activities.

'A growing number of communities arrange to meet for early morning prayers, either in groups or all together. Some meet every morning, others one or two times a week. A most promising development is the increased youth activity and the enrolment of many youth. After an inspiring session with Mrs. Thelma Khelghati of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Western Africa, followed by a most successful and enlightening training institute in Yaoundé, youth teaching teams scattered throughout Cameroon during the long vacation in 1976. Dr. and Mrs. Enayat played a valuable role at the

institute and also participated in the travel teaching.

'Until 1976 there was one committee for Women and Child Education. There are now separate committees for these—one for Child Education and two for Bahá'í Women's Activities, one for the English speaking friends and one for those who speak French.

'The beloved Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga and his dear wife paid two memorable visits, on one occasion accompanied by Mr. Oloro Epyeru of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Central and East Africa. These visits strengthened the love and unity amongst the friends. The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir has also paid two visits and through his zeal new ambitious teaching goals were set.

'Locality goals are nearer to completion and with very little extra effort could be achieved. Property goals need following up much more vigorously but news has just been received of the acquisition of a regional Ḥazíratu'l-Quds in Yaoundé. Yaoundé is becoming a centre of proclamation; the Bahá'í University Club is active; radio interviews and talks have been given in Yaoundé, Douala and Buea, and these radio stations are always willing to broadcast free announcements about Bahá'í activities. The Bahá'í Institute Course held in the University in Yaoundé in 1975, arranged by the Continental Board of Counsellors, brought added prestige to the Faith. Visits from all members of the Board of Counsellors in Western Africa have been of great value and inspiration.

'In an effort to bring the Bahá'í Faith to the attention of all strata of society the National Spiritual Assembly encouraged Local Assemblies to sponsor exhibits of Bahá'í books. Exhibits were arranged in 1975 in a number of communities including Kupe, Kumba, Ebolowa, Obala, Mbamayo and Buea. In most instances the exhibits were publicized by posters, written invitations and flyers. Attendance ranged from between a handful of enquirers to upwards of four hundred. In several instances new believers were enrolled as a result of the exhibits. Radio Buea announced the exhibit regularly several times a day for a number of days and broadcast a short interview with a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly. The station also recorded and broadcast the talks given at the public meeting held at the close of the meetings when speakers from six different

¹ Appointed to the Continental Board of Counsellors in Western Africa, March 1976.

backgrounds spoke on "The Oneness of Mankind."

'National Teaching Conferences have been held annually—in Mamfe in 1974, in Kumba in 1975 and in Douala in 1976—and have shown increasing improvement in spirit and attendance. The news given at the Douala Teaching Conference that some National Spiritual Assemblies in Western Africa had already accomplished all or the major part of their goals and had been assigned additional goals provided a wholesome shock to the friends of Cameroon and an inspiration to pursue our tasks with renewed vigour.'

CHAD

'Following the Nine Year Plan a concerted effort was made to find new ways and means of reaching the minds as well as the hearts of the many souls who had responded to the Call of Bahá'u'lláh in Chad. Guided by the Universal House of Justice; buttressed, spiritually and practically, by a memorable visit from the beloved Hand of the Cause of God Enoch Olinga, by the counsel of the Continental Board

of Counsellors in Western Africa, by the work of Auxiliary Board members and their assistants; reinforced through the settlement of new pioneers; encouraged by the visits of travelling teachers from Írán and England, a programme was launched to enlist the participation of all the believers in the Five Year Plan. Plans were directed toward enrolling the greatest possible number of Bahá'ís in concentrated areas, systematically exploring, deepening and expanding with a view to establishing strong centres from which the teaching work of well-deepened local teachers would radiate to surrounding communities.

'Essential to this programme was the preparation of the believers, mostly cultivators and fishermen from the rural areas, and the development of better methods of ensuring that the Bahá'í teachings were being comprehended by the friends. Thus, simplicity in teaching, and means of relating the Bahá'í teachings to the lives of the Chadian believers, became paramount objectives of the National Teaching Committee. To this end, illustrated lessons were prepared and distributed to selected individuals in the various communities. These lessons presented in



Participants in Bahá'í Conference, Chad; December 1975.

simple language stories about the Central Figures of the Faith, the Bahá'í principles and laws, and teachings about living the Bahá'í life. Constant correspondence was maintained between the National Spiritual Assembly and Local Spiritual Assemblies. Specific projects were assigned to Local Assemblies, such as the establishments of local Centres and the cultivation of Bahá'í gardens.

'Distribution of the national Bahá'í publication *Journal de l'Unité* was expanded and its content increased through the inclusion of a page for children and the publication of news of particular interest to the village communities, taking special notice of local accomplishments and activities.

'Larger numbers of women were elected to Local Spiritual Assemblies and participation by women in national and regional teaching conferences increased. Two Chadian Bahá'í women attended a National Women's Conference hosted by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Central African Republic and remained to participate in a travelling teaching project. During two of the three years under review, a Chadian woman served loyally as a member of the National Assembly. Children's classes were instituted in selected communities. A song book was published by Bahá'í youth and several youth were appointed to national committees.

'Prayers were translated into four indigenous languages: Sara Ngama, Sara Ngambaye, Massa and Kanuri. To ensure accurate translations and to assist the translators the National Translation Committee clarified the meaning of difficult words. Before publication the translations were authenticated by several individuals speaking the language.

'The yearly National Teaching Conferences called for by the Universal House of Justice under the Five Year Plan in Chad, bolstered by regional teaching conferences and small teaching institutes, proved of exceptional value in deepening, unifying and inspiring the believers. The decision in 1976 to hold the National Teaching Conference in a village rather than in a city proved to be the key that unlocked floodgates of latent enthusiasm and resulted in the friends pouring forth to teach and to win Five Year Plan goals. The Bahá'í community was further diversified through the enrolment of representatives of the Goulaye, Dajo, Kanembo,

M'Baye-Dora, Moubou, Tuperi and Kéra tribes.

'In the area of public relations, audiences were obtained with ministerial officials; an article reporting the visit of Mr. Olinga to Chad appeared in the Government daily bulletin; Mrs. Meherangiz Munsiff, a travelling teacher from the United Kingdom, was interviewed on Radio Chad for a programme on International Women's year during which she made mention of the Bahá'í Faith and its principles as related to the role of women in developing countries. Personal visits were made and Bahá'í literature was distributed to many local and regional Government officials. In co-operation with the local United Nations Organization, United Nations Day was observed annually. Successful public expositions of Bahá'í books were held in two major communities; and during national conferences and conventions displays of books stimulated the interest of the friends in the literature of their Faith.

'By Riḍván 1976, many localities had set aside sites for local Centres, and five Centres had been constructed; seventy-five new localities had been opened; pioneers had settled in key posts; fifty-two Local Spiritual Assemblies had been elected, many through their own efforts; and hundreds of new believers had declared their faith in Bahá'u'lláh. The plans of National and Regional Teaching Committees were imaginative and productive. Thus the spirits of the labourers in this corner of Bahá'u'lláh's vineyard were lifted and filled with assurance that the careful tilling of this fertile soil and the patient nurturing of these tender plants at the beginning of the period would bear mature and plentiful fruit in the remaining years of the Five Year Plan.'

THE GAMBIA

'In 1973 the Gambia was under the jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly of Upper West Africa (seat in Banjul, the Gambia) comprising Sénégal, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde Islands, Mauritania and the Gambia. At Riḍván 1975 a new National Spiritual Assembly, that of the Gambia, was established with its seat in Banjul, and the National Spiritual Assembly of Upper West Africa, now comprising Sénégal, Mauritania, Guinea-Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands, changed its seat to Dakar, Sénégal.¹

¹ Announced in a letter of 6 January 1975 from the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies.



Bahá'í Children's Class, Talindingkunjang, the Gambia; May 1974.

'The conventions for the election of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Gambia in 1975 and 1976 were characterized by a heightened spirit of unity. In the period under review the residents of villages in the Fonyi area demonstrated great receptivity to the Faith and teaching followed by consolidation will result in the establishment of firm communities there. Wisdom must guide every effort as persecution and difficulty have been encountered in a few villages. Nevertheless, some Bahá'ís of the Fonyis have carried the Faith to neighbouring villages.

'Proclamation activities have familiarized the Faith to many throughout the Gambia. In August 1973 the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir, accompanied by Mr. Ḥusayn Ardikání of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Western Africa, made a brief visit and met with Bahá'ís in Banjul and Churchilltown. In September 1974 and again in June 1976 the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga visited the Gambia. During his visit Mr. Olinga was received by the Acting President, His Excellency Andrew D. Camara, to whom he presented a copy of *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV; was inter-

viewed on Radio Gambia; visited the Temple site and national endowment land; met the friends in a number of centres including the eight villages in Fonyis where local Centres are being built; addressed successful meetings and met with the National Assembly to advise, and orient its efforts to accomplish the goals of the Five Year Plan.

'In December 1974 a successful teaching institute and conference was held at the national Ḥazíratu'l-Quds in Banjul under the sponsorship of the Continental Board of Counsellors with fifty believers attending from Sénégal, Mauritania and the Gambia. The theme of the conference was the significance of the Five Year Plan. A second teacher training institute was held in Banjul a year later to train the friends for village teaching. Forty friends from the Kombo (urban) area attended. The presence of three youth travelling teachers from the United Kingdom enlivened the gathering. As a follow-up measure, the National Spiritual Assembly initiated a correspondence course.

'Other important teaching activities were: a one-day deepening class in Banjul in July 1973; increased classes for Bahá'í children and fuller

participation by women in the affairs of the community; extensive teaching in the vicinity of Mansakonko including a successful public meeting in June 1975 when a meeting of the National Spiritual Assembly coincided with the arrival of Bahá'í visitors from Mauritania and Írán; the opening of new villages in the Fonyis by local believers; the observance of United Nations Day in 1974 and 1975 by the Bahá'ís in Mansakonko; and the influx of more than twenty travelling teachers and visitors to Fonyis and the Kombo and Mansakonko areas.

'Bahá'í women have participated on both the local and national levels and classes for Bahá'í women were established in some areas. During International Women's Year efforts were made to bring the Faith to the attention of greater numbers of women. Mailers were sent to some eighty prominent women in the Gambia and contact was made with the Gambia Women's Federation. In January 1976 the Bahá'ís were represented at the Gambian Government's observance of International Women's Year. In addition, the Bahá'ís arranged a poster display

in the National Library. Women were active in travel teaching in the period under review.

'Youth have assisted in translating for travelling teachers and children's classes. In December 1975 a youth proclamation project was initiated by three young travelling teachers from the United Kingdom. The team addressed seven schools, presented books to libraries, had two radio interviews, arranged a poster display at the National Library and gave a press release to local newspapers.

'Various Bahá'í visitors have been interviewed on National Radio and announcements of Bahá'í activities have been broadcast.

'In June 1973 the national Ḥazíratu'l-Quds was exempted, as a religious building, from tax and subsequently the title deed was transferred from the National Spiritual Assembly of the United Kingdom and registered in the name of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Gambia.¹ On 19 February 1976 a twenty-one year lease for the Temple site at Latrikunda Sabiji was signed

¹ See p. 168.



The first West African (International) Bahá'í Youth Conference, held in Accra, Ghana, 10-13 July 1975, was attended by the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga and 350 youth representing 27 countries.

and registered in the name of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Gambia. This plot is now being fenced and the construction of the regional Bahá'í Centre on a portion of the site is nearing completion. On 5 January 1976 a twenty-one year lease was signed and registered for the national endowment land at Lamin in the name of the National Assembly. Construction of local Bahá'í Centres in eight villages in the Fonyis is nearing completion.

'On 11 February 1976 the National Spiritual Assembly was registered as a religious body. In addition, a model Bahá'í will has been prepared and the friends are invited to file their will with the civil court.

'In retrospect, the past three years have witnessed signs of the growing maturity of the Bahá'í community of the Gambia. Teaching has increased and the local believers are increasingly participating in activities. The number of Local Spiritual Assemblies has increased from seventeen to twenty-three. The recent settlement of two additional pioneers and the influx of travelling teachers has shown what increased manpower can accomplish. Surely with the settlement of the remaining pioneers required in the Five Year Plan and the continued and intensified participation of all the friends the remaining goals of the Five Year Plan will be achieved.'

GHANA

'Ghana was greatly blessed during this three-year period by visits from the Hands of the Cause Enoch Olinga and Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muḥájir whose presence stimulated the believers and encouraged them to scale loftier heights of devotion and service.

'In 1974, for the first time, the public heard of the Faith over the National Television Network when Dr. William Maxwell was interviewed by the director of television. Extracts from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá were read on the late evening "Meditation" series by National Spiritual Assembly member Mr. Joseph Musah over a period of two months. During 1974-1975 a musical programme of songs with Bahá'í themes was presented on television on five occasions by Ghanaian believers, Ranzie and Lorraine Mensah.

'The outstanding event of this period took place in July 1975 when Ghana was privileged to

be host to the first West African Bahá'í Youth Conference, held in Accra. The hand of the Cause of God Enoch Olinga graced the gathering by his presence and there were more than three hundred and fifty participants from twenty-seven countries. For the first time in Accra, posters were displayed all over the city and a series of crowded public meetings was held nightly during and after the conference. Simultaneously, deepening classes were held at the national Centre. Many people declared their belief in Bahá'u'lláh. Following the conference participants travelled to different areas of Ghana and Togo to teach the Faith. The Hand of the Cause, accompanied by some of the Bahá'í youth, was cordially received by the Head of State of Ghana, His Excellency Colonel Ignatius K. Acheampong, who accepted Bahá'í literature. Official recognition of the Bahá'í Faith was obtained in March 1975.¹

'In the following year the visit of Mrs. Meherangiz Munsiff again brought the Faith to the attention of the public. Large-scale proclamation projects were carried out in the south of Ghana, in Cape Coast, Koforidua, Tema and Nsawam. During the entire period 1973-1976 the Faith was proclaimed on a scale hitherto unknown and many people in Ghana, though unaware of its full import, for the first time heard the word "Bahá'í" and learned of the existence of the Faith.'

IVORY COAST, MALI AND UPPER VOLTA

'The community of the Ivory Coast, Mali and Upper Volta entered the Five Year Plan in a state of thrilled anticipation, fortified by their outstanding victories in the teaching field during the Nine Year Plan. The local one year plan, 1973-1974, had been devoted to consolidation of victories; and now the community was rewarded by the exciting news that in the Five Year Plan they were to raise two more pillars of the administrative structure sustaining the Universal House of Justice—the National Spiritual Assemblies of Mali and of Upper Volta. In addition, among the other tasks confronting them, the believers were given the particularly challenging goal of forming Local Spiritual Assemblies in more than half the total localities assigned to them.

¹ See p. 359.

'The friends determined to accomplish all teaching goals by the mid-point of the plan. Mass teaching in the animist regions of the country began to be particularly effective in such areas as Danané and Daloa. The believers responded enthusiastically to the call to dawn prayers; regular devotionals were initiated in over twenty communities. Women were becoming more active in community affairs. Children's classes were begun. By Riḍván 1976 the exciting news was announced: all teaching goals in the Ivory Coast had been achieved and surpassed! The goal of ninety localities was surpassed through the opening of one hundred and forty-seven localities; the goal of forming fifty Local Spiritual Assemblies was exceeded by ten.

'The first phase of our teaching plan having been achieved, the second phase was begun. The teaching goals in Mali and Upper Volta were to be accomplished by 20 October 1976, the anniversary of the birth of the Báb, and the midpoint of the Five Year Plan. As early as January 1975 the goal of opening nineteen localities in Mali had been exceeded by three. Inspired by the announcement of the Universal House of Justice at Riḍván 1976 that the two new National Spiritual Assemblies would be elected at Riḍván 1977 a call went out to the delegates assembled at the national convention in 1976 and the local believers arose to meet the challenge. All international travelling teachers were to be diverted to Mali and Upper Volta and each pioneer pledged teaching time in these areas. Plans were formulated for the holding of an International Youth Conference in Abidjan and the launching of a special teaching project in West Africa.

'Through the unceasing efforts of the Malian believers both the national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds and the Temple site were acquired by the end of 1975. During this same period the national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Ouagadougou, Upper Volta was acquired due in large part to the devoted efforts of the local community. The beautiful Bouaké regional Centre, teaching institute and proclamation hall were completed and were dedicated at the national convention in 1976. In 1975 recognition of the Faith was obtained in Upper Volta.¹

'In the autumn of 1974 Mali and Upper Volta were honoured by the two-month visit of the

Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga. He inspired the believers to launch a project of expansion which became known among the friends as "The Olinga Project". Inaugurated in 1974, on the birthday of the Báb, the project in 1976 was extended to Riḍván 1977, the target date for the formation of the new National Spiritual Assemblies. The inspiring visit of the beloved Hand of the Cause set the stage for the impressive victories which followed.

'The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muḥájir blessed the friends in the Ivory Coast with a brief visit in 1975 on his way to the annual convention of the National Spiritual Assembly of Niger. As a result of his consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly of the Ivory Coast, Mali and Upper Volta a model mass teaching project was launched in Daloa, a recently opened animist region near the centre of the Ivory Coast. The results were unprecedented: in less than a year more than sixteen Local Spiritual Assemblies were formed and the new believers had assumed responsibility for teaching, forming new Local Assemblies, holding children's classes, Nineteen Day Feasts and Holy Day observances, and propagating the Faith throughout the region.

'The believers of the three-country area are ready to enter the second half of the Five Year Plan with high enthusiasm, their hearts firmly fixed on surpassing each and every goal in their fervent desire to serve the Blessed Beauty.'

LIBERIA AND GUINEA

'Over the past few years the Bahá'í community of Liberia has succeeded more in the field of proclamation activities than in any other field. The impact created by the Continental Conference held in Monrovia in January 1971² has been sustained by a number of projects which have attracted increasingly widespread public attention to the Faith and its teachings. While this increased public attention has not resulted in any dramatic increase in enrolments in the Faith, it has prepared the ground for the success of the suggestions offered by the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muḥájir which are being implemented with a gratifying degree of success by the National Spiritual Assembly. Many people in the urban areas of Liberia immediately express a familiarity with the name "Bahá'í Faith".

¹ See p. 358.

² See *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, pp. 296-316, 318.

'Prominent among the proclamation activities that have made and are making a significant impact are:

'1. A weekly television epilogue, each Wednesday evening. Many local Bahá'ís and travelling teachers and visitors have appeared on this programme in Monrovia.

'2. A sympathetic relationship has been established with the key personnel of the broadcasting station. This has resulted in Bahá'í guests being readily accepted for interviews on radio and television. During his recent visit to Monrovia, Dr. Muhájir was interviewed on television and showed slides of the Holy Land during the broadcast.

'3. In 1974, on the occasion of national Independence Day, the Bahá'ís of Liberia were accorded a cordial interview with His Excellency Dr. William R. Tolbert, Jr., President of Liberia, at his official residence in Gbarnga. In the presence of high-ranking officials of Government and parliamentarians, His Excellency graciously accepted a copy of *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV. The event received press coverage and a news item which appeared the following day in the Ministry of Information's official press bulletin quoted President Tolbert as saying that the volume would be placed in a "special corner" of his library. On the same occasion the Ambassador of Guinea pledged his country's friendship and consented to being photographed with representatives of the National Spiritual Assembly.

'4. The Bahá'ís of Monrovia were very actively involved in activities relating to International Women's year in 1975. A United Nations Day programme was sponsored by the Bahá'ís in the United States Information Service auditorium during which, in addition to a talk, two Bahá'í films were shown.

'5. Mrs. Meherangiz Munsiff, a travelling teacher from the United Kingdom who visited Liberia in 1975, made a considerable impact on members of the public through a public meeting, three lectures at high schools, a lecture at the university and through interviews on radio and television during which she spoke about International Women's Year and the principles of the Bahá'í Faith as related to the role of women.

'At the half-way point of the Five Year Plan there has been witnessed a forward surge of teaching engendered by the visit of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Muhájir. The enthusiasm, zeal

and dedication which the friends are currently devoting to the teaching work hold a bright promise and the rewarding results which are already being recorded may very well be attributed to the gradual effects of sustained preparatory proclamation activities in the previous years.'

NIGER

'The first pioneers of the Faith arrived in Niger in 1966. When the Five Year Plan was launched, Niger was under the jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly of Dahomey (Benin), Togo and Niger which had its seat in Cotonou, Benin. At Riḍván 1975, nine years after the first pioneers settled in the country, Niger was granted the privilege of electing its own National Spiritual Assembly, with its seat in Niamey. A new page was turned in the history of the Faith in Niger, for with administrative independence the activities of the Faith were conducted more easily.

'At Riḍván 1976 Niger has a community of approximately 600 Bahá'ís out of a population of 4,500,000; about two-thirds of the believers embraced the Faith within the last four years and the community is composed mainly of youth. With the appointment of two very important national committees, youth and teaching, a burgeoning of activities became evident.

'The National Teaching Committee has organized weekly programmes under which teaching trips are made and isolated localities are visited; it also organizes, on a regular basis, institutes and deepening classes. The National Youth Committee directs widely diversified activities such as exhibitions, conferences in various localities throughout the country, social outings such as picnics which attract a considerable number of sympathizers of the Faith, slide programmes and fellowship evenings.

'At the first national convention the Bahá'í community of Niger had the privilege of being assisted by the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir, the representative of the Universal House of Justice. One year later the community was honoured by the presence of the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga. Dr. Mihdí Samandarí, Mrs. Thelma Khelghati and Mr. Zekrollah Kazemi, of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Western Africa, were also welcome guests in the period under review. A number of travelling teachers from various

countries have effectively contributed to the progress of the Bahá'í Faith in Niger.

'The number of Local Spiritual Assemblies in Niger is rather unstable due to the frequency with which the many Bahá'ís who are civil servants are transferred in the course of their employment. Although the community is lagging in forming the requisite number of Local Spiritual Assemblies it has succeeded in opening to the Faith more than half the number of localities required to be opened during the Five Year Plan. A national Centre has been acquired in Niamey, the capital, as called for in the plan and a national endowment has been secured. The second city of the country enjoys a local Centre and a local endowment, both acquired in 1976.

'The National Spiritual Assembly has appointed a Home Committee which regularly organizes activities for Bahá'í women and children. The appointment of a Translation Committee has resulted in the translation of some Bahá'í prayers into Dyerma (Djerma) and Hausa (Hausa), two main languages of the country.

'Confronted at the national convention in 1976 with a recognition that achievement of the Five Year Plan goals required a renewed sense of urgency, the National Spiritual Assembly developed a six-month project designed to correct the deficiencies. The results of this programme which is to extend from May to October 1976 are awaited with hope.'

NIGERIA

'During the course of the Nine Year Plan, Nigeria was engulfed in civil war which had a negative effect on the progress of the Faith. Towards the end of that plan, which coincided with the termination of the disturbances, many assigned goals were accomplished. A large number of pioneers had left when the Five Year Plan started and the number of functioning Local Spiritual Assemblies became very low. In the opening phase of the Five Year Plan the National Assembly had the difficult task of simultaneously revitalizing Local Spiritual Assemblies while pursuing vigorously the winning of the goals of the new plan.

'The visits of the Hands of the Cause of God had a beneficial and lasting effect in generating enthusiasm and stimulating the friends to assume more responsibilities and rise to new

heights of service. In 1974 the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga visited Nigeria, accompanied by Mrs. Olinga. He was able to travel throughout the country visiting many communities. The highlight of his visit was an interview which was published by one of the most popular and well-circulated daily newspapers.

'The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir also visited Nigeria, in May 1974 and again in May 1975. During his first visit he was able to meet with some of the National Spiritual Assembly members and other Bahá'í friends in Lagos. His brief visit on that occasion had a great impact on the friends. During his second visit, which was longer, he was able to visit more Bahá'ís.

'The Continental Board of Counsellors in Western Africa held several of their meetings in Nigeria and the Counsellors visited some communities. On several occasions the National Spiritual Assembly enjoyed the benefit of direct consultation with the Counsellors.

'Many international travelling teachers visited Bahá'í communities in Nigeria during this period. These friends who came from Portugal, Canada, Benin, the United States and the United Kingdom contributed considerably to the achievement of our goals. In addition, a group of Persian youth who had participated in the International Youth Conference in Ghana in July 1975 spent a week in Nigeria and visited some localities. For the first time in the history of the Faith in Nigeria the believers attended a Bahá'í conference beyond the confines of the country; the Ghana International Youth Conference was attended by a delegation of thirty-three Bahá'ís from Nigeria.

'The National Teaching Conferences held in 1974 and 1975 were among the activities specifically embarked upon in conjunction with the Five Year Plan. The first one was held in Aba and the second in Umuahia. Acting upon instructions from the Universal House of Justice the election in 1975 of delegates to the national convention took place through unit conventions. This was a great experience for the friends, many of whom had never before had the opportunity of participating in national conventions or of becoming familiar with the process of Bahá'í consultation in large gatherings.

'In the period under review prayers were translated into Tiv, Yoruba and Ibo and a



Second Regional Youth Conference, Taiama, Sierr Leone; 26-28 March 1976.

general increase in the efficiency and organization of national committees was noted.'

SIERRA LEONE

'In 1972 Sierra Leone was under the jurisdiction of the regional National Spiritual Assembly of West Africa. At the outset of the Five Year Plan the National Assembly of West Africa assigned a number of the teaching and expansion goals for Sierra Leone to its National Teaching Committee based in that country. The National Teaching Committee was also instructed to secure the incorporation of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Freetown and to commence work on the acquisition of the national Ḥazíratu'l-Quds, local Ḥazíratu'l-Quds and to achieve other property goals.

'In July 1974 a Bahá'í youth, Mr. Augustine Conteh, undertook travelling teaching in three communities. In November 1974 youth were also involved in a National Teaching Committee project which was designed to stimulate enthusiasm and foster understanding of the Five Year Plan through visits to the Local Spiritual Assemblies. This process was reinforced in June 1975 through the holding of a conference in Bo for Auxiliary Board members which had the Five Year Plan as its central theme.

'The first National Teaching Conference was held in Bo in February 1975 under the sponsorship of the National Teaching Committee. It was at this conference that the friends were informed that Sierra Leone would form its National Spiritual Assembly at Riḍván 1975. When the first national convention was held in Sierra Leone at Riḍván 1975 the report of the National Teaching Committee reflected, among other things, that the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies had increased from five to seven, the number of groups had increased by one and the number of localities by two.

'The Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga represented the Universal House of Justice at the inaugural convention for the election of the first National Spiritual Assembly of Sierra Leone. Mr. Olinga consulted with the newly-elected National Assembly, the Local Spiritual Assembly of Freetown and in addition to meeting with the believers on two occasions did some teaching work in Hastings and Goderich.

'The new National Spiritual Assembly set out immediately to consider the suggestions of the National Teaching Committee, the recommendations of the convention, and to make plans concerning goals for the second year of the Five Year Plan.

'Two successful regional Youth Conferences

were held, the first at Makeni, Northern Province, in October 1975; the second at Taiama in March 1976. A programme related to International Women's Year was held at the Teacher's College for Women in Port Loko in November 1975. The visit in August 1975 of Mrs. Meherangiz Munsiff of the United Kingdom contributed immensely to the proclamation of International Women's Year. She met with several prominent local women and had a radio interview on a women's programme entitled "Mainly for Women".

'The use of mass media has increased during the Five Year Plan. Bahá'ís have appeared on two television programmes as well as being interviewed on radio on a number of occasions. The Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga was interviewed following the 1975 convention. Auxiliary Board member Mrs. H. Vera Edwards, together with other Bahá'ís, was interviewed on radio following the 1976 convention. As a result of the interviewer suggesting that the Bahá'ís have a regular programme on radio and television, the Publicity Committee is attempting to develop suitable materials for a weekly radio programme and spot announcements.

'A compilation of relatively short selections from the sacred Writings is in process of being translated into Mende. Members of two tribes, not previously represented in the Cause, embraced the Faith in 1976 namely, the Yalunka and Koranko tribes of the Koinadugu district in the Northern Province.

'Characteristic trends of the period were observed mainly in three areas: first, a marked increase in participation in the teaching effort by local believers; secondly, an upsurge of interest in the Faith mainly among literate people resulting from proclamation activities; and, thirdly, greater interest on the part of women and increased enrolments among them. Generally, youth were involved in almost every aspect of the work of the Five Year Plan.'

TOGO

'The period from Ríḍván 1973 to Ríḍván 1976 was one of intense activity for the Bahá'ís of Togo. Many significant accomplishments were recorded including the formation of the first National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Togo; the winning of a series of teaching

victories resulting in the establishment of the Faith in every region of the country and increasing greatly the number of its adherents; the holding of several major conferences and institutes; the achievement of most of the major property goals of the Five Year Plan; and the witnessing of a vast increase in the participation of local believers in the teaching and administrative work of the Cause.

'During these three years Togo had the extreme bounty to receive several visits from the Hands of the Cause of God. Mr. Enoch Olinga and his wife visited Togo for several days in September 1974, and Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir made three brief but deeply appreciated visits, in September 1973, June 1974 and April 1975. Each of these visits breathed new life into the members of the Togolese Bahá'í community, stirred them to greater service and strengthened their resolve. Indeed, many of the goals achieved are due in part to the loving inspiration of these distinguished Hands.

'At Ríḍván 1975 the Bahá'ís of Togo rejoiced at the formation of the first National Spiritual Assembly. Togo had formerly been under the jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Dahomey (Benin), Togo and Niger. The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir represented the Universal House of Justice on this joyous occasion. More than sixty delegates and observers from throughout Togo witnessed with justifiable pride the birth of this new divine institution, the formation of which marked the coming of age of the Bahá'í community of Togo. Its seat is in Lomé.

'In the period covered by this survey the Bahá'ís of Togo helped organize two international teaching conferences. The first, held in July 1974 in Lomé, brought together more than seventy-five believers from six countries and sparked a wave of teaching throughout Togo. The second was the historic International Youth Conference held in Accra in neighbouring Ghana in July 1975. This conference was originally scheduled to take place in Lomé but because of unforeseen circumstances the locale had to be transferred to Accra on short notice. This turn of events brought unexpected benefits. Not only were better physical facilities obtained than could have been found in Lomé but also the Togolese and Ghanaian National Spiritual Assemblies, who co-sponsored the conference, were able to work together on a common inter-

Assembly project which helped greatly to cement the unity of the Bahá'ís of the two regions. The Accra conference, attended by the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga and almost four hundred believers from twenty-seven countries, was a tremendous stimulus to the teaching work throughout West Africa.

'In Togo, teaching groups from Belgium, Írán, Switzerland and the United States teamed with local believers and pioneers and spread throughout the country winning great victories. The extreme north of Togo, hitherto almost virgin to the Faith, was conquered through the opening of six new localities and the enrolling of more than seventy-five new believers. Simultaneously, different projects were launched in the south and centre of Togo, also with good results. Other teaching activities too numerous to mention were held during these three years, the overall result being that the number of Bahá'ís in Togo more than doubled and the Faith became solidly established in every region of the country. Considerable progress was also made in deepening the knowledge of the old and new believers and in establishing the basic foundation of local Bahá'í community life. One rewarding result of this process was the increase in the number of African believers serving in the teaching and administrative fields.

'Any summary of Bahá'í activity in Togo during this period would be incomplete if mention were not made of achievements in relation to the important property goals of the Five Year Plan. The national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds was acquired in March 1975 and dedicated on the anniversary of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh. In addition, the site of the future House of Worship, a national endowment and the land for a regional Centre were all acquired.

'Other important activities during these three years included the publication of a selection of Bahá'í prayers in Ewe, in collaboration with the National Spiritual Assembly of Ghana; the co-operation of the Bahá'í community with the local United Nations Information Bureau on two occasions; the presentation of Bahá'í literature to prominent personalities; the appearance of a full-page feature article on the Faith in the national newspaper *Togo Presse*; the enrolment in the Faith of several village Chiefs; the publication of a brief French-language teaching brochure designed for mass distribution; the holding of several one-day regional

deepening institutes, a national deepening institute in Lomé in June 1973, and a national teaching conference in Lomé in December 1975; and the modest beginning made on several occasions to initiate women's activities and increase their participation in the Cause.

'This three-year period culminated at Naw-Rúz 1976 with the appointment of Mrs. Thelma Khelghati as a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Western Africa.¹ The entire Bahá'í community of Togo took pride in the honour accorded one who had contributed so greatly to the achievement of these victories.'

UPPER WEST AFRICA

'After the establishment of the National Spiritual Assembly of The Gambia at Riḍván 1975, the National Spiritual Assembly of Upper West Africa was elected comprising under its jurisdiction the territories of Sénégal, Mauritania, Guinea Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands and with its seat in Dakar, Sénégal. The Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga represented the Universal House of Justice at the inaugural convention on 25 April 1975.

'Many significant events occurred in 1975. A national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds for Sénégal was acquired in Dakar and this structure rapidly became the centre of all Bahá'í activities for that area. Gatherings for dawn prayers were held there once each week; a weekly teaching and deepening class was initiated; and a national Bahá'í library was established, thus making it easier for the friends to study the Writings of the Faith.

'After many months of patient and sustained effort on the part of Dr. 'Azíz Navídí recognition of the Faith was achieved in Sénégal in 1975 when the Faith was registered as an association under the name "The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Sénégal".

'Several international travelling teachers visited Sénégal and Mauritania during this period and aided in the teaching work. We record with appreciation the visit of Mr. Olinga to Mauritania following the national convention in 1975. This visit enabled him to see at first hand the problems which arise in relation to teaching in Mauritania and he was thus able to proffer very valuable advice.

¹ Letter from the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies, Naw-Rúz 1976.

'Thirty-seven believers gathered in Dakar for three days in December 1975 to participate in the first National Teaching Conference.

'On 29 March 1976 the first local Centre was acquired and dedicated in M'Bidieum, Sénégal. On 21 March of that year the first issue appeared of the Bahá'í bulletin of Upper West Africa entitled *Naw-Rúz*. The bulletin contains not only international and national news but deepening materials including previously unavailable selections from the Bahá'í Writings, outlines of Bahá'í history and editorials related to principles of the Faith.

'By Riḍván 1976 the number of Local

Spiritual Assemblies had increased to twenty—five more than existed at Riḍván 1975—and in the same period the number of localities opened to the Faith increased from twenty-eight to fifty-three. Efforts have been initiated to increase participation by Bahá'í women and a class for children is held in Dakar attended by Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í children. It is our hope that through the dispersal of the friends from the Dakar area, through the arrival of pioneers and through improved conditions external to the Faith in Mauritania, greater progress will soon be made toward fulfilling our teaching goals.'

B. THE AMERICAS

In the period under review, no new National Spiritual Assemblies were formed in the Americas. The progress of the Faith in the territories within the jurisdictions of the thirty National Assemblies which existed there at Riḍván 1976 is described below, the national communities being set out under the three zones established as the spheres of service of the Continental Boards of Counsellors, namely:

- Central America
- North America
- South America

Central America

BARBADOS AND THE WINDWARD ISLANDS

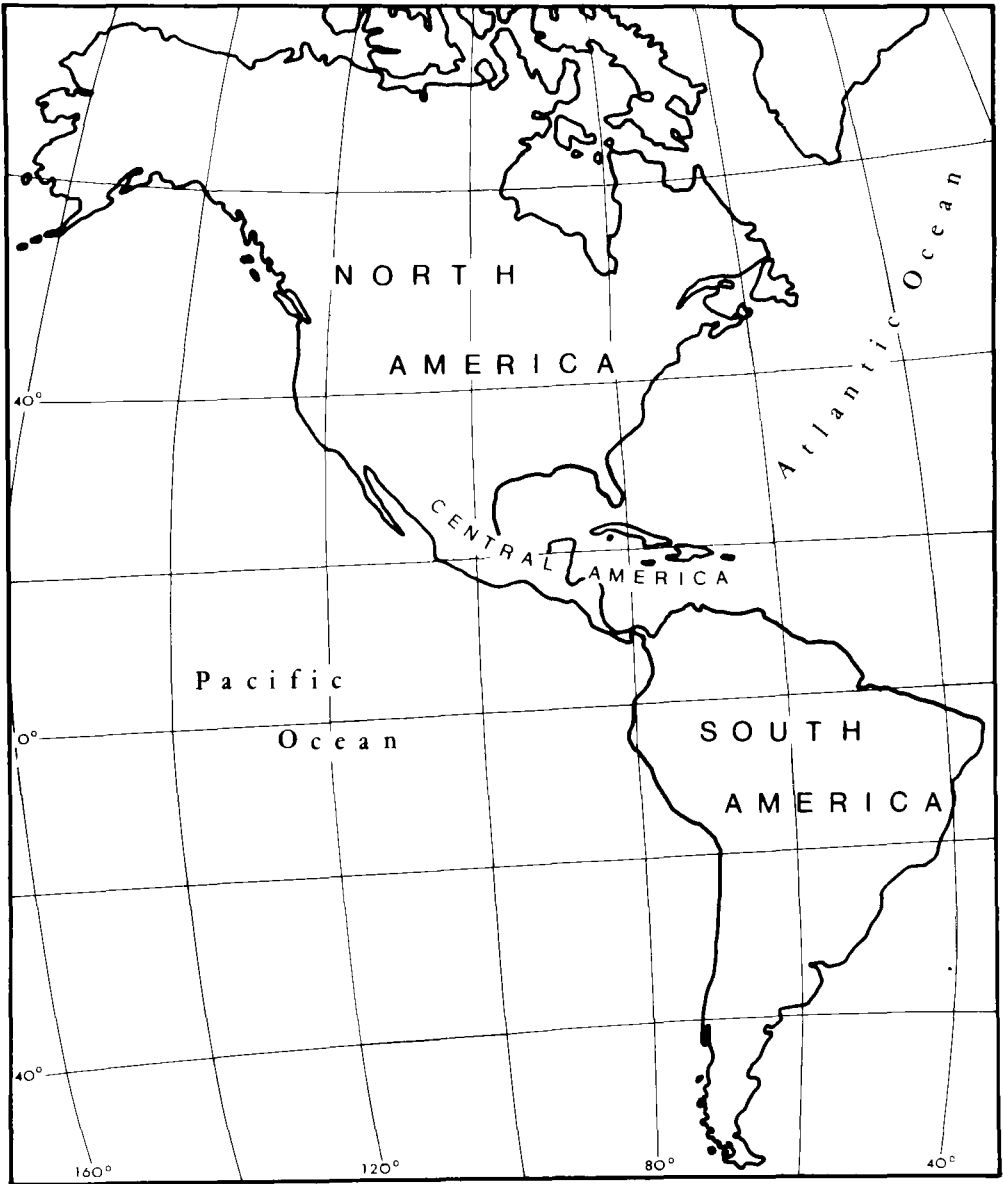
'The year 1973 was highlighted by the visits of the Hand of the Cause Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá, and Mrs. Carmen de Burafato, Mr. Rowland Estall and Mr. Artemus Lamb of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Central America. Mr. Estall also visited Grenada and St. Vincent where he met the friends. While in St. Vincent he presented Bahá'í books to Premier Mitchell.

'Significant activities in 1973 include the satellite conference in August and a nine-day teacher training course in December, both held at Martin's Bay, St. John, Barbados.

'The National Spiritual Assembly acquired its national Ḥazíratu'l-Quds in Bridgetown, Barbados in April 1974 with the assistance of the

National Spiritual Assembly of Canada. The first resident Auxiliary Board member was appointed—Miss Shirley Ann Yarbrough—and Dominica was added to the territory of the National Spiritual Assembly. In the summer of 1974 the friends of Barbados welcomed the Hand of the Cause Jalál Kházeḥ on his first visit to the area. The first Bahá'í wedding in the national area took place in St. Vincent in the month of June when Allister Phillips and Evelyn McFay were married. A Bahá'í correspondence course was initiated in July 1974 and in September another "first" was registered when the Bahá'í youth organized and conducted a Bahá'í youth meeting at the national Centre. The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muḥájir and Counsellor Estall visited Barbados in November 1974. The following month a National Teaching Conference was held in St. Vincent, attended by Mr. Artemus Lamb of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Central America.

'One of the goals of the Five Year Plan for this area was achieved in 1975 through the purchase of ten acres of land for use as a Temple site in St. Lucy, Barbados. Other significant events which occurred in 1975 include the visit of the Hand of the Cause John Robarts who conducted a two-day deepening institute in Barbados; the appointment in February of the first two assistants to the Auxiliary Board member; the formation of a Bahá'í Youth Club in St. Vincent in February and in Barbados in April; the arrival of Mrs. Hazel Lovelace, an Indian believer from Alaska, who launched a two-month teaching



project in Newbury, St. George, which attracted a number of young people to the Faith, before continuing her travelling teaching in St. Vincent and Union Island; the holding of a National Teaching Conference at the national Centre in Barbados in July; the attendance of Bahá'ís from Barbados at the teaching conference called by the Continental Board of Counsellors and held in Antigua in August; the presentation by Bahá'ís of Barbados of a copy of *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* to Mas Clam, the Carib Indian

Chief of Dominica thus fulfilling another Five Year Plan goal; the passing in November 1975 of Mrs. Elsie Snyder, the first pioneer to die at her post in Barbados; the first visit to Barbados, Grenada, St. Vincent and Dominica of Mr. Paul Lucas of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Central America; and the incorporation of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of St. Michael, Barbados, the first Local Assembly to achieve incorporation in this national area.

'In a cablegram dated 15 April 1975 the



Universal House of Justice approved the recommendation of the National Assembly that its name be changed from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Windward Islands to the National Spiritual Assembly of Barbados and the Windward Islands to facilitate the National Assembly's efforts to secure recognition by Act of Parliament.

'In April 1976 Cora Oliver visited Barbados and Grenada as a travelling teacher. The national convention in 1976 was held in St. Vincent. It was the first time that this event took place outside Barbados since the formation of the National Spiritual Assembly. In attendance was Mr. Alfred Osborne of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Central America and friends from Grenada, Barbados and Dominica.'

BELIZE

'The period from 1973 to 1976 has seen much acceleration in the teaching and deepening work in Belize. We have been twice blessed with the guidance and spiritual impetus resulting from visits of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir. His three-day visit in February 1975 was utilized to the fullest extent, beginning with a reception at the leading hotel the night of his arrival attended by almost one hundred specially invited guests including the Mayor of Belize City, a member of the National House of Representatives and many other prominent persons who had never before attended a Bahá'í public function.

'Dr. Muhájir, whose arrival and activities were broadcast on radio news programmes

several times, was interviewed on the radio station whose programmes are heard throughout the country; spoke in the high schools of Belize city; consulted with the National Spiritual Assembly; met the friends from various areas at a national conference at the Enoch Olinga Institute at Blackman Eddy; met the Bahá'ís at Belmopan and proceeded to Stann Creek Town (now called Dangriga) for a one-day school.

'In March 1976 Dr. Muhájir again gave us two precious days during which he attracted over a hundred Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís to a very successful public meeting at the most prestigious hotel, once more spoke in high schools and, in consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly, outlined a special teaching plan for 1976 in which the remaining goals of the Five Year Plan were to be phased over the time remaining. This project was discussed and launched at two teaching conferences and teams were appointed to carry it out.

'Belize has also had the valuable assistance of a flow of travelling teachers from the United States, Canada, Mexico, Jamaica and Honduras and has welcomed the arrival of eleven new pioneers from Írán, Canada and the United States.

'Deepening the believers has been the paramount goal during this period as well as the development of functioning Local Spiritual Assemblies. These twin processes were initiated in November 1973 with ten days of continuous and regular classes held in different villages of the Western district, to prepare the local believers to become independent teachers. Two teacher training institutes were also held in that year.

'One national and three regional teaching conferences were held during 1974 and 1975, the latter for the purpose of launching the Five Year Plan. Since 1973, many one-day schools, institutes, deepening classes and public meetings have been held in various parts of the country; and a correspondence course and national Bahá'í bulletin have been sent periodically to all English-speaking believers.

'In February 1974 the quarterly meeting of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Central America was held in Belize City; and we have since had individual visits from Counsellors Alfred Osborne, Rowland Estall, Paul Lucas and Artemus Lamb. The Enoch Olinga Institute, the acquisition of which was one of the goals of the Nine Year Plan, was completed in the period under review; it was dedicated in October 1973 by Counsellor Alfred Osborne at a national teaching conference.

'Excellent publicity was obtained both in press and on radio for all local Bahá'í events. The monthly Bahá'í radio programme "The Bahá'í Viewpoint" which was initiated before the end of the Nine Year Plan was presented on a weekly basis beginning early in 1974 and broadcast throughout the country.

'During this period we achieved incorporation of the Local Spiritual Assemblies of Stann Creek Town (Dangriga) and San Ignacio, bringing to six the total of incorporated Local Spiritual Assemblies.

'Lessons for Bahá'í children have been distributed to believers in many villages who volunteered to conduct children's classes; many are functioning in different parts of the country. Activities for youth and women have lagged but a beginning has been made and we are concentrating on increasing projects in these fields.

'At Riḍván 1973 there were twenty-four Local Spiritual Assemblies and the Faith had been established in ninety-three localities; by Riḍván 1976 these figures had increased to thirty-six and one hundred and twenty, respectively. In 1975 we achieved the goal of sending a pioneer to Islas de la Bahía. The diversity of the Bahá'í community has been enriched through the enrolment in the Toledo district of Bahá'ís of East Indian background. We are in process of securing land for one district Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds and an adjacent piece of land for an endowment, and are investigating and negotiating for

property in various villages for use as both Centres and endowments.

'The most characteristic trend of the period has been the enrolment of believers in outlying districts and small villages, rather than solely in the capital and Belize City, resulting in a considerable increase in the number of Bahá'ís in the community.'

COSTA RICA

'During the year 1974-1975 the National Spiritual Assembly devoted itself to strengthening the bonds of affection and unity between itself and the local communities and to stimulating and encouraging the friends, particularly those in outlying areas, by visiting a number of centres as a body and simultaneously participating in proclamation projects sponsored in those areas, using the films *El Alba* and *Paso a Paso*. In addition, to prepare the friends of the Meseta Central for greater participation in the teaching work, the National Assembly arranged to hold a monthly "Unity Feast" for the six Local Assemblies and two groups concerned, each community in rotation being responsible for the meetings which were held in the national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds with the full membership of the National Assembly in attendance. The success of this year-long endeavour was reflected in the increasing seriousness of the discussion, the resultant deepening and the stimulation of the desire of the friends to work together.

'Toward the end of 1973 a beautiful plot of land, more than one hectare in size, was acquired in Belén de Carrillo, Guanacaste, as the site of a permanent institute. A member of the National Spiritual Assembly agreed to design, plan and later direct the construction which commenced in February 1974. It has gradually been developed as a permanent institute and a large number of conferences and teaching institutes have been held there.

'During the year 1975-1976 activities of the type inaugurated the year before were continued but on a wider scale, extending to the regional level. Native believers went to the rural zones to assist in the consolidation work and the deepening of believers who had embraced the Faith years ago during a teaching project but who had not had sufficient knowledge and training to function as community members. This work was not as effective as was desired, although there were some positive results. The



Bahá'í children's class, Costa Rica; 1975.

teaching and deepening of women and children was intensified through the appointment of a Domestic National Teaching Committee and through the holding of conferences and teaching institutes.

'The National Assembly met with partial success in correcting its membership records for believers in the rural zones—a difficult task because of the extreme mobility of the farming population—but the verification achieved provided an opportunity to evaluate more realistically the situation of rural believers.

'In December 1975 a Central-American Summer School was held with one representative of the Continental Board of Counsellors and two Auxiliary Board members in attendance, as well as believers from Panama, Nicaragua, Honduras and Costa Rica.

'The work of the National Assembly was intensive that year; thirty-eight two-day meetings were held. We were honoured by a visit from the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir who worked closely with the National Assembly on teaching plans for the year 1976. During the second half of 1975 much work was done in laying a firm foundation for the year 1976.

'The visits of native teachers to rural areas were intensified during 1976 with the result that many communities were strengthened and

some that had never functioned on an organized basis began to operate effectively. The communities of the Central Plateau were considerably strengthened with the intention of developing the believers to serve as travelling teachers. The teaching of children was also intensified, as far as possible, especially in the rural zones. Specific goals were assigned to some rural communities, not only in their own localities but in outside regions where they have been encouraged to aid Bahá'í groups to become Local Spiritual Assemblies.

'Proclamation of the Faith continued through expanded use of mass media and particularly through the showing of the film *The Green Light Expedition* which has already been shown in a number of provinces including all the Central Plateau, and in universities, colleges, schools, community halls, the theatre of a small village, and in a municipal gymnasium. Efforts are now being made to have it projected on television. The Proclamation and Public Relations Committee has presented Bahá'í literature to the Governors of the provinces of San José, Cartago, Alajuela, Heredia and Guanacaste.

'Two travelling teaching projects have been completed in Panama, of one and three months' duration respectively; two in Honduras, of one month and three weeks respectively; and one of one week in Nicaragua. Two pioneers settled in

the Artemus Lamb Institute in Guanacaste and a Costa Rican pioneer spent some time in Nicaragua.

'Local Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds have been acquired in Mojocito, Cohen, Sotki and Alto Uren in the Province of Limón in the Talamanca region; steps have been taken to acquire a Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Desamparados, in the Province of San José; local endowments have been secured in Quepos and Térraba in the Province of Puntarenas, and in Nambí in the Province of Guanacaste. The goal that is giving us the most difficulty is the acquisition of Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds and, above all, of endowments; but we are confident that Bahá'u'lláh will help us to achieve the goal.

'In the period under review, to date, we have welcomed more than three hundred new believers into the Faith.'

CUBA

'Bahá'í activities in Cuba are restricted by legal limitations since, according to the laws of our country, they cannot take place outside the precincts of the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Havana.

'In spite of our modest number, the believers make great efforts to reflect in their daily lives, in their jobs and social contact, a high-minded Bahá'í spirit and a rectitude of conduct which win them the respect and admiration of everyone.'

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

'This national community has been blessed by the visits of two Hands of the Cause. Mr. Jalál Kházeḥ came in mid-1974 to orient the National Spiritual Assembly to the Five Year Plan. Mr. John Roberts arrived in late January 1975 and held valued consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly. Both these beloved Hands were able to meet with the friends and give them spiritual comfort, stimulus and joy.

'All five members of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Central America visited the Dominican Republic during this period, participating in conventions and conferences, consulting with the National Assembly and visiting local communities. The Counsellors named Mr. Regino Pepín a member of the Auxiliary Board for protection of the Faith in 1973; he has since designated five assistants.

'The Dominican Bahá'ís can be proud of their international travelling teaching activity. A

member of the National Assembly travelled to Venezuela and Puerto Rico in 1974, and he and his wife visited the same countries in 1975. Six other believers made teaching trips to Puerto Rico during this period.

'Travelling teachers have come to this country from North America and Puerto Rico. Mention must be made of five North American youth who visited us in the summer of 1974 as members of a summer youth project sponsored by the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States. After a brief training session they were divided into two groups which travelled in different regions. For a part of their tour they were accompanied by a Dominican Bahá'í girl from Santo Domingo. Their presence was inspiring to many and especially valuable was the constant example of their lives, joyful and informed with spirituality and moral principles.

'In addition to numerous national conferences, frequent one-day local and regional institutes were held to train Local Spiritual Assembly members, travelling teachers and others. There have also been several local Bahá'í women's conferences in different towns.

'Two publications were produced during the period under study, a revised edition of the booklet *Primeros Pasos en la Fe Bahá'í* (First Steps in the Bahá'í Faith) which is sent to every new believer, and a small and inexpensive introductory pamphlet.

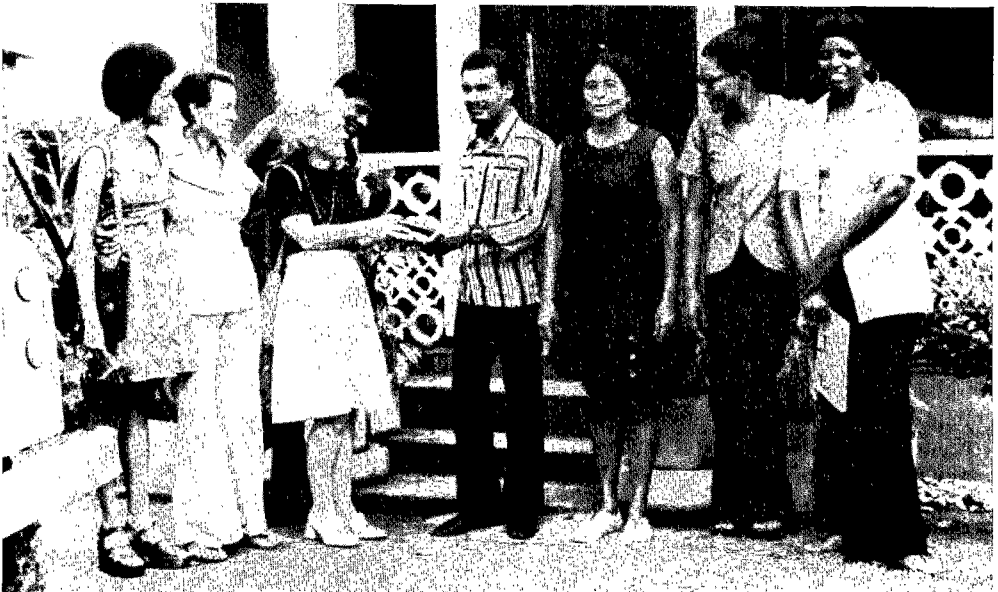
'There are regular children's classes in four localities (one a group) and some other communities hold them intermittently; all are the spontaneous responses of Local Spiritual Assemblies or individuals to the known needs of the developing community. The National Child Education Committee is striving to prepare and disseminate materials and to encourage communities to take up the responsibility of establishing classes for children.

'The first local endowment in the country was acquired early in 1976 in Santo Domingo through the sacrificial contribution of a piece of land by a Bahá'í couple of that community.

'There has been a significant movement among the friends toward undertaking personal goals. A number of Local Spiritual Assemblies have shown progress toward maturity; in many cases this is the result of the increased regularity of visits by travelling teachers which itself arises from the undertaking of personal goals by the friends. Another notable trend is that women of



Bahá'í children's class, Moca, Dominican Republic; 1975.



Presentation of The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh to Mas Clam (centre), Carib Indian Chief, Dominica, by a teaching team under the direction of the National Spiritual Assembly of Barbados and the Windward Islands; August, 1975. Auxiliary Board member Shirley Yarbrough is seen on the extreme right.

all social classes are becoming increasingly strong and effective Bahá'í teachers.'

EL SALVADOR

'Coming a year after the successful conclusion of the Nine Year Plan in which this energetic community sextupled the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies, the Five Year Plan presented us with a new kind of challenge. Not only were the fifty-four Local Spiritual Assemblies to be increased to one hundred, and the localities from two hundred and ten to two hundred and sixty, but we were to acquire twenty local *Ḥazíratu'l-Quds* and twenty-five local endowment properties. El Salvador was also given the task of assisting its sister communities of Guatemala and Nicaragua with pioneers and travelling teachers and helping all the countries in the area with the development of the use of mass media, especially radio, in proclamation and teaching.

'In the first year of the plan this community was requested by the Continental Board of Counsellors in Central America to host two international conferences. The first was blessed with the presence of the Hand of the Cause *Abu'l-Qásim Faízí* and was attended by four Counsellors, members of the Auxiliary Board, the representatives of nine National Spiritual Assemblies and approximately one hundred and fifty other believers from twelve countries who met for three days in July 1974. The second, held in December of that year, was an International Youth Conference at which two Counsellors and approximately seventy-five youth from eight countries conferred on how youth could deepen their resolve and strengthen their Bahá'í character. In February 1976 a conference was held in observance of International Women's Year attended by Bahá'í women from six countries and representing many walks of life. Several outstanding women who are active in public life in El Salvador attended a special reception and some of the conference sessions; many expressed their admiration of the efforts of the Bahá'ís to achieve recognition of the principle of equality of the sexes. The Continental Board of Counsellors, which co-sponsored these events with the National Spiritual Assembly of El Salvador, expressed its satisfaction with the success of all three conferences.

'This community has established one pioneer

in each of the two countries assigned, and has sent eight travelling teaching teams beyond its borders.

'A well-equipped sound studio has been set up and a very creative committee is producing materials for radio which are made available to other countries of this area. A systematic plan of radio teaching has been in effect in El Salvador since early 1976 and we have been asked by the Universal House of Justice to serve as a clearing-house and distribution centre for radio materials for all Latin America.

'The community has established good relations with the authorities, especially the Ministry of Education, which requested that Bahá'í literature be provided to supervisors of education for the purpose of orienting them in a suitable approach to the teaching of comparative religion. The National Spiritual Assembly donated one hundred and thirty books to the ministry for this purpose. Bahá'í speakers have been readily accepted for talks in the national high schools and have conferred with the educational planners of the Government. On the significant date 12 November 1975, the anniversary of Bahá'u'lláh's birth, representatives of the National Spiritual Assembly were granted a cordial thirty-minute interview by His Excellency President Colonel Arturo Armando Molina Barraza of El Salvador to whom Bahá'í literature was presented.

'The teaching and proclamation activities of the community have been such that the name "Bahá'í Faith" is now quite well known. Five factors have contributed greatly to the teaching and consolidation work:

'1. The launching of intensive, short-term, dynamic campaigns. The value of these projects was demonstrated during the two visits to the country of the Hand of the Cause Dr. *Rahmatu'lláh Muhájir*. In one three-day period twelve outstanding teaching events were arranged and carried out; these included public talks, addresses in high schools, radio presentations, interviews with educators and meetings with the believers and their friends.

'2. The creation of four regional teaching and consolidation committees under the supervision of the National Teaching Committee makes it easier to serve the five regions and to cover much more intensively the many communities. On any given weekend there might be four or five proclamation meetings, six or eight towns



Participants in first institute in El Salvador sponsored by the Central American Counsellors to discuss the institutions of the Bahá'í Faith. The Counsellors were represented by Mr. Artemus Lamb (second from right). Auxiliary Board member Naomi Dreyer is seen on the extreme left with her assistants (left to right) Sr. José Francisco Oliva, Sra. Lidia Montecinos, Srta. Anna Hilda Rosales, Sr. Carlos Rodriguez, Sr. Antonio Reyes; 1975.

visited, several deepening institutes conducted and between thirty and sixty new believers enrolled. Although this programme is demanding it has resulted in an increased involvement by new believers in the work of the Faith.

'3. The naming of fifteen assistants to the Auxiliary Board member has more fully stimulated within the communities a sense of responsibility for teaching and consolidation.

'4. Regular institutes on a national and regional level have increased the enthusiasm and activity of the believers.

'5. The dedicated involvement of Bahá'í youth in all the above activities. On some occasions local youth have served with young travelling teachers from other countries including Colombia, Mexico and the United States.

'Although lagging in the acquisition of some property goals several communities have taken steps leading to the acquisition of endowments and local Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds. A special project approved by the House of Justice was the purchase of approximately five acres of land for the establishment of a permanent institute. On this beautifully situated property a road has been

built and construction of the building has been almost completed.'

GUATEMALA

'During the period from Riḍván 1973 to Riḍván 1976 the progress of the Faith in Guatemala was very slow although some small advances were made. In February 1975 the community was visited by the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muḥájir who greatly inspired us.

'For the first time a National Women's and Children's Committee was appointed which in 1975 sponsored a series of national and local institutes. These institutes included workshops on such themes as "The role of women according to the Bahá'í teachings", "The spiritual education of children", "The human (intellectual) education of children" and "Discipline", based on the Bahá'í Writings and on notes of talks by various Hands of the Cause. During this period the first national institute for children and for potential teachers of children's classes was also held.

'Although radio was not extensively used, for a two-month period regular fifteen-minute programmes were broadcast in Quiché, and for a two-month period five-minute programmes were regularly broadcast in Cakchiquel.

'One original booklet *Amor, Noviazgo, y Matrimonio: Un Punto de Vista Bahá'í* (Love, Courtship, and Marriage: A Bahá'í Viewpoint) was written and published for use in deepening Bahá'í and other youth in these important teachings. *God's Great Plan* by Henry Ginn, *Riches Without Gold* by Joyce Liggett, and the compilation of the Universal House of Justice on living the life were translated into Spanish and published. *Cuentos de los Rompedores del Alba* (Stories from the Dawn-Breakers) was republished; and *La Luz: Un Guía para los Padres* (The Light: A Guide for Parents), a booklet on child education based largely on the Writings and on notes of Bahá'í talks, was compiled and prepared for publishing.

'Three endowments have been acquired in the period; two were spontaneous gifts of the owners and one was purchased by an individual believer for the purpose of donating it to the Faith.

'Generally speaking, these years have been ones of internal tests and reassessment which did not result in dramatic growth in numbers but which nevertheless served to purify and strengthen the community of the Greatest Name in Guatemala.'

HAITI

'During the first half of the Five Year Plan the efforts of the Haitian Bahá'í community were channelled into two major areas, the attainment of the goals of the Five Year Plan and the development of a more efficient internal administrative system.

'With respect to the accomplishment of the goals of the plan, the following measures were taken:

'1. Local Spiritual Assemblies were strengthened through being encouraged to assume greater responsibilities which previously were discharged by a homefront pioneer or a representative assigned to the area by the National Spiritual Assembly. To aid in this process deepening programmes were held on various subjects including improving the quality of Bahá'í life. The National Spiritual Assembly is in process of developing a manual containing guidelines for the officers of Local Assemblies.

'2. Haiti was assigned the goal of raising the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies to one hundred and five by the end of the Five Year Plan. A decrease in the number of Local Assemblies was noted in the second year of the plan, due to correcting the membership records and improving the administrative system and indicated a greater awareness on the part of the National Assembly of the number of local centres. With a firm and accurate base now established, plans are being formulated to meet and if possible exceed the statistical goals, working in close collaboration with the Auxiliary Board member.

'3. A centrally located building has been acquired in Port-au-Prince for use as the national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds. The building is larger than the one formerly used as the national Centre and plans are under way to renovate the structure and add auxiliary buildings. Six local Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds have been established. One of these, situated in Poteau, near the provincial city of Les Cayes, will serve as a regional Centre for that area.

'4. The compilation of prayers for children prepared by the Universal House of Justice has been translated into Créole and published and has been distributed to the Local Spiritual Assemblies.

'5. Two delegates from Haiti attended the regional conference on the development of the use of mass media, held in Puerto Rico in December 1975. Radio time has been acquired several times in Port-au-Prince as well as in Gonaïves and Les Cayes.

'6. Initial steps have been taken toward incorporating the National Spiritual Assembly.

'A number of measures have been taken which have dramatically improved the administration of the Bahá'í community on both the local and national level. The relocation of the national Bahá'í office in the new Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds, the engaging of a full-time staff to aid with the secretarial work and the establishment of a reading library open to the public are significant improvements now under way. In an area where effective communication systems are lacking, the creation of a centrally-located national office will provide a permanent point of contact and a meeting place for the friends. The adoption of these and other measures will result in improved efficiency and provide a more effective foundation for the teaching work.'

HONDURAS

'The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir made two visits to Honduras during the first half of the Five Year Plan. In 1974 he emphasized the need to phase the goals of the plan and inspired us to work one step at a time toward total victory without being overwhelmed by the magnitude of the task before us. The sense of urgency imbued during his first visit was confirmed in April 1976 when he came again and challenged us to double the number of believers in the country by 1978. Subsequently the north coast was selected for mass proclamation.

'Since the inception of the Bahá'í Women's Club of Siguatepeque in 1974 many women have been introduced to the teachings and five women and one youth have accepted the Faith. A similar club based in Tegucigalpa held a successful public meeting in November 1975 when Mrs. Carmen de Burafato of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Central America addressed a public meeting attended by approximately one hundred women who are prominent in public life in the capital. In the same period Mrs. de Burafato and her fellow Counsellors, Mr. Artemus Lamb, Mr. Alfred Osborne and Mr. Paul Lucas, accompanied by Priscilla Banks Távora, enjoyed a cordial audience with the Chief of State, His excellency General Juan Alberto Melgar Castro, to whom they presented a copy of *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh*. The Minister of Defence, General Mario C. Chinchilla, received a copy of the brochure outlining the Bahá'í viewpoint on loyalty to Government and the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Information, Lieutenant-Colonel Efraín L. González, was given a copy of "The Bahá'í Fact Sheet".

'A folk dance group composed of Bahá'í youth of Tegucigalpa offered a unique medium for introducing the Faith to the public. The group perform typical and traditional folk dances of Honduras and have been invited to appear at a variety of public functions and on television.

'In September 1974 hurricane Fifi lashed the north coast causing widespread death and destruction. Even as the National Spiritual Assembly of Honduras endeavoured to contact the affected communities a generous contribution for disaster relief was received from the National Spiritual Assembly of Irán. A team

representing the Honduran National Assembly set forth to reach as many as possible of the stricken communities. Equipped with food staples, medical supplies, soap and sundries, they searched out the Bahá'ís. Through enquiries and direct communication it was determined that although many communities sustained devastating damage and many thousands of people were killed or injured, not a single Bahá'í was hurt or lost his life in the disaster.

'Stimulating and guiding the development of children's classes at the local level has been the aim of the National Children's Education Committee since its inception in 1973. A comprehensive teaching manual has been prepared designed to serve the dual purpose of instructing children and illiterate and semi-literate adults. Under the auspices of the National Publications Committee, created in 1976, this effort has culminated in the publication of an engaging and well-illustrated basic teaching manual. In addition to preparing teaching packets the committee has conducted a programme of formal institutes and informal visits to various local communities, with members meeting with Local Spiritual Assemblies, prospective teachers and interested community members to stimulate and guide them toward establishing regular Bahá'í children's classes. Their efforts frequently have included giving sample classes to groups of Bahá'í and other children in order to demonstrate techniques and the use of materials.

'A National Youth Conference held in Siguatepeque in 1974 attended by youth from a number of centres was devoted to discussion of their role in the Five Year Plan. Participation by youth serving on teaching teams and the need for continued deepening were among the themes covered.

'Early in 1974 the Local Spiritual Assembly of Siguatepeque initiated a regular series of weekly five-minute radio talks, with thirty-second spot announcements four times a day during the week. This programme has brought the name of Bahá'u'lláh to many an isolated mountain village. In 1975 the coastal city of La Ceiba began a similar series but employing fifteen-minute weekly talks. The communities of Choluteca and Tegucigalpa are also utilizing regular radio broadcasts. The National Spiritual Assembly of Belize, utilizing material sent by the Honduran

National Assembly, broadcasts programmes in Spanish as a supplement to their English programmes. Radio Belize reaches the north coast of Honduras, the Bay Islands and many other islands of the Caribbean.

'With the advice and assistance of Mr. K. Dean Stephens, a radio and television engineer of Puerto Rico, a Bahá'í radio station is being equipped and set into operation in La Ceiba. This studio will provide the various communities with recorded talks and announcements, and act as a co-ordinating centre for the interchange of radio materials with other countries.

'In the period under review, Honduras received travelling teachers from Costa Rica and the United States, and sent teachers to Belize and Guatemala. During the same week in which Bahá'í literature was presented to the Chief of State and other government officials, members of the Continental Board of Counsellors participated in a public meeting at the National Library in Tegucigalpa. Counsellor Carmen de Burafato addressed various women's groups, and the Counsellors and members of the Auxiliary Board attended a press conference and dinner. In addition to public appearances, the Counsellors held an all-day deepening institute at the National Bahá'í Centre. On the last night of their visit, a farewell party featured the Bahá'í youth folk dance group.'

JAMAICA

'Having successfully achieved the goals of the Nine Year Plan, the Bahá'í community of Jamaica concentrated its efforts in 1973 on the consolidation of the work accomplished. However, three more Local Spiritual Assemblies were formed in that year thus raising the total number to twenty-five. In addition, the National Spiritual Assembly which, during the Nine Year Plan, had been incorporated under The Companies' Act, obtained more satisfactory and better recognition of the Faith by achieving incorporation by Act of Parliament.¹

'Shortly after the launching of the Five Year Plan in 1974, Jamaica was blessed with the visits of the Hands of the Cause Jalál Kházeḥ, John Robarts and Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir, whose presence and valuable addresses at different gatherings brought the believers a greater awareness of their grave responsibilities for the advancement of the Cause of God and the

accomplishment of the goals assigned to Jamaica in the Five Year Plan.

'A visit was made by the Hand of the Cause John Robarts and Mrs. Robarts to His Excellency the Governor-General of Jamaica, Sir Clifford Campbell, who warmly received them. At a later date, on the occasion of his retirement, the Governor-General accepted the presentation by the National Spiritual Assembly of an album containing photographs taken during the 1971 Oceanic Conference which was held in Kingston and which he had officially opened.

'Through the encouragement received from the Hand of the Cause Dr. Muhájir a two-year project was initiated under which intensive teaching was undertaken in four districts of the island with the aim of increasing the number of believers and training new teachers to assist in the expansion work. Although the progress of this project during the first year, 1974-1975, was somewhat slow, it resulted in some expansion as well as the revival and consolidation of some of the communities in those areas.

'A pending goal of the Nine Year Plan was accomplished through the appointment of a Bahá'í marriage officer, and the legal transfer of the Temple site was completed.

'One of the outstanding achievements during this period was the expansion of the use of mass media, a goal assigned to Jamaica in the Five Year Plan. A fifteen-minute weekly radio programme was initiated and regularly broadcast beginning in January 1976. These broadcasts, coupled with press publicity, made a tremendous impact on the public and the Bahá'í community. The two million people who inhabit Jamaica have now heard about the Bahá'í Faith, many enquiries are regularly received, numbers of people have spontaneously attended meetings and some have embraced the Faith as a result of the use of this medium. A fully equipped recording studio was established at the national Ḥazíratu'l-Quds where taped programmes are prepared for broadcasting.

'The prestige of the Faith in Jamaica is such that students of the Government's Junior High Schools, the Teacher Training College and other schools are encouraged as part of their course of study to investigate and write articles about it. In their papers the students have listed the Bahá'í Faith as one of the world's major religions and many have commented that its distinguishing feature is that it has not led to sectarianism.

¹ See p. 355.

When high school students were asked to write a paper on the Bahá'í Faith many visited the national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds to obtain information. Books were presented to school libraries and Bahá'í speakers were provided. The Bahá'í youth who initiated teaching activities at schools through their annual "Bahá'í Youth Tell the News" campaign, organized proclamation meetings at the University of the West Indies and in different localities on the island and gave lectures at high schools. Two of the youth opened a new phase of development in Jamaica by volunteering as homefront pioneers.

'For the dedication of a Home for the Aged, established by a Christian lady in 1976 in memory of her mother, Mrs. Esmie Burton,¹ a distinguished early Jamaican Bahá'í who passed away in 1971, the Bahá'í community of Kingston was invited to conduct the devotional section of the programme in the presence of Government officials and other dignitaries.

'Celebration of Bahá'í Feasts and anniversaries, the holding of summer schools, national teaching conferences, institutes and programmes related to United Nations observances were among the other activities of the Jamaican Bahá'í community. During International Women's Year a number of functions took place. A copy of the talk on "The Equality of Men and Women: A Bahá'í Viewpoint" which was given at one of these functions was sent to the wife of the Prime Minister at her request, together with other Bahá'í literature. This followed the presentation to the Prime Minister of a copy of *The Bahá'í World*. The statement of the Bahá'í International Community to the International Women's Year conference held in Mexico was published in the leading newspaper of Jamaica.

'Sacrificial participation of individuals, groups and Local Assemblies in contributing to the fund has increased in the period. The national community of Jamaica is fully aware at this point in the Five Year Plan that the remaining three years should be devoted not only to winning the remaining goals but to consolidating the work that has been done. The goal adopted by the community at Riḍván 1976 for implementation during the next year includes the formation of at least ten new Local Spiritual Assemblies and the incorporation of six.'

THE LEEWARD AND VIRGIN ISLANDS

'The following are events of significance in the development of this island community in the period under review:

'Brief visits by the Hands of the Cause of God Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá, Jalál Kházeḥ, Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muḥájír and John Robarts; repeated visits by all members of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Central America to various island communities, their frequent consultations with the National Spiritual Assembly, their International Teaching Conference (1975) and satellite conferences and the services of their Auxiliary Board members in the forefront of travelling teaching activity; the frequent longer-term visits by veteran international travelling teachers; the publication on a more regular basis of a bilingual national newsletter; the establishment of a facility for the distribution of Bahá'í books and other materials in both the English and French areas; the acquisition of the national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds of the French Antilles in Guadeloupe, in collaboration with the National Spiritual Assemblies of Canada and France; the holding of national conventions for the first time in St. Barthélemy and Guadeloupe with attendance of the first French Antillian believers; the holding of meetings of the National Spiritual Assembly for the first time in St. Martin, St. Barthélemy, Martinique and St. Croix; the appointment of the National Teaching Committee of the French Antilles, preparing the way for the future formation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the French Antilles; continuing and effective Bahá'í radio broadcasts produced by individuals on a weekly basis in the islands of Saba, St. Maarten, Antigua, St. Thomas and St. Croix; the initiation of a weekly television programme broadcast from St. Maarten; the construction of a recording studio in the national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in St. Thomas; participation of local believers in the Caribbean Radio/Television Workshop held in Puerto Rico in 1975; annual participation in the Virgin Islands Agricultural Fair; the first annual National Teaching Conference (1974); the first Bahá'í summer school held in Antigua in 1975; the establishment in 1975 in the national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds of the national Bahá'í office and the inauguration in that Centre of regular activities; increased recognition of the Faith through the legal change

¹ See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, p. 505.



A delegation of Bahá'ís who attended the first Bahá'í Summer School of the Leeward and Virgin Islands, held in Antigua in August 1975, are seen presenting Bahá'í literature to the Hon. George H. Walter (extreme right), Premier of Antigua and Barbuda. Left to right: Mr. E. Blackwell, Haiti; Mrs. E. Holbert, Antigua; Counsellor Alfred Osborne, Panama; Shamsi Sedaghat, Trinidad.

of name of the National Spiritual Assembly resulting from the formation in 1972 of an independent National Assembly in the Windward Islands, formerly part of this national community; the annual circulation by the Department of Education of a listing of Bahá'í Holy Days on which students may be excused without penalty (U.S. Virgin Islands only);¹ and the granting of title to the National Assembly of national endowment property in the British colony of Montserrat.²

MEXICO

'Mexico has witnessed an inspiring demonstration of sacrifice and dedication during the first half of the Five Year Plan. In the short span of two years a wave of pioneers has arisen to fill homefront goals; in many cases these individuals were pillars of strength in their home communities and their arising as pioneers has served both as a great teaching impetus

throughout the country and as an inspiration for even greater effort on the part of their home communities to awaken new believers to their responsibilities. On the international level, three pioneers departed from Mexico to settle in their goals, two in the San Blas Islands and one in Costa Rica. In addition, a number of Mexican believers have served as international travelling teachers.

'One of the main causes of this heightened spirit of service was the inspiring visit of the Hand of the Cause of God Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir in February 1975. After lengthy consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly, Dr. Muhájir suggested the launching of the "Mexican Crusade", a project calling for the immediate implementation of mass proclamation activities throughout the country and with the goal of finding literally thousands of new believers and deepening at least ten per cent of all new Bahá'ís. A year after the project was launched the National Spiritual Assembly reassessed and modified it in the light of the

¹ See p. 373.



Bahá'í children's class, Winter School, Muna, Yucatán; December 1975.

experience gained and the manpower and resources available with a view to intensifying proclamation efforts on the regional and national levels.

'An exciting development of this period is the border teaching project co-sponsored by this national community and the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States which aims at increasing Bahá'í activity along the Mexican-United States border and creating a steady flow of travelling teachers who will aid in deepening the knowledge of Bahá'í communities on both sides of the border. The project was launched in April 1976 in Mexicali with approximately seventy friends participating, among whom were Mrs. Carmen de Burafato representing the Continental Board of Counsellors in Central America, and Mr. Franklin Kahn and Mr. Francisco Chiu representing the National Spiritual Assemblies of the United States and Mexico, respectively.

'A steady flow of travelling teachers has served to stimulate teaching activity in Mexico. Two music groups in particular have made a tremendous impact on our community, Greg Shaw's Travelling Teaching Music Show, and the inspiring team of Jan and Marvin Dryer of El

Salvador. The Dryers performed both in Mexico City and in the Yucatán and received very favourable publicity in the local newspapers.

'The members of the Continental Board of Counsellors for this area have been of invaluable service to Mexico during the period being surveyed. In February 1975 and again in March 1976 the entire membership of the Continental Board of Counsellors met with the National Assembly. The Counsellors have sponsored many teaching and deepening institutes in their ceaseless efforts to inspire and protect the community of the Most Great Name; their constant support and guidance is impossible to measure. Their work was reinforced through the appointment of two new members of the Auxiliary Board. An effective deepening programme introduced by Auxiliary Board member Maria Novak designed to strengthen and increase the efficacy of Local Spiritual Assemblies won the wholehearted approval of the National Assembly and has been adopted for use on a national scale.

'The visit of the Bahá'í delegates to the International Women's Year Conference held in Mexico City in 1975 resulted in a very intensive proclamation of the Faith through a large and



Bahá'í youth of Mexico who attended the institute held in Mexico City in the spring of 1976.

well-attended public meeting and the effective use of a Bahá'í information booth at the conference site. Literally thousands heard of the Faith during the conference. We record our profound gratitude for the contribution made by the distinguished Bahá'í women who attended the conference and the tribune for United Nations non-governmental organizations held as a parallel activity. Three representatives of the Mexican Bahá'í community attended the International Bahá'í Women's Conference held in El Salvador in February 1976.

'The growth of the community has been stimulated by improved communications between the Regional Teaching Committees and the National Assembly, resulting from re-organizing areas of responsibility.

'Two of our most dedicated Bahá'ís ascended to the Abhá kingdom during this period, Esther Krieger and Olimpia Murray; their services live on in the memories of the Bahá'ís of the Mexican community.

'We embark upon the second half of the Five Year Plan with clear knowledge of the even greater sacrifices which must be made if we are to

achieve our goals; our prayer is that we may be strengthened to accomplish all that lies before us.'

NICARAGUA

'The small but dedicated band of believers in Nicaragua has been reinforced in its efforts in the period under survey by an influx of assistance from various Bahá'í institutions and individuals outside the country. As a result the community has been strengthened, its foundations have been expanded, and we are confident that we can meet all the goals of the Five Year Plan.

'Nicaragua is the largest of the Central American Republics although it has one of the smallest populations, a little over two million. Because there is no road across the country travel between the Pacific side and the Caribbean side must be undertaken by expensive air flights or a full-day boat trip; yet, because of the efforts of pioneers and travelling teachers in the past, the largest Bahá'í population is concentrated on the east coast. The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir suggested during his visit in February 1975 that a regional Centre be

established on the east coast. With the approval of the Universal House of Justice the National Spiritual Assembly decided to establish a Centre in Pearl Lagoon, twenty miles north of Bluefields. Pearl Lagoon is becoming increasingly important as it is situated at the entrance of a developing intercoastal canal. In 1974 through the generosity of an individual believer the National Assembly received the gift of thirty acres of land along the Rio Escondido, the river used in travelling across the country; in time the National Assembly hopes to develop this property into an institute for deepening Bahá'ís. In the period under review considerable teaching was done in villages along the east coast by resident pioneers and travelling teachers.

'As a result of the severe earthquake in December 1972 the interior of the capital city, Managua, was destroyed and has yet to be rebuilt. The Bahá'í Centre was so badly damaged that it had to be torn down. In June 1974 a new Centre was acquired; it was officially dedicated in December of that year in a beautiful ceremony attended by Mr. Artemus Lamb of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Central America and many other Bahá'ís and their friends. Despite the destruction of the national Centre the teaching work proceeded. In the period embraced by this summary our teaching efforts were greatly reinforced through the visits of various members of the Continental Board of Counsellors and their Auxiliary Board, by the arrival of pioneers and travelling teachers from a number of countries, and through visiting teams of Bahá'í youth. One visiting Bahá'í family from the United States visited various communities, living for a week or two at a time in their mobile home and winning many new friends for the Faith. Some opportunities arose for Bahá'ís to be interviewed on television, on one occasion in relation to the Bahá'í teachings about child education and the rights of women. A significant degree of proclamation was achieved during the notable visit of Dr. Muhájir who, in addition to meeting the friends in various centres, presented the Faith in a lecture attended by nine hundred students. A year later he returned to lead a mass teaching project in Poseltega, Chichigalpa and Chinendega. Following his visit in 1975 the International Goals Committee arranged an orientation meeting at the new Centre where, for six days, twelve travelling teachers from the United States participated in a programme in

which they gained first-hand information about teaching conditions in Central America.

'Some Five Year Plan goals were achieved in 1975. Two *Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds* were developed, one in Juigalpa and one in Little Sandy Bay on the east coast. After much effort the National Spiritual Assembly secured incorporation and official recognition by the Government.¹ In May we were given the opportunity to present, without cost, a half-hour radio broadcast each Sunday; since that time a thirty-minute taped radio programme has been broadcast each week aimed at deepening old believers and attracting new ones. The Bahá'í community of Bluefields frequently uses the radio to promote the Faith. We gratefully acknowledge the professional assistance and advice of Mr. K. Dean Stephens of Puerto Rico who has enabled us to improve our programming and encouraged us to share our materials with neighbouring countries.

'So far the year 1976 has been most promising and the teaching efforts go forward, now enriched through the appointment of assistants to members of the Auxiliary Board. The recent arrival of pioneers, the increased use of radio and the determined efforts of our various national committees all suggest increased growth for our national community. Enrolments are increasing and a greater number of native believers are participating in the development of the Faith. It is impossible in this brief report to detail individual efforts and sacrifices; suffice to say that through the joint efforts of the local friends and teachers from abroad we are confident that we all may soon share the fruits of these labours.'

PANAMA

'When the Five Year Plan for Panama reached us in 1974 we had prepared for it by every means at our disposal, emphasizing the guidelines stressing individual deepening and participation during 1973. In its message to Panama the Universal House of Justice indicated that "Your community, blessed by having erected the Mother Temple of Latin America on its soil, is uniquely placed to reap a rich harvest in the Bahá'í world's third global enterprise to be launched at *Riḍván* (1974)." There were nineteen specific goals assigned to us.

'Since its dedication at *Riḍván* 1972, work has never stopped on the *Mashriqu'l-Adhikár* or its

¹ See p. 360.



Bahá'ís gathered for Naw-Rúz observance and dedication of a new Bahá'í Centre, Balsal Village, in the Darien jungle of Panama; March 1976.

gardens. There are now thirty flower beds bordered by rocks and recessed perennial borders outlining the nine walls. Velvety lawns and walks inviting meditation welcome the nearly two thousand people who visit each month. A public service enhanced by an *a cappella* choir is held each Sunday and firesides are conducted in the lodge where films are shown and literature is available.

'The prestige of the House of Worship opens the doors of both the English and Spanish mass media. For one year after the dedication, two English and three Spanish daily newspapers accepted a regular column comprised of both original articles and serialized excerpts from *The New Garden* and *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*. Notices of meetings, visitors and Holy Day celebrations are accepted and prominently placed in newspapers. Six radio stations have given us free time, including a fifteen-minute interview with Mr. Hooper Dunbar of the International Teaching Centre which was used twice. Spot announcements have been broadcast four times daily for four consecutive days. Both

the local English-language television station and the one Spanish-language station interviewed Dr. Edris Rice-Wray as delegate to the United Nations International Women's Conference in Mexico City, as well as concerning the Bahá'í view on birth control. Perhaps our most important coverage was the one and one-half minute film arranged by the National Spiritual Assembly covering the visit to the House of Worship on 15 February 1976 of the Continental Board of Counsellors which was broadcast during the main news programme of the day. In February 1974, Auxiliary Board member Raúl Pavón of Ecuador was interviewed on television in an hour-long programme during which he gave a comprehensive outline of the Faith and some of the local youth sang. The film *El Alba* was shown. A well-equipped radio and recording studio has been built adjacent to the lodge at the House of Worship and was dedicated at Ridván 1976.

'Three Hands of the Cause of God have paid gracious visits to Panama during the period 1973-1976. Mr. Abu'l-Qásim Faizí spoke at the

national Centre in Panama City on 11 July 1974, urging our increased dedication and service to the Bahá'í institutions through which is channelled the plan of God for this and future ages. At Naw-Rúz 1975 we had the great bounty of a visit by Dr. Adelbert Mühschlegel, accompanied by his wife. Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir visited twice, once in 1973 when plans for mass teaching were made and once in early 1976 when he enjoined the believers to demonstrate such faith as would replace the fear which rules the world today.

'Since October 1973 we have also had the privilege of attending institutes conducted by Counsellor Alfred Osborne of the Central American zone and by Auxiliary Board members Ruth Pringle and Fred Berest. Counsellor Rowland Estall has paid us two visits from his West Indian post of Haiti.

'The Villa Virginia Training Institute could be considered the significant and outstanding teaching and deepening effort of this period. The first three-month course began in January 1975. Among the students were fifteen Guaymí, two Cuna and four Chocó Indians. Auxiliary Board member Ruth Pringle served as director, registered nurse, teacher and author of the project. The students, chosen for their abilities and special interest, were trained through practice and example in various aspects of administration, teaching and deepening, as well as fundamentals of daily life including diet, hygiene, health and child care. Literacy classes were also held as many of these friends had never been to school. A second institute was held in early 1976 with new students. The success in improving indigenous communities has been greatly acclaimed by travelling teachers in the areas.

'The National Children's Education Committee has the honour of being the first committee to exceed its goals; it boasts thirty-three functioning children's classes instead of the projected twenty-five. Kits containing illustrated lessons are supplied to the teachers, and those children who can read and write in turn teach their families. Bahá'í children are actively teaching by accompanying their parents on sometimes difficult trips in order to conduct children's classes. Additionally, youth deepening classes have been held. Our youth regularly serve as readers in devotional programmes at the House of Worship and work on both local and national committees.

'The International Women's Forum, a panel of four Bahá'í women from Panama, Colombia and Persia, have made five presentations on the theme of the Bahá'í view of women's role in today's world. The most responsive reception was accorded them in Colón by the Chamber of Commerce, although they were well received in other major cities. Dr. Edris Rice-Wray, as previously mentioned, attracted much interest in the Faith by her appearance on television in Panama. A pioneer in Santiago, Panama arranged a one-woman United Nations Day programme in which she honoured ten outstanding women of her community on a Bahá'í platform, an effort which prompted gracious expressions of appreciation by these women of her many years of outstanding service to the community.

'The Chocós, using their own funds and manpower, have erected four Ḥaẓiratu'l-Quds and in the central Provinces five more have been raised by the indigenous believers. The Guaymí Bahá'í women are of a courageous nature; one Local Spiritual Assembly elected six women to serve on it. Both the Cochó and the Guaymí Indian friends are responsive and are developing well, assisted by the devoted efforts of self-sacrificing pioneers. One Guaymí friend who serves as a guide to a team of pioneers made a vow to raise up nine Local Assemblies before he dies and in fifteen years he has established eight well-grounded communities. The Short Obligatory Prayer has been translated into Cuna, Guaymí and Chocó; the Long Prayer for the Dead into Cuna and Chocó.

'Since Riḍván 1973 we have raised the numbers of groups, localities, and believers, and have assigned twelve of nineteen extended teaching goals to Local Spiritual Assemblies. Seven endowments and eleven Ḥaẓiratu'l-Quds have been acquired. We have a monthly bulletin published in both Spanish and English; a brochure entitled *Careers for Youth* was published in 1974, and a Temple pamphlet in 1976. Annual teaching conferences have been held. Dawn devotionals are held in sixteen communities, including both the indigenous and capital city areas.

'Significant trends of the period have been the rapid growth and development of children's education in the spirit of the raising up of a new race of men, and the continued emergence of the indigenous believers as examples of peoples who

have taken the teachings into their hearts and demonstrated a marked capacity for spiritual growth and teaching.'

PUERTO RICO

'Several trends in the Puerto Rican Bahá'í community reflected Five Year Plan goals. Island-wide committees were established by the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Puerto Rico to develop education of and activities for women and children. New Local Spiritual Assemblies and active groups were established away from metropolitan areas. Use of Spanish literature and teaching materials was expanded greatly and proclamation meetings often featured the showing of the films *Paso a Paso* or *El Alba*. The distribution of more special mailings and regular publication of *El Lucero*, the Puerto Rican Bahá'í monthly newsletter, increased communication and unity throughout the island.

'The Hand of the Cause of God Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muḥájir visited the island in March 1974. The following May, the Hand of the Cause Jalál Kḥázeh arrived to launch the Five Year Plan. Central American Continental Counsellors Mrs. Carmen de Burafato, Mr. Artemus Lamb, Mr. Paul Lucas, Mr. Alfred Osborne and Mr. Rowland Estall guided and inspired individual believers and institutions during their visits. Mr. Firaydún Mitháqíyán of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South-Eastern Asia at meetings he addressed in San Juan and Caguas in October 1975, exhorted the friends to assume responsibility for teaching.

'As directed by the Universal House of Justice, the island's first Bahá'í school was instituted in December 1973 with sixty-three friends in attendance. Another week-long school the following summer served for deepening and teaching and as a pattern of success for ensuing Bahá'í schools. The winter school in December 1974 featured teachers from Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela.

'Teacher training institutes were inaugurated in 1975 and held in various localities during the year to assist the believers in their teaching efforts. A teacher training manual and a supplement on travelling teaching have been prepared and translated into Spanish. During the period under review there has been an increase of fifty per cent in the number of

believers and five new localities—bringing the total to forty-five—have been opened; new Local Assemblies were formed in Bayamón, Juana Díaz, Añasco; the Local Assemblies of Carolina and Ponce were re-formed. The localities opened were Juncos, Guánica and Loíza. Local Bahá'í Centres were established in Mayagüez and Caguas. Two travelling teachers visited the Dominican Republic and our pioneer goals were met by two believers from this area settling in Honduras and Nicaragua. The work of the Auxiliary Board member was reinforced through the appointment of three assistants.

'A delegation of three believers in October 1975 presented *La Proclamación de Bahá'u'lláh* to Mr. Juan B. Albors, a representative of the office of His Excellency Rafael Hernández Colón, Governor of Puerto Rico.

'After the formation of the Wings of Equality Committee (Women's Committee) in 1973, its first activity was to teach a class at the winter school on "The Place of Women in the Bahá'í Faith". In April 1975, Dr. Edris Rice-Wray of Mexico City, a former pioneer to Puerto Rico, spoke at a women's conference and was presented the first "Ṭáhirih Award", named after that outstanding heroine of the Bábí dispensation. During the year Bahá'í women participated in inter-community teaching and deepening articles of special interest to women appeared in *El Lucero*. Pamphlets and a compilation concerning the equality of men and women were available at the first conference for Bahá'í women held in February 1976 with twenty-six participants. Two women Bahá'ís from San Juan attended the Bahá'í Women's Conference held in El Salvador that same month. More than sixty-five adults and children participated in a conference held in San Juan in January 1976 under the joint sponsorship of the Women's and Children's Committees.

'The first island-wide Children's Committee was appointed in January 1974 and it created and published a page for children in the Bahá'í newsletter commencing that year. Classes for children were presented at the summer school. In March 1976, fifteen children participated in an Intercalary Day celebration with games, arts and crafts centred on Bahá'í themes. A series of lessons for young children, developed by Mrs. Mignon Witzel of Venezuela, has been reproduced and distributed to Local Assemblies.

'Planning and presenting teaching events and



Participants in the first Radio and Television Workshop of the Caribbean held in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico; December 1975.



On 26 August 1975 the Bahá'ís of Puerto Rico established in Mayaguez a recording studio for the production of radio programmes. Present for the dedication were Mrs. Carmen de Burafato of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Central America, and Mr. R. Betancourt, vice-chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of Puerto Rico.

deepening classes occupied the Youth Committee. In the first year of the plan the youth met once with Counsellor Paul Lucas of Mexico and twice with Auxiliary Board member Félix Gómez. They taught in various centres, participated in deepening institutes on subjects including the distinctive character of the Bahá'í community, assisted in contacting isolated believers and in correcting our membership records, presented classes at Bahá'í summer and winter schools and formed and obtained recognition of the island's second Bahá'í Club at *Colegio Universitario de Turabo* as an official student organization.

'Puerto Rico was the first Bahá'í community in the world to establish a studio for the production of radio programmes, the first phase of a four-phase project to be executed within the Five Year Plan. Public service announcements were broadcast on two television stations in Ponce in 1974. Another station, without cost, videotaped *Paso a Paso* in black and white. The media committee initiated a series of fourteen and twenty-eight minute radio programmes based on a correspondence course produced in Guatemala. Each Local Assembly and group was provided with guidelines on obtaining and utilizing free broadcast time. In December 1975 the committee hosted a radio and television workshop for the Caribbean area. The purpose of the workshop was the implementation of mass communication goals of the Five Year Plan. In attendance were thirty-four believers from thirteen countries and islands, representing nine National Spiritual Assemblies. Nine localities in Puerto Rico were represented.'

North America

ALASKA

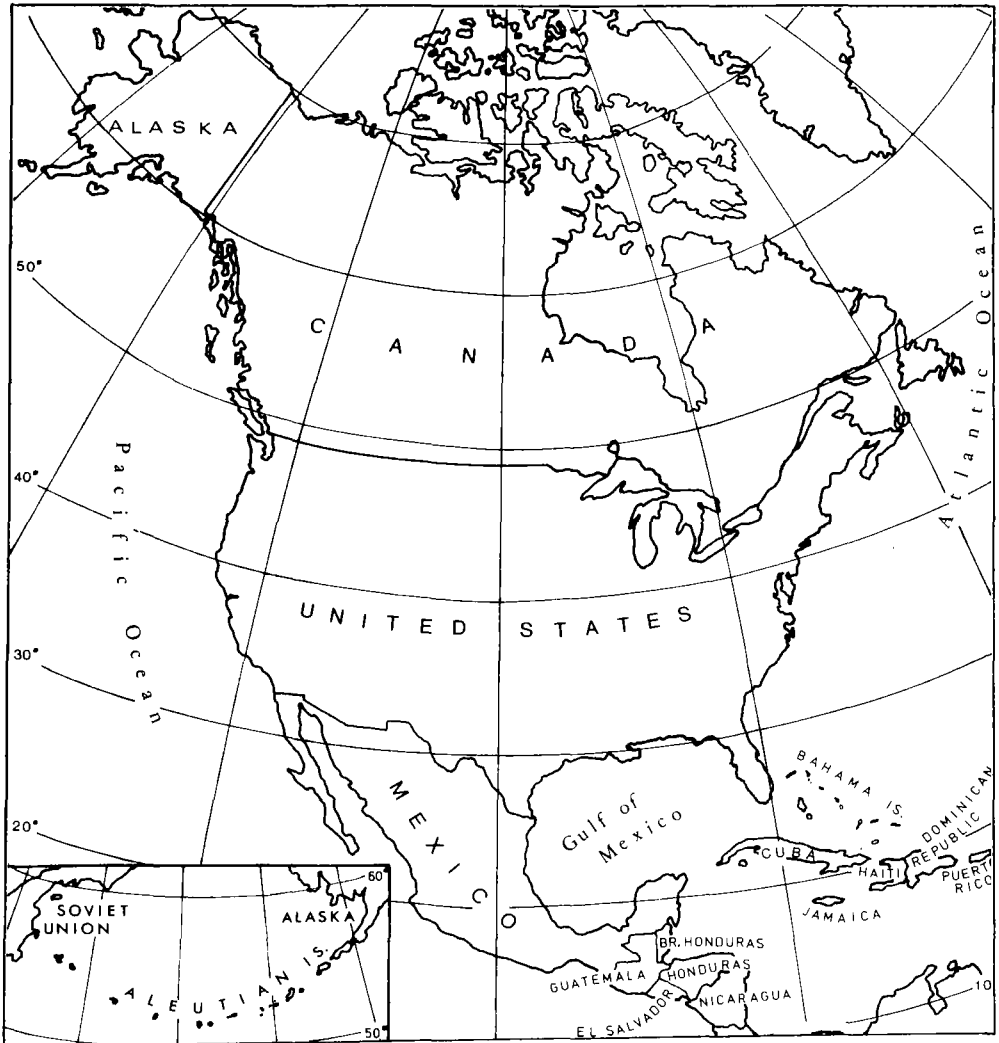
'The Bahá'ís of Alaska joined their fellow believers around the world in rejoicing when the Universal House of Justice announced at Ridván 1973 that "The Army of Light has won its second global campaign . . ." At the annual convention that year, at the eighteenth annual convention in 1974 when the Five Year Plan was announced, and at the succeeding two conventions, the Alaskan delegates and friends resolved to achieve the spiritual conquest of this vast territory through winning their specific goals.

'Alaska was aided and assisted beyond measure through visits from the Hands of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, Jalál Kházeh, John Robarts, Collis Featherstone, Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir and Abu'l-Qásim Faizi. The visit of Rúhíyyih Khánum in 1973 was unusually significant by reason of its length (from 25 July to 24 August); the number of localities visited (fifteen, including many remote towns and villages); the encouragement and deepening given to the believers; and the publicity which resulted.

'The year prior to the launching of the Five Year Plan saw the number of localities where Bahá'ís reside raised to one hundred and seventy-eight and the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies increased to forty-one. It was a year of remarkable deepening opportunities which began with the inspiring attendance of the Hand of the Cause Jalál Kházeh at the national convention and at subsequent meetings. In early July the friends in several cities had the privilege of attending meetings addressed by the Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone. Later that month the Bergamaschi Bahá'í School in Juneau was dedicated; this facility is used for meetings, institutes and training sessions; it is named in memory of Napoleon Bergamaschi,¹ an exemplary Bahá'í pioneer of Eskimo background. August was the month during which Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum visited; there was an unprecedented attendance at summer school where sessions were given by Rúhíyyih Khánum and Colonel Kházeh. In addition a thrilling Alaskan Cultural Evening, featuring the songs, legends and dances of Alaska natives, concluded with the ceremonial adoption of Rúhíyyih Khánum by the Eagle tribe of the Tlingit Indians who bestowed upon her an Indian name meaning "Precious Lady". In September a conference centering on the *Tablet of Carmel* and emphasizing the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh featured Counsellor Florence Mayberry who was *en route* to the Holy Land to serve at the recently established International Teaching Centre. Bahá'ís from across Alaska flocked to these meetings and then returned to their local communities where further deepening and teaching activities were generated.

'The three major objectives of the Five Year Plan gave specific goals to Alaska and resulted in

¹ See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, p. 503.



successful and enthusiastically prosecuted projects:

'*Preservation and consolidation of the victories won.* Conferences on the Five Year Plan were held in three locations during April and May 1974. These, together with later "Concept Conferences", were invaluable in assisting the friends to focus on their personal and family responsibilities and on the required development of Local Spiritual Assemblies. A national institute programme was initiated with sessions lasting from three to twenty days. These institutes are constantly monitored and their curriculum is changed as needs arise. A typical institute lasting twenty days was held in June 1975 and its programme included a study of one

of the teaching prayers, some of *The Hidden Words*, excerpts from *The Advent of Divine Justice*, and the Five Year Plan; three days were devoted to a study of the functions of a Local Spiritual Assembly and the last week was spent in training teaching teams. The institute programme has proved valuable in the deepening of individuals, in the training of teachers, and in inspiring local communities to host their own institutes.

'Two National Teaching Conferences and three Native Councils were held. The annual teaching conferences are goals of the Five Year Plan. The Native Councils, active participation in which is reserved for Alaska natives or for those the Council invites, have the close feeling

of family which is so strong in the native community. The National Spiritual Assembly defined the purpose of the Councils as being "to bring together Indian, Eskimo and Aleut believers from throughout Alaska as well as from nearby localities in Canada and the United States to encourage them to take an increasingly more active role in the Faith." The Councils were planned by native believers from several small villages and were designed to reflect the native culture and to provide a setting for consulting on teaching in the villages by the native people. These Councils have proved effective means for the growth and development of the Faith in Alaska.

The weekend of 8-9 November 1975 was an exciting one with the dedication of the new national *Hazíratu'l-Quds* on the outskirts of Anchorage, the first conference sponsored in Alaska by the Continental Board of Counsellors in North America and attended by the four Counsellors for this zone; the Black Teaching Conference sponsored by the Interracial Awareness Committee also took place during this weekend.

'Consolidation on the local level was a concern of all. Consolidation teams travelled, communities participated in town celebrations with appropriate booths and floats, Bahá'í Holy Day observances and programmes on special days were held throughout the State, children's classes developed new approaches, and regular firesides and deepening classes continued.

'*A vast and widespread expansion of the Bahá'í community.* Called upon to greatly increase their numbers, to enrol people from all segments of the varied society of Alaska, and to continue their systematic teaching work among the Eskimos, Indians and Aleuts, the Bahá'ís of Alaska sent teaching teams in small airplanes to introduce the Faith to villages in the Bristol Bay region and the Norton Sound area. Many other trips—by float-plane, truck, car, and snowmobile—were made into villages and towns to renew acquaintances and to further diffuse the glad tidings.

'A "Friendship Team", composed predominantly of elderly Alaskan native believers, visited several communities in south-eastern Alaska and in British Columbia, Canada,



The Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhiyyih Khánum (centre) was photographed with Sharon Faverty, an Athabascan believer, and Fletcher Bennett, as she left Fairbanks, Alaska, bound for Nenana; August 1973. Mr. Bennett transported Rúhiyyih Khánum in his private plane to many of the centres she visited during her tour of Alaska.



The Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm (front row, centre) with some of the students at the Mathew Kaszab Bahá'í Institute, Anchorage, Alaska; August 1973.

presenting dances, songs and the message of Bahá'u'lláh to eager audiences.

'To utilize mass media the first Radio and Television Committee was established. The Public Relations Committee encouraged the use of publicity opportunities on the part of Local Spiritual Assemblies, offered speakers to a number of organizations, hosted lunches to which public figures were invited, submitted newspaper advertisements to papers in outlying areas of the State, arranged television interviews, and sponsored the Hawaiian television series¹ throughout the State. In addition, this committee has been active in securing advance publicity for the International Teaching Conference in Anchorage called by the Universal House of Justice for July 1976 in which connection two interviews were held with the Governor of the State of Alaska.

'Bahá'ís throughout the State used many means of teaching. Two beautiful banners proclaimed the Faith across two of Fairbanks' busiest streets; several churches requested Bahá'í speakers; some communities taught

through the arts, drama and folk singing while another sponsored a "Community Play Day"; World Peace Day, World Religion Day, Human Rights Day, United Nations Day and local holidays (such as Kodiak's Crab Festival) were opportunities to teach; several communities made lovely floats to participate in town parades; and the Bahá'í information booth at the Alaska State Fair attracted hundreds of people.

'In January 1976 a conference was held with the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir who encouraged the friends to teach intensively prior to the International Teaching Conference and to bring many new believers to this conference. Dr. Muhájir again inspired the friends at the national convention at Riḍván 1976.

'Development of the distinctive character of Bahá'í life particularly in the local community. Efforts for the accomplishment of this goal were initiated through "idea" or "concept" meetings and through the enthusiastic endeavours of individual believers and Local Assemblies. Children's classes received more innovative attention than ever before. A travelling

¹ See report by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Hawaiian Islands, p. 229.

children's summer school was taken to many communities to provide sessions for children and to teach the local believers how to conduct such schools. Several communities sponsored summer schools for their children and gave serious thought to the general education of the young. Two youth conferences and a youth institute were held. Programmes were held that called for participation of entire families.

'Holy Day celebrations were emphasized throughout Alaska, and several communities began to gather for dawn prayers.

'Training sessions for Local Spiritual Assemblies were held. Local Ḥazíratu'l-Quds were acquired in Dillingham, Fort Yukon, Nome and Petersburg and six communities secured local endowments. Translations were continued in the various native languages of Alaska. An increasing number of believers had the joy of making their pilgrimages to the World Centre, of pioneering to Alaska's overseas goals, and of serving as travelling teachers in various parts of the world.

'Throughout Alaska the friends have prayed and arisen to fulfil their goals. Teaching momentum gathered and expectations rose as the date of the International Teaching Conference in Anchorage drew closer. Riḍván 1976 saw forty-two Local Spiritual Assemblies including the newly-formed northernmost Local Assembly at Barrow, and there were believers in one hundred and eighty-two localities throughout *the wilderness, the mountain, the valley, the forests, the prairies and the seas*¹ of Alaska raising the call of the Kingdom of God *through that spacious territory*.²

CANADA

'For the Canadian Bahá'í community the period Riḍván 1973 through Riḍván 1976 was one in which first priority was given to overseas pioneering and property responsibilities. On the homefront, energies were concentrated on experimentation with new methods of proclamation and teaching and on the consolidation of the institutions of the Cause.

'By Riḍván 1976 sixty of the eighty-four overseas pioneering goals assigned to Canada in the Five Year Plan had been filled, and the community focussed its attention on the effort to

complete the remaining twenty-four goals and the four supplementary ones assigned by the Universal House of Justice, by the end of October, the mid-point in the Five Year Plan. Canadian Bahá'ís undertook nearly one hundred travelling teaching projects overseas. The community had also discharged most of its obligations under the collaborative projects for the acquisition of properties overseas; of the seven originally assigned, five had already been successfully secured, and funds set up to cover the cost of the remaining two which were awaiting negotiations being carried out by the collaborating National Spiritual Assemblies. Finally, the Canadian community was able to contribute significantly to the work of Maison d'Éditions Bahá'ies, the French-language publishing trust in Brussels, in the form of financial subsidies, large orders of literature which permitted that trust to publish new titles at a reasonable cost, cover designs for several of the titles, and extensive translation help.

'The period also saw a number of very important developments in the field of proclamation. Intensive work began at both the national and local levels in the field of T.V. cablevision, and a Department of Information was created at the Ḥazíratu'l-Quds to assist Local Spiritual Assemblies in making better use of publicity opportunities in newspaper, radio and television. In the French-language media particularly, the Faith obtained a degree of coverage far beyond anything we had hoped. Another very welcome development in the field of proclamation was the success of the numerically small Bahá'í community at Inuvik, on the shores of the Arctic Sea, in securing free time for Bahá'í broadcasts in the Canadian north, a facility which had formerly been denied to the Faith.

'Acting on the advice of a policy conference attended by believers qualified in various fields, the National Assembly encouraged the creation of a "Canadian Association for Studies on the Bahá'í Faith", open to all members of the Canadian Bahá'í community. The association immediately began work on a number of lecture and publishing projects designed to "cultivate opportunities for formal presentation of the Faith at Canadian universities". Finally, the entirely unexpected bounty of the presence of the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum in Montreal, in September of 1975, for

¹ From a prayer revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá; see *Tablets of the Divine Plan*.

² *Tablets of the Divine Plan*.



*The Hand of the Cause John Robarts (standing, third row, fourth from left) and delegates to the annual convention of the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada, held in Toronto, 26–29 April 1974. A highlight of this, the largest convention ever held in Canada, with 1,500 in attendance, was the dedication of the new national *Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds* on 28 April.*

the commemoration of the visit of the Master sixty-three years earlier, made it possible for the community to undertake its first Canadian-produced Bahá'í film, *Invitation*, an hour-long documentary.

'Between Riqván 1973 and Riqván 1975, several large-scale team teaching projects were undertaken. These covered virtually every major region of the country and resulted in an increase in the membership of the Bahá'í community. Concentrated efforts were made to learn from the experience gained in each phase of these projects and to adapt methods to raise new insights. From this a teaching model emerged which the National Assembly feels will be invaluable in undertaking all future team-teaching activities. Also, the National Assembly took three other important steps in the field of teaching. In order to keep more closely in touch with a community spread over vast distances, a National Teaching Committee was appointed with members from all the major regions of the country. The francophone and bilingual areas were organized as a separate teaching unit so as

to make possible a greater concentration of effort. Finally, following the model developed in Alaska,¹ the National Assembly held Canada's first Native Council in the Yukon.

'The period from 1973 to 1976 saw important developments in virtually every area of the consolidation and deepening work. An ambitious "Role of Women" programme was undertaken involving the production of audio-visual materials and original pieces of Bahá'í literature. A major breakthrough occurred in relation to the education of Bahá'í children through the creation of an imaginative and very successful children's programme at the national conventions of 1975 and 1976. The programme has already begun to serve as a model and stimulant for work at the regional level, and the National Assembly's hope is that its influence will reach to the local level, as well.

'A large number of other types of publications were also undertaken including several compilations produced by the Universal House of Justice, special compilations on youth and on the

¹ See report by the National Spiritual Assembly of Alaska, p. 197.



Group of Canadian Bahá'ís who served as a teaching team whose purpose was to present the Bahá'í teachings to members of various ethnic groups; January 1974.

institution of the Continental Board of Counsellors, a deepening series on the subject of the protection of the Cause, and handbooks for the secretaries and treasurers of Local Assemblies. Most of the foregoing materials were made available in both French and English.

'Few aspects of the work received such concentrated and sustained attention during the years 1973 through 1976 as did the consolidation of the Local Spiritual Assemblies. By 1974 it was apparent that the Assembly Resource Programme was meeting only a part of the need, and a number of other programmes were undertaken. The Counsellors, with the assistance of their Auxiliary Board members, offered deepening seminars in the form of "mini-conferences" in which representatives of the National Assembly assisted. A project which produced promising results in a number of local communities which persisted with it was the "Universal Participation Model". Under this plan communities were broken into small groups or cells which, under the direction of the Local Assembly, assumed responsibilities for Feasts, Holy Days, teaching and proclamation projects,

study sessions for their own members, etc. From the experience a number of major guidelines emerged and the National Assembly decided that because of the importance of the task it should itself take a direct role in the development and expansion of this one field of work.

'An objective which has been pursued patiently and deliberately over many years has been the attempt to secure the civil Government's explicit recognition of the institution of the Bahá'í Assembly as the body "conducting" Bahá'í marriage services. This period saw two accomplishments in this respect; in Alberta, the Marriage Act¹ was amended to give formal recognition to Bahá'í institutions as such, and in British Columbia the Department of Vital Statistics formally ruled that the Local Assembly, rather than its chairman, is the body which conducts Bahá'í marriages.

'Two thrilling developments occurred with respect to properties owned by the Canadian community. The Shrine in Montreal was accorded formal civil recognition as a *Sanctuaire*, and after many years of difficult

¹ See p. 377.

negotiations was reopened for visitation. In Toronto, in August 1974, the new Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds was completed. Besides providing greatly improved facilities for the work of the National Assembly, the new building also serves as an attractive and prestigious symbol of the Bahá'í Administrative Order in Canada. Just before Riḍván 1976, four acres were added to the existing eighteen-acre property through the purchase of land immediately to the north.

'In addition to the historic visit of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, and the help given by the two Hands of the Cause resident in Canada, Mr. John Robarts and Mr. William Sears, Canada had the bounty of visits from five other Hands. Throughout the period the work of the Canadian believers was sustained and unified by the tireless efforts of the North American Counsellors and their deputies.'

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

'The activities of the United States Bahá'í community during the period from Riḍván 1973 to Riḍván 1976 were characterized by the hugeness, even the spectacular nature, of numerous events; and the boldness and newness of the initiatives taken in the fields of proclamation and community development. For example, in June 1973 more than 4,000 believers gathered at a National Youth Conference in Oklahoma city. The size and effect of this event were surpassed only by the conference held in August 1974 in St. Louis, designed to be the final stage in the launching of the Five Year Plan in the United States. This conference drew an attendance of 10,000, the largest gathering of Bahá'ís to take place anywhere in the world up to that time. Certain events incorporated into this conference also had striking results; among them were the meeting of 3,000 members of Local Spiritual Assemblies with members of the National Spiritual Assembly and the holding of classes for the 1,600 children attending the conference.

'Although there was no dramatic growth of the community in this period it could confidently be said that knowledge of the Bahá'í Faith was widely disseminated because of the unprecedented range and intensity of proclamation activities. These activities were largely made possible by an unusual conjunction of opportunities such as the fiftieth anniversary of the National Spiritual Assembly, the observance of

International Women's Year, and the bicentennial of the United States.

'The anniversary of the National Spiritual Assembly was marked by a public observance in Foundation Hall of the House of Worship to which Wilmette village officials were invited. On that occasion the Mayor of Wilmette paid tribute to the Bahá'í community and presented to the National Spiritual Assembly a resolution of the Village Government recognizing the occasion.¹

'Three major actions highlighted the involvement of the American Bahá'í community in the bicentennial observance. These were the placement of full-page colour advertisements in the bicentennial issues of *Life* and *The New York Times Magazine* and in the August 1976 issue of *Ebony*; the display of Bahá'í exhibits at three major transportation centres, namely O'Hare Airport in Chicago, Dulles International Airport in Virginia, and Penn Central Station in New York City; and the publication of a bicentennial issue of *World Order*, 50,000 copies of which were distributed to important persons and organizations throughout the country. The entire editorial of that issue was read into the *Journal* of the House of Representatives of the State of South Carolina. The remarkable increase in the community's ability to use mass media both at the local and national levels resulted in immeasurable publicity for the Faith. An element of that ability was the construction of a studio in the basement of the House of Worship in Wilmette for the production of radio and television materials.

'A summary of the other accomplishments during this period, as given below, conveys this same sense of hugeness and innovation.

'In addition to the numerous activities undertaken by the three Hands of the Cause of God resident in North America (Dhikru'lláh Khádem, John Robarts and William Sears), five Hands of the Cause visited the United States during the three years: Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, Jalál Kházeh, Collis Featherstone, Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Mḥájir and Abu'l-Qásim Faizí. Rúḥíyyih Khánum paid two visits to the community, one before and the other after her epic journey to Amazonia.² On the former occasion she was the main speaker at the St. Louis Conference; her subsequent visit brought

¹ See p. 203.

² See 'The Green Light Expedition', p. 419.

her to Wilmette twice, in January 1976, to discuss with the National Spiritual Assembly plans for the distribution of her film *The Green Light Expedition*, and again at Ridván of that same year to be present at the showing of the film to the delegates and friends attending the national convention. Moreover, she met with a gathering of the believers in New Haven, Connecticut in November 1975 and at another gathering in New York City in December 1975. Colonel Kháزه met with the friends in Atlanta in June 1974 on his way from the national convention of Brazil; Messrs. Featherstone and Faízí attended the St. Louis Conference and met with the friends in California on separate occasions. Dr. Muhájir arrived in time to take part in teaching conferences held in California in December 1975 and remained for several months thereafter to travel extensively in the country promoting international pioneering and encouraging the teaching work on the homefront.

Two events involving the Hands of the Cause resident in North America stand out with special significance, namely the gathering on 26 May 1974 of these Hands, members of the Continental Board of Counsellors in North America and their Auxiliary Boards along with members

of the National Spiritual Assembly and its major committees for announcement of the plans developed for the execution of the Five Year Plan in the United States; and the gathering on 4 July 1975 of all senior institutions of the Faith in North America—including the entire institution of the Continental Counsellors, and the National Spiritual Assemblies of Alaska, Canada, and the United States—at the House of Worship for discussion on protection of the Faith. Counsellor 'Aziz Yazdí, a member of the International Teaching Centre, was present on this occasion.

'A large number of teaching conferences followed the St. Louis Conference. One was held in each of the States of California, Illinois, and New York, between July 1974 and January 1975, to launch the intensive teaching and consolidation plans developed especially for these States in accordance with the requirements of the Five Year Plan; subsequent conferences were held in the same States between November and December 1975 to promote the theme of "Each One Teach One"; eighty-eight district conferences on the same theme were held simultaneously in the continental United States on 27 March 1975 and similar conferences were held



Participants in the first Spanish language Bahá'í Institute held in Wilmette, Illinois; February 1976.



A participant in a teaching project designed to present the Bahá'í teachings to Chinese-speaking people in America. New York City; April 1973.



A Bahá'í float designed and organized by the Bahá'ís of Webster Groves, Missouri; 1976.



Bahá'í participants in an Indian Council Fire, Chinle, Arizona; 1975.

on that day in the Bahamas and Bermuda. A conference in Wilmette on teaching among the Indians drew participants from various Indian tribes and produced recommendations of great value to the efforts of the friends. One of the most ambitious consolidation programmes undertaken in 1975 was the Local Spiritual Assembly Development Programme, designed to involve members of each Local Assembly in a thirty-hour course on Assembly functions. The programme called for the use of 300 two-person training teams, audio-visual materials, and manuals. The programme had as its goal the training of all Local Spiritual Assemblies existing in the United States by the end of the Five Year Plan. A less ambitious but nonetheless impressive programme of family life conferences was launched by the National Education Committee in February 1975; it had as its goal assisting local communities to deal with such subjects as child education, Bahá'í marriage, and family life.

'A two-year youth programme, extending from 29 August 1974 to 1 September 1976 was adopted as part of the Five Year Plan. Among other things it called for the youth to supply twenty-five international pioneers and one

hundred homefront pioneers, to undertake seventy-five international teaching trips and five hundred domestic teaching trips, to establish three hundred and fifty college clubs and one hundred youth clubs. Fifty-one youth conferences were held to stimulate the objectives of the programme. By Riqván 1976 ultimate victory was evident. For example, twenty youth pioneers had already settled abroad and more than seven hundred and fifty domestic teaching trips had been completed. Also by this time a programme had been developed to bring groups of youth together in work/study projects at the Bahá'í national Centre in Wilmette.

'Beginning with the programme arranged for the 1,600 children who attended the St. Louis Conference, great efforts were made to organize children's classes in local communities and at all large events such as district conventions. The National Education Committee developed a training programme to assist local communities to hold children's classes.

'The diversity of the American Bahá'í community was increased through the acceptance of the Faith by members of Indian tribes not previously represented in it including Acoma, Alamo, Bannock, Colville, Kickapoo, Koyu-



Participants in the first teaching institute of the Bahamas, held in Nassau; 2 May 1975.

kon, Mattinecok, Northern Cheyenne, Shoshone, Umatilla, Walla Walla, Wapato, Warm Springs, Wichita, and Yakima. Bahá'í literature was translated into Kazakh and into seven American Indian languages and dialects including Apache, Flathead dialect, Papago, Puget Salish, Shoshone, and Tewa. The Bahá'í Publishing Trust in the period under review produced an impressive amount of literature including books, pamphlets, study outlines and other materials covering a wide range of subjects including some of particular relevance to the goals of the Five Year Plan. Among these mention could be made of the Comprehensive Deepening Programme (1973 and 1974); *Tokens from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* (1973); the Star Study Programme comprising deepening booklets on various topics (1974, 1975 and 1976); an assortment of pamphlets on the equality of men and women (1975); a brochure "Women: Attaining Their Birthright" (1975); *Selected Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* and *Selected Writings of Shoghi Effendi* (1975); *Messages from The Universal House of Justice: 1968-1973* (1976); and *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* (4th revised edition, paper, 1976).

'Properties in the Bahamas called for in the

Five Year Plan were acquired: a national endowment, national Ḥazírat'l-Quds and a Temple site. Moreover, assistance was given to the National Spiritual Assembly of Dahomey (Benin), Togo and Niger in the acquisition of a Temple site in Lomé, Togo; and to the National Spiritual Assembly of West Africa in the acquisition of a national Ḥazíratu'l-Quds in Freetown, Sierra Leone. The Geyserville Bahá'í School property in California was replaced through the acquisition of a sixty-seven acre property with buildings; more than eight acres of land were added to the Green Acre property in Eliot, Maine; and eighty acres of land were acquired in Pleasant Hill, Oklahoma.

'Three distinguished American believers were accorded public recognition in their respective fields. In 1975 Dr. Dorothy Nelson, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly, and Dean and Professor of Law at the University of Southern California, was chosen as one of the recipients of the 1975 *Pax Orbis Ex Jure* Medallion Awards by the Centre Associates World Peace Through Law Centre, an award bestowed upon "women throughout the world who have contributed significantly to the cause of world peace through their understanding and pursuance of successful

international relations in the world community."

"Mr. Robert Hayden, Professor of English at the University of Michigan and associate editor of *World Order* magazine, was appointed in 1976 consultant in poetry to the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., the first black poet to be named to this prestigious position. Mr. Hayden is the author of a number of books of poetry and was winner of the chief award at the first World Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar, Sénégal in 1962. In 1971 he was awarded the Russell Loines Award for poetry by the National Institute of Arts and Letters and in 1975 received an award from the Academy of American Poets.

"On 9 March 1976 Mr. John Birks "Dizzy" Gillespie, one of the world's leading jazz musicians, was honoured in his home State of South Carolina where a special joint session of the South Carolina Legislature convened to pay tribute to his contribution "to the world of music and the State of South Carolina." In the presence of Governor James B. Edwards, Mr. Gillespie received a plaque from the South Carolina Arts Commissions and attended a reception held in his honour by Governor Edwards."

South America

ARGENTINA

"The growth and development of the Argentine Bahá'í community during the period from Ridván 1973 to Ridván 1976 has been characterized by the establishment of strong, active teaching centres throughout the length and breadth of the country. Ten Regional Teaching Committees have been formed to broaden the base of the national teaching programme. The Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizí, meeting with the friends in Buenos Aires in July 1974, expressed his great satisfaction with the progress of the Faith in Argentina since his last visit in 1962. The warmth of his loving counsel encouraged the friends to win even greater victories.

"In November of that same year the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir made a whirlwind tour of the entire country and constantly urged the friends to teach the masses. Upon his return visit in April 1976 the Argentine community was inspired to plan five specific regional teaching projects, the first to be launched in the Chaco Province in July 1976,

aimed at achieving a vast increase in the size of the community.

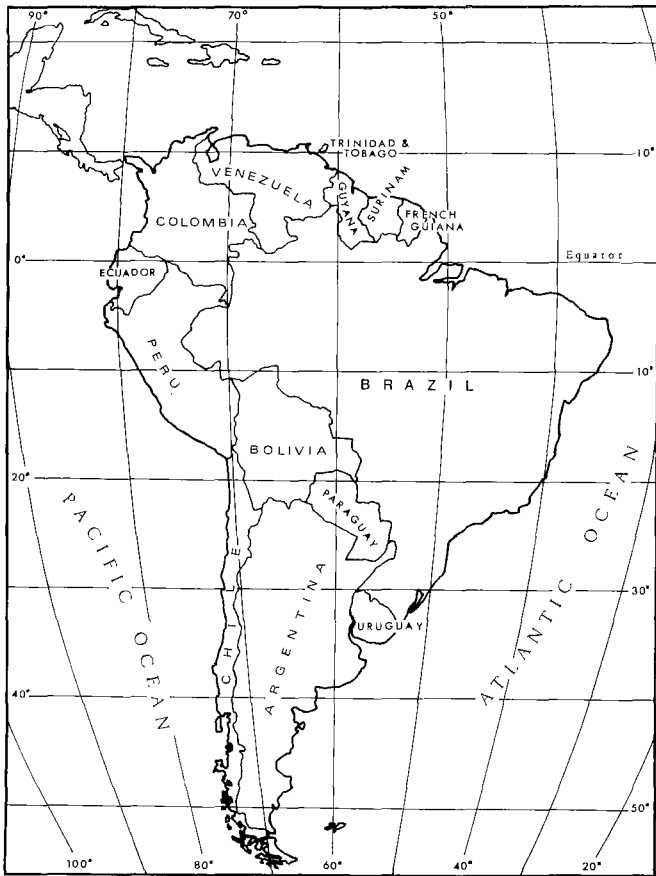
"In April 1975 Argentina was privileged to be visited by the Hand of the Cause Dr. Adelbert Mühlshlegel. Although advanced in age, Dr. Mühlshlegel held many meetings and inspired the friends with his spirit of sacrificial service. He delivered a talk in Esperanto at the Esperantist Centre in Buenos Aires and urged the Bahá'ís to develop stronger ties with this important group of people who are striving for the establishment of a common ideal.

"The election during this period of the first Indian Bahá'ís to the National Spiritual Assembly marked a significant step in the process of the future full-scale conversion of the red race. Florentino Gomez of the Toba tribe was elected at Ridván of 1973 and Gustavo Zabala of the Mataco tribe at Ridván 1976. In the interval under survey women delegates of these two tribes participated for the first time in national conventions and the first Argentine Indian arose to settle in an international pioneering post.

"The National Teaching Centre was inaugurated in Buenos Aires in November 1973 and has since served as the focal centre of a multitude of Bahá'í activities, among them the annual National Teaching Conference.

"One of the most notable events of this period was the holding of the first National Teacher Training Institute, a week-long event held in Buenos Aires in January 1976 under the auspices of Counsellor Athos Costas representing the South American Board. The event drew an attendance of thirty participants, many coming from distant provinces. In addition to National Teaching Conferences, Regional Women's Conferences were held in a number of centres. Two Bahá'í representatives attended a Women's Rights Conference sponsored by the United Nations in Buenos Aires in March 1976.

"National proclamation efforts included the presentation of *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh* to many provincial governors as well as prominent civic leaders. An important television interview resulted in the Faith being proclaimed to millions for the first time on a nation-wide network. In April 1976 Counsellor Athos Costas concluded the recording of a sixteen-part series of fifteen-minute radio talks based on the principal teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. These talks have been offered for distribution among local Bahá'í communities.



Participants in an institute for deepening in knowledge of the Bahá'í Faith, LaLeones, Argentina. Counsellor Athos Costas is seen standing, second from the left.



Bahá'í children's class, Las Lomitas, Argentina; 1975.

'In the field of Bahá'í literature, the Bahá'í Publishing Trust for the Spanish language, Editorial Bahá'í Indo-Latinoamericana (E.B.I.L.A.), edited a number of compilations, pamphlets and books including *A Synopsis and Codification of the Laws and Ordinances of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, *Tablas del Plan Divino* and *La Constitución de la Casa Universal de Justicia*. A national youth bulletin, *Noti-Bahá'í*, was widely appreciated throughout Argentina and a regional news bulletin, *El Ruiseñor*, was received with equal enthusiasm. A special booklet, *Guía para Maestros*, was prepared by the Women and Children's Committee to aid local communities in the development of regular children's classes. Translation of *The Hidden Words* into the Toba language has been initiated and an introductory pamphlet in the Mataco tongue is being written.

'The first Local Spiritual Assembly in the Province of Misiones was formed in the capital city, Posadas. Pioneer families have settled in the capital cities of six other Provinces and the settlement of a pioneer in the remote Pilcomayo River area has established permanent contact with the Mataco tribe. The settlement of these dedicated pioneers and their opening many important centres brings to mind Shoghi

Effendi's promise that the tomb of May Maxwell, designed by him and situated in Buenos Aires, would become an "historic centre" of "pioneer Bahá'í activity".¹

BOLIVIA

'During the three years under review a number of significant events offered evidence that the Bahá'í community of Bolivia is enthusiastically and actively meeting the challenges of the Five Year Plan. Generally speaking, 1973 was a year of consolidation in preparation for the launching of the Five Year Plan in 1974. However, expansion of the Faith continued to demand close attention and approximately 5,000 new believers embraced the Faith between Riḍván 1973 and Riḍván 1976. The number of localities opened to the Faith grew from 3,761 to 4,285 and by Riḍván 1976 a total of 802 Local Spiritual Assemblies was formed. An influx of seventeen new pioneers was another highlight of the first part of the Five Year Plan, as well as the rising up of several native believers to help shoulder the tasks ahead.

¹ Shoghi Effendi, cablegram to the Hand of the Cause William Sutherland Maxwell; see *The Bahá'í World*, vol. VIII, p. 642; *The Priceless Pearl*, p. 155.

'The visit of the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm in June 1975 and of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muḥájir in January 1975 and April 1976 helped tremendously to orient the efforts of the Bahá'ís toward fulfilment of the goals of the Five Year Plan. The journeys of these Hands of the Cause also brought considerable publicity for the Faith, with television, press and radio coverage on several occasions. Another signal event was a gracious interview accorded Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm by the President of the Republic of Bolivia, His Excellency General Hugo Banzer Suárez, to whom she presented Bahá'í literature in Spanish and English. On this occasion Rúhíyyih Khánúm explained to the President that the purpose of her visit to Bolivia was to attend a National Teaching Conference in Totoroko, climaxing her Green Light Expedition, and described the efforts of the Bahá'ís in promoting world peace. President Banzer expressed his sincere appreciation and gratitude for the work of the Bahá'ís in Bolivia.

'The first visit of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Muḥájir resulted in the formulation of a one-year international teaching project in which Bahá'í youth from Argentina, Germany, Mexico, Peru and the United States participated actively. One of the many fruits of this endeavour was the proclamation of the Faith in August 1975 in several new areas, notably Valle Alto of the Department of Cochabamba, and the opening to the Faith of at least one rural teachers' college; thirty students embraced the Cause.

'A pioneer conference held at this same time was a great source of inspiration and practical training, and with the effective assistance of Mr. Donald Witzel of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South America it came to a dramatic conclusion when five of the visiting international travelling teachers who were in attendance decided to remain in Bolivia as pioneers. Dr. Muḥájir's second visit in April 1976 spurred on the teaching work and two continuous projects were launched as a consequence, one in the Andean province of Loayza in the Department of La Paz, and another in the tropical Department of Santa Cruz. Both projects have produced positive results. Constant encouragement and support on the part of Continental Board members Mas'úd Khamsí, Athos Costas, Raúl Pavón and Donald Witzel

contributed greatly to the advances made in the multiple tasks of the teaching work.

'The use of radio for the diffusion of Bahá'í programmes was given new impetus and a special committee was appointed to develop means of utilizing this important type of mass communication. Programmes in Spanish, Quechua and Aymara were broadcast daily in La Paz, and sporadically in several other cities and towns. During the international teaching project of 1975, a series prepared in Ecuador and another entitled "Sr. Juez y la Alfombra Mágica" produced many years ago in the United States, were transmitted without cost from Punata and Cliza. A radio studio is being developed at the national Ḥazíratu'l-Quds and it is hoped that eventually there will have been sufficient programme preparation and recording as to merit the creation of a Bolivian Bahá'í radio station.

'Efforts were made to enrich the quantity of Bahá'í literature in Quechua and Aymara, the two most widely-spoken native languages in Bolivia, with the publication of a prayer book with selected Bahá'í prayers in those two tongues. A basic introductory but comprehensive pamphlet about the Faith, *Cheqan K'anchay Tukuynejpaj*, was published in Quechua and the translation into that language of *The Hidden Words* was initiated. By April 1976 efforts were being made to make contact with and teach the Ayoreo tribe in the Department of Santa Cruz and thus to further diversify the membership of the Bolivian Bahá'í community which already comprises representatives of the Quechua, Aymara, Chiriguano, Chipaya, Moxos, Bauré, Trinitario, Siriono and Tacana tribes.

'A goal of the Five Year Plan for Bolivia was fulfilled in 1975 when a Quechua-speaking Indian couple, Facundo and Felipa Cardozo and their infant daughter, settled in the Cuzco area of Peru as pioneers.

'The National Assembly sadly announced the untimely passing on 3 October 1974 of Louise Jackson, a courageous pioneer who came to Bolivia from the United States in 1970; she is the first Bahá'í pioneer to be buried on Bolivian soil.

'During this period the all-Indian Bahá'í community of Yuraj K'asa acquired not only its own local endowment but also its local Ḥazíratu'l-Quds. The Indian community of Autijipiña also constructed a local Bahá'í Centre

and similar projects were initiated in several other communities. Approximately ten Local Spiritual Assemblies are attempting to establish their own extension teaching programmes and a number of communities have begun to observe dawn prayer meetings as enjoined by the Universal House of Justice.

'An upsurge in activities for women, youth and children was also noted between 1973 and 1976. Deepening institutes, conferences and congresses were prepared especially for the purpose of stimulating further activities and training sessions for teachers of local children's classes were held. More and more communities gave increased attention to the spiritual education of their youngsters by establishing regularly scheduled classes for children. A youth magazine, *Nuevos Horizontes*, began publication, and the preparation of children's materials got under way in 1976.

'In the community of Cochabamba, one Bahá'í woman was given the unique opportunity of participating in a special national women's conference held under non-Bahá'í auspices during the International Women's Year activities, as well as writing several interesting articles from the Bahá'í point of view for a local newspaper. During these three years there was also a marked increase in the number of Bahá'í women who lent their services in the teaching of the Faith.'

BRAZIL

'The Hands of the Cause have especially blessed the Brazilian Bahá'í community during this period with six visits, and each time, with one exception, the visit was connected with an important project, planned or realized.

'The Hand of the Cause Jalál *Kházeh*, well known and much loved in Brazil through his extensive period of service here, was present at the fourteenth national convention when the Five Year Plan of the Universal House of Justice was given to the Bahá'í world and the exciting prospect of hosting the International Bahá'í Teaching Conference of South America in Salvador, Bahia to be held in January 1977, was revealed to our convention. This was an auspicious beginning for the plan in Brazil. With his wise and inspiring counsel, Colonel *Kházeh* gave an initial impulse which was to carry us into the preparation for this great work.

'The Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizi

entered Brazil in Recife on 31 May 1974 and left from Porto Alegre in the south on 26 June. During his brief visit he travelled to nine cities and wherever he stopped he left a wiser, more loving and more closely knit community, and a desire in each Bahá'í heart to serve the Faith ever more diligently and with ever deeper understanding. The friends from a number of distant points gathered in São Paulo to attend the ten-day study course which Mr. Faizi offered covering a wide range of themes which represented a spiritual preparation for the tasks that confront us.

'In the period from 19 October to 12 November 1975, the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir visited fifteen communities and awakened us to the possibilities of large-scale teaching at every social level in preparation for the forthcoming International Teaching Conference. In consultation with the Continental Board of Counsellors and the National Spiritual Assembly, Dr. Muhájir aided in the drawing up of a two-year project which included the publishing of vast quantities of books, brochures and pamphlets, the purchase of a local *Ḥazíratu'l-Quds* in Salvador, the concentrated teaching of many children especially in the Bahia mass teaching area, for the rapid expansion of youth activities in the secondary schools and universities, and for a concentrated teaching effort in each of ten most promising communities. On his return visit in April 1976, Dr. Muhájir was able to consult with the Counsellors in their plenary session, with the National Assembly both before and during the convention, and to formulate with both bodies a great mass teaching project for the entire north-east region of the country. The project placed great emphasis on the winning of families to the Faith and called for bringing one entire village under the shadow of Bahá'u'lláh. The project generated much enthusiasm at the convention, was immediately launched and quickly produced rich fruits: the arising of twenty-five teachers who pledged to devote periods ranging from one to nine months to this work and who began at once to teach in that same area successfully enrolling several hundred new believers in this initial undertaking; and spontaneous contributions of cash, *Ḥazíratu'l-Quds*, schools, cars and even a burro! To accompany this great effort in the north-east, the National Assembly devised a project for the south of the



Newly-acquired National Hazíratu'l-Quds of the Bahá'ís of Brazil; 12 November 1974.

country for gaining the sixty remaining Local Assemblies. Both projects were launched with great enthusiasm, inspired by the memorable visit of Dr. Muhájir.

'In May 1975 the Hand of the Cause Dr. Adelbert Mühlshlegel, accompanied by his wife, spent almost three weeks in the country, passing from the south to the north, spreading the warmth of his loving spirit and his dedication in spite of the illness which cut short his visit. Dr. Mühlshlegel's great longing to fulfil the Master's desire to travel for the Cause was fully realized and a deep spirit of love was generated. His inspirational talks about the Administrative Order were illustrated in flannel-board presentations by Mrs. Mühlshlegel.

'The first national conference of Manaus with the theme "The Challenge of the Amazon" was the great project which was inspired by the visit of the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum in April 1975, coinciding with her stop-over during the Green Light Expedition. The entire undertaking was planned around our distinguished visitor. Three weeks were devoted to publicity and expansion teaching in preparation for her visit and during

the week of her stay all levels of society were reached. Rúhíyyih Khánum was interviewed by the press, on radio and television, and was accorded a cordial and unprecedented interview of forty-five minutes' duration with His Excellency Henoeh Reis, Governor of the State of Amazonas. Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum made an outstanding impression upon the hundreds of students who attended her lectures in preparatory schools and universities. Nearly one hundred of these students embraced the Faith and approximately two hundred requested copies of the Bahá'í correspondence course which the National Assembly supplies without cost to enquirers. "Don't let this die! Go back! Go back!" was her oft-repeated admonition to the Bahá'ís; and new pioneers in this region have responded by doing so.

'With the challenge in mind presented by Dr. Muhájir of finding 1,000 new Bahá'ís in Belo Horizonte a pilot plan was worked out fired by the urgency provided by the many Bahá'í youth who wished to go out as pioneers without depleting the strength of their community. The inspiration came from the Words of Bahá'u'lláh: *Wholly for the sake of God he should proclaim His*

*Message, and with that same spirit accept whatever response his words may evoke in his hearer.*¹ The theme was "Compared Religion" which fitted into the present curriculum of the schools. The goal was to teach 100,000 students during seventy-two days. It was hoped that ten per cent of those reached would manifest further interest by spontaneously requesting the Bahá'í correspondence course. To date, eight schools (with the students of every class participating, a total of 3,166 students) have received the first of the five standard presentations. Fifty-nine per cent of the students have expressed an interest in further study in this first phase of the project as reflected by the 1,868 correspondence courses solicited. The friends throughout Brazil are eagerly awaiting their turn to launch this new type of proclamation and in the city of Salvador where the International Teaching Conference will take place a similar project has already begun.

Other methods of proclaiming the Faith are also being used. Projects similar to that launched in Manaus have been undertaken in ten cities

with excellent results. Bahá'í marriages are impressing the hundreds who have attended them. Expositions at which free literature is offered have resulted in requests for further information. Programmes held in relation to United Nations Day and Human Rights Day are attracting the attention of the press and the public and the number of firesides has increased considerably.

The goal assigned to Brazil, and especially applicable to Rio de Janeiro, of teaching in the island prison of Ilha Grande, was difficult of attainment since the Government does not permit visits to the prison city itself; the most dangerous of prisoners are confined there and outbreaks in the past had been frequent. A determined small group of believers from Rio opened the way through their own contacts with the authorities. Carrying in their hearts the supplication *Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá* they braved the difficulties presented by the turbulent waters and the hostile atmosphere which they at first encountered. As they continued their journeys the atmosphere changed and they were welcomed, not as those seeking a favour but as those bestowing a great blessing. Although it was not

¹ *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, CLXI.



Some members of the committee who co-ordinated the teaching activities arising from the visit of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhiyyih Khánum to Brazil; April 1975.



Some of the first Alacalufe Indian Bahá'ís of Puerto Eden (Port Eden), a small port of 250 inhabitants in Magellan Province, Chile, who accepted the Bahá'í Faith in June 1974 as a result of the teaching effort of Mr. Robert Siegel.

possible to form a Local Spiritual Assembly because of Government restrictions, several members of this prison community, living outside the walls of the prison, accepted the Faith and have implored the friends to return to teach their children. They have received copies of Bahá'í prayers which they cherish and use. More visits are being organized with the objective of reaching the women and children of the community.

'We regret that a survey of this brevity does not permit our giving further details of the events related in this report of the achievements we have been privileged to record thus far in the Five Year Plan.'

CHILE

The development of the Faith in Chile during the three-year period commencing at Ridván 1973 went forward in the face of numerous difficulties resulting from the unsettled political situation in that country which, for a time, inhibited the holding of elections of Bahá'í institutions, and even, in some Provinces, of meetings of the friends.

In June 1973 the National Spiritual Assembly reported that forty-seven Local Spiritual Assemblies had been formed and that one hundred and ninety-two localities had been opened to the Faith. When the Five Year Plan was inaugurated at Ridván 1974, to Chile was assigned a goal of forming seventy-five Local Assemblies and opening to the Faith two hundred and seventy-

five localities. To take full advantage of the teaching of the Mapuche indigenous believers, a ten-room property had been purchased early in 1973 in Nueva Imperial, at the heart of an indigenous area in the Province of Cautín. This property was used for deepening institutes, summer schools, conferences, as a stimulus for youth activities, and as a centre of activity for the Mapuche friends of the region.

The believers of Iquique, a small town in northern Chile, had for more than a year enjoyed excellent relations with the three local radio stations and two newspapers serving that town. Bahá'í travelling teachers had been interviewed on radio, and articles about the Faith had been printed from time to time. In one of the reports from Chile it was stated: 'Last October one member of the Bahá'í group was granted seven or eight minutes of radio time every morning for a period of five days. The Bahá'í presented a talk on references to women in the Sacred Writings. Although the talk was a unified whole, each segment was complete in itself.' The same radio station broadcast excerpts from the Bahá'í Writings as a regular weekly occurrence. The Bahá'í group of Iquique expressed their delight in helping to proclaim the Faith through the expanded use of radio, one of the important goals of the Five Year Plan.

Excellent relations with many Government officials were developed. At the National Convention in 1975, the Mayor of La Cisterna addressed the attendants in words clearly demonstrating his sympathetic attitude toward the Bahá'í Faith, offering the use of the House of Culture (the local meeting hall where the Convention was held) for any Bahá'í activity, stating that it was an honour for his community that such high ideals were being promoted from that place.

In October 1975 the National Assembly reported the enrolment, within a period of four months, of 1,400 new believers in the Mapuche area; Bahá'í activities going forward throughout the country, from Arica, the northernmost point of the country, to Punta Arenas, the southernmost point; the beginnings of continuous movement and activity among the youth; a greater participation of the local communities in contributing to the national fund in the face of a highly difficult economic condition; a vast increase in offers of travelling teachers including a significant number of Mapuche friends; a

strong desire on the part of Bahá'í parents to educate their children in the Divine Teachings; great opportunity to proclaim the Faith through the mass media; two years of uninterrupted publication in the newspaper *El Correo*, of Valdivia, of a column of short excerpts from the Teachings and one year of similar coverage in *La Prensa* of Osorno.

One of the pioneers in Chile travelled to Port Eden, a small port of only 250 inhabitants in the Province of Magellan in the extreme southern part of the country, where he stayed for two weeks. This is the only place where there are Alacalufe Indians. Of the twenty-five members of this tribe that remain, nine became Bahá'ís, adding to the Cause a new race and another signal victory.

It is noteworthy of this devoted and steadfast Bahá'í community that at the end of two years of the Five Year Plan, Chile had surpassed its goal for the number of Local Assemblies, a most significant achievement.

(Based on various reports received by the World Centre).

COLOMBIA

'The Bahá'í community of Colombia had the privilege of launching the Five Year Plan during an international teaching conference held in Cali in April 1974 attended by all six members of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South America, representatives of four South American national communities, and believers from all corners of Colombia. Like one soul in many bodies the Bahá'ís of Colombia responded to the call of the Universal House of Justice: Local Spiritual Assemblies formed special funds for the purpose of their Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds and recruited teachers to complete extension goals; and internal pioneers and travelling teachers offered their services in the entire country.

'In January 1975 the vision of the friends in Colombia was widened as a result of the visit of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muḥájir. In an unforgettable three-day visit during which he met with the believers in three communities, Dr. Muḥájir challenged the Colombian Bahá'ís to concentrate their teaching efforts on reaching entire families instead of individuals. With this new challenge before them, and reinforced by the National Spiritual Assembly's plan for consolidation, the com-

munity carried forward the twin duties of expansion and consolidation.

'In March of that year we were again honoured with the visit of a Hand of the Cause when Dr. Adelbert Mühlischlegel, accompanied by his wife Ursula, came to Colombia and won the hearts of the friends. It was during Dr. Mühlischlegel's visit to Cali that the Continental Board of Counsellors for South America held a conference for Auxiliary Board members from Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela and Colombia; and the Colombian believers were invited to be present during the last two days of the conference. On their way home to Ecuador, Mr. Rufino Gualavasi and Mr. Ralph Dexter, two members of the Auxiliary Board, accompanied by Mr. Arnubio Diaz, a Colombian youth, brought the Faith for the first time to members of the Inga tribe who reside in Sidundoy Valley in the Department of Putumayo.

'The bounties bestowed upon the Colombian Bahá'ís by the All-Merciful had still not reached their end. In April, the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm who was making her historic trip through the Amazon jungle, came to Leticia, the Colombian port along the Amazon river. Although she remained for only two short days, she kindled a flame in Leticia which has not yet reached its zenith. In addition to proclaiming the Faith to Government officials, she and two members of the Colombian National Assembly taught the Faith for the first time to members of the Ticuna tribe. As a follow-up to the visit of Rúhíyyih Khánúm, the Continental Board of Counsellors called for a regional conference to be held in Leticia in March 1976. Present were Counsellors Raúl Pavón and Mas'úd Khamsí of the South American board, as well as Auxiliary Board member Ḥabíb Riḍvání. The proclamation of the Faith was continued through the presentations of programmes performed by groups of Bahá'í musicians and by radio interviews.

'During this period enormous strides were made in the field of translation of Bahá'í literature into the Guajiran language. Two pioneers, Addis and Alan Fryback, arrived in the Guajira in March 1974 and immediately began the arduous task of learning the Guajiran language, and before Riḍván 1976 pamphlets and tapes of the Holy Scriptures were produced in Guajiran.

'In July 1975 the Katio tribe, which lives in

northern Colombia, was introduced to the Faith for the first time through the joint efforts of Clara Ines Grueso, a native believer, and Sherry Howard, a pioneer. Before Riḍván 1976 regular visits were begun in order to deepen these new believers and a Bahá'í prayer for children and some songs with Bahá'í themes were translated into the Katio language.

'In the interval under discussion various methods of expansion were tried. In January 1974, five teams of six members each were sent to all corners of Colombia to participate in a one-month expansion project during which more than two thousand souls accepted the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. For the first time a new method of deepening was employed, the teams returning the day following the person's declaration of faith to begin the study of simple deepening materials designed for village believers. The first "Universal Participation Week" was held in November 1973, an activity which has continued successfully up to the present. Under this project, a week is chosen and the entire national community is invited to participate by praying each morning during the week for the success of the project and by every individual attracting one new believer to the Faith during that time.

'Beginning in January 1976 regional expansion programmes were held all over Colombia. One type of programme, used mainly for training new teachers, utilizes a small group which teaches in a nearby locality for one or two days. Longer programmes lasting from between ten and fifteen days utilize larger groups of more experienced teachers from an entire region of Colombia.

'In the area of children's education much advancement was made during this period. Two Bahá'í youth from the United States were in Colombia for a three-month children's class project during 1973. They began developing a series of teacher's aids for use with the children's booklets, work which culminated in the Bahá'í children's class teacher training course held in December 1973. Five teachers and twenty students lived and studied together for two weeks in a small Colombian village. The results were not only twenty well-trained teachers but also a well-designed correspondence course for children's class teachers and a more comprehensive range of material for children's classes.

'During the years from 1973 to 1976 the Colombian Bahá'í community has advanced in

many fields and shortened the distance separating her from ultimate victory in the Five Year Plan.'

ECUADOR

'During the first half of the Five Year Plan the Bahá'í community of Ecuador had the privilege of being visited twice by the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir. During his visits he gave several interviews on television stations in Quito, Cuenca and Guayaquil and thrice was interviewed by radio stations in Quito. Dr. Muhájir animated the various communities which he visited by telling the friends about the early believers in the Faith and their spirit of sacrifice. As his visit coincided with International Women's Year, some communities took the opportunity to arrange public meetings at which Dr. Muhájir and other believers spoke. Also during International Women's Year, two radio programmes of half an hour each were transmitted by *Radio Municipal de Cultura* and *Casa de la Cultura* in Quito.

'In 1975, the Hand of the Cause Dr. Adelbert Mühlischlegel, accompanied by his wife, came to Ecuador. Because of difficulties caused by the altitude their visit was confined to Guayaquil. While Dr. Mühlischlegel was in Guayaquil many friends, including the members of the National Spiritual Assembly, attended the meetings at which he spoke on the theme of the importance of service and the spirituality which should characterize the believers.

'The community of Cuenca, with the aid of Mrs. Patricia Conger, a member of the Auxiliary Board, arranged various public meetings during International Women's Year. They also participated in an exhibition at the *Casa de la Cultura* where they displayed posters bearing quotations from the Writings on the equality of men and women and exhibited publications of the Bahá'í International Community and the United Nations on the subject of women's rights. The Bahá'ís also participated in a thirty-minute television programme related to this event.

'Beginning in 1973, regularly scheduled classes for children have been established in a significant number of communities, utilizing local community teachers most of whom are themselves mothers. A course of study in thirty-two parts covering a wide range of subjects has been prepared for use in children's classes and ar-

rangements have been made for its publication. A highly successful regional conference on the subject of the training of Bahá'í children was held in Tachina, Esmeraldas Province, early in 1976, under the aegis of the Continental Board of Counsellors.

'As its contribution to the first *Tandanakuy* (conference of Quechua-speaking believers, similar to a North American Indian Native Council meeting or "pow wow") held in Cuzco, Peru in August 1975, the community of Ecuador published a Quechua translation of *The New Garden*. A literacy booklet as well as a prayer book for children have already been translated into Quechua. It is planned to publish the prayer book and present it as our contribution to the second *Tandanakuy* to be held in Bolivia.

'A property has been acquired in Cuenca for use as a local Ḥazíratu'l-Quds and that community has also acquired a cemetery. Land has been donated in Majua, and in both Guayaquil and Esmeraldas funds have been established for the purchase of a Ḥazíratu'l-Quds.

'The Universal House of Justice encouraged the Bahá'í community of Ecuador to investigate the possibility, during the Five Year Plan, of purchasing a broadcasting station and thus operating the first Bahá'í-owned radio station in the world. Some measures leading to this goal had already been taken prior to 1973 and the community is continuing to exert every effort to obtain from the Ecuadorian Government the necessary licence. Meanwhile, from 1973 onward, programmes have been transmitted on a regular basis by twelve commercial radio stations thus giving almost complete national coverage.

'For two consecutive years in the period being reviewed the Bahá'ís participated in the annual exhibition *Feria de las Flores y las Frutas* where thousands of people from Ecuador and abroad who attended this event received the message of Bahá'u'lláh.

'Intensive teaching projects which produced excellent results took place in the regions of Esmeraldas, Quito, Loja, Carchi, Manabi, Morna Santiago and Chimborazo, the last mentioned being of particular significance because it was a mass teaching project and the majority of participants were indigenous peoples of Imbabura.

'The most outstanding event of the period was the inauguration in December 1973 of the Bahá'í

Institute named after the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum in Otavalo, an event which was followed by a teaching conference. Present were Counsellors Athos Costas, Mas'úd Khamsí, Peter McLaren, Raúl Pavón and Donald Witzel and other Bahá'ís from Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Bolivia and the United States. Indigenous believers from all parts of Ecuador actively participated in the conference. The principal language used during the proceedings was Spanish but many of the speeches were translated into Quechua.

'The settling of Mr. William Rodriguez as a pioneer in Leticia, Colombia, the National Spiritual Assembly hopes, will serve as an example and inspiration for the Bahá'í youth of Ecuador.'

GUYANA, SURINAM AND FRENCH GUIANA

'One of the principal goals assigned to the National Assembly in the Five Year Plan was the establishment of the National Spiritual Assembly of Surinam and French Guiana with its seat in Paramaribo, Surinam. In its message to the Bahá'ís of the world at Naw-Rúz 1976 the Universal house of Justice called for the election of this new body at Ridván 1977. Thus, much of the activity of the community was directed towards the eventual establishment of this new independent administrative entity.

'In October 1974 the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir visited Guyana, Surinam and French Guiana, inspiring and guiding us in our teaching work. He encouraged us to increase and extend our teaching efforts by seeking to double the size of our community membership and advised us to reinforce the process of consolidation through teaching entire families and establishing children's classes on a regular basis.

'The Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum visited Surinam in March 1975 during her Green Light Expedition and opened to the Faith new areas deep in the interior of Surinam.

'In the process of extending the teaching work the Faith has now been taken to the western and eastern borders and to the southernmost village in Guyana. In Surinam, the eastern border has been the scene of considerable activity resulting in the enrolment of new believers among the

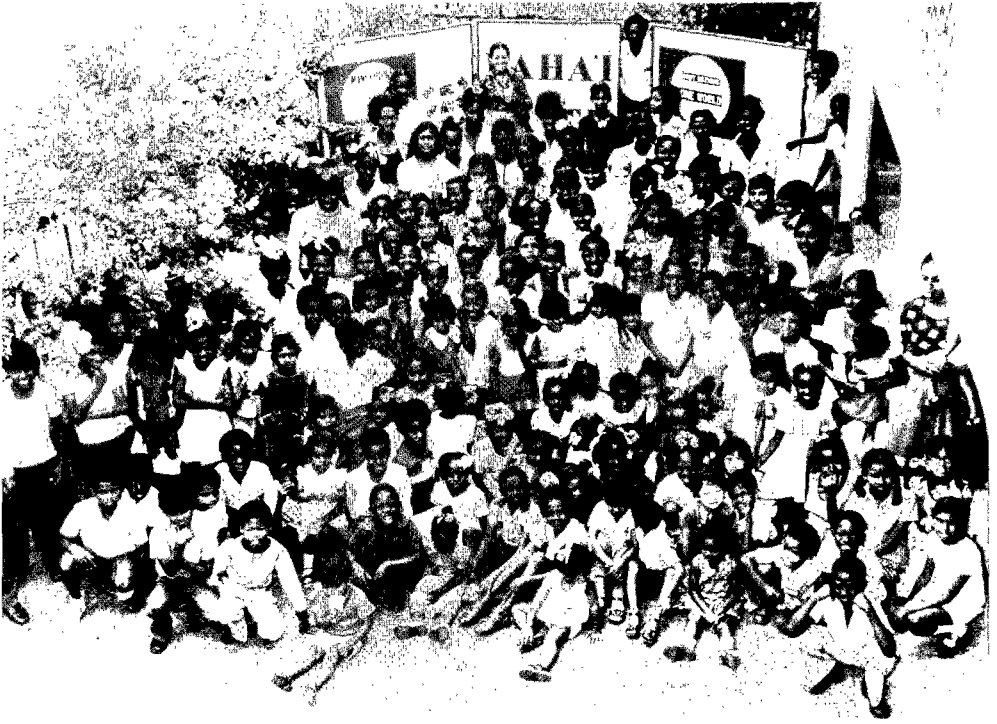
Amerindians and Bush Negroes and the deepening of existing communities. The western border of Surinam was opened to the Faith and a Local Spiritual Assembly formed among people of East Indian background, thus enriching the diversity of the Bahá'í community. A noteworthy development in French Guiana was the increase in numbers and the deepening of believers in areas outside Cayenne as well as among the Galibi Indians. The number of believers in the three regions comprising this national community grew from approximately 750 to more than 1,800, including a large number of youth.

'The National Youth Committee of Guyana has held regular deepening classes designed for youth in various villages. The fourth annual youth camp was attended by more than one hundred and seventy-five participants compared with thirty-five who attended the first camp in 1973. Unprecedented publicity was obtained in 1976 with three articles in the press, one appearing on the front page and two being accompanied by photographs. Youth are playing an increasingly important role in supporting the teaching and consolidation work in all areas in Guyana.

'The number of children's classes held on a regular basis has increased from two to more than twelve in Guyana, and to two in Surinam. Our second annual children's conference held in Georgetown attracted an attendance of one hundred and thirty children from more than seven localities who came to share the prayers and selections from *The Hidden Words* which they had memorized.

'We now have a regular weekly ten-minute radio programme in Guyana which is heard throughout the country. Over the past two years quotations from the Bahá'í Writings have been placed in the newspaper on a regular basis. Mailings to members of parliament and officials of the Government of Guyana have included a prayer of Bahá'u'lláh, the statement on loyalty to Government and introductory literature. A proclamation week in Georgetown in November 1975 featured display boards placed in strategic points throughout the city, a public meeting for which eight hundred invitations were mailed and distribution of literature to more than six schools.

'In Surinam there was participation in the Independence Fair with a large and attractive



Second annual Bahá'í children's conference, held at the national Bahá'í Centre, Georgetown, Guyana; 28 March 1976. In attendance were 128 children representing 9 communities, and 25 adults participated.

Bahá'í booth. The event which was held from 19 November to 7 December 1975 drew an attendance of more than 35,000 people. The Bahá'ís also participated in the Independence Parade which attracted more than 100,000 viewers and had a television interview which was seen by an estimated 150,000 people.

In Guyana representatives of the Macusi, the Waiwai and the Wapiashanna tribes embraced the Faith in 1975-1976.

Three Bahá'í newsletters, each in a different language, are now being distributed on a regular basis in our region. In the period under review there was a small printing of prayers in Taki-Taki (Sranang Tongo), and some teaching aids and additional prayers were translated into Galibi.

Our first international travelling teachers were sent from Guyana to Trinidad in 1975 and to Jamaica in 1976.

The first properties to be acquired by the Bahá'ís in Surinam were the Temple site (early 1975) and the national Ḥazíratu'l-Quds in Paramaribo which was acquired in September of

that year and opened with a public ceremony. This structure, which now serves as the local Ḥazíratu'l-Quds, was utilized in conjunction with the Bahá'í booth at the trade fair in November-December 1975. The first district Ḥazíratu'l-Quds in Guyana was acquired in Annandale. The dedication ceremony was attended by many people from that region and was accorded publicity in the press. It now serves as the local Ḥazíratu'l-Quds for Annandale and as the office for the District Teaching Committee.

The following general trends have been observed in the period being discussed. In Guyana, there has been an upsurge in the participation of Bahá'í youth in all aspects of the teaching work including the opening of new areas, the forming of Local Spiritual Assemblies and the consolidation of communities. The believers have begun to adopt personal goals and many have achieved them. An increasing number volunteer to assist in all Bahá'í activities. In Surinam, a greater number of believers sup-

port all aspects of Bahá'í activities and an increased degree of collaboration has developed in teaching projects between Surinam and French Guiana. In French Guiana, the believers have become more deeply aware of the significance of the Faith and have demonstrated their loyalty to it. There is a growing maturity among believers outside the capital city and particularly among the Galibi Indians.'

PARAGUAY

'The years between Riḍván 1973 and Riḍván 1976 were not very fruitful ones for Paraguay. However, the visits of three beloved Hands of the Cause—Dr. Adelbert Mühlshlegel, who was accompanied by his lovely wife; Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir; and Mr. Enoch Olinga—left us with a renewed spirit.

'One significant proclamation event took place in the small town of Villarrica early in 1974. The programme which included films about the United Nations and the Bahá'í film *El Alba* was announced for a month in advance by radio publicity and street banners. The Bahá'ís who optimistically hoped to attract an audience of 300 from among the 25,000 population of the town were astonished when 4,500 people attended the showing of the films and listened attentively to the message of Bahá'u'lláh presented by a representative of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South America.

'In December 1974 a successful summer school was held just outside the capital city. In attendance was Mrs. Leonora Armstrong of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South America and other Bahá'ís from Paraguay, Uruguay, Argentina and Bolivia.

'Teaching trips have been made to various communities in the country and on at least one occasion books were presented to the authorities.

'Children's classes have begun on a regular basis in several communities and are held sporadically in others.

'There is a close relationship between the Continental Board of Counsellors and members of the Auxiliary Board and the national and local administrative bodies. The climax of these years was a particularly outstanding national convention, infused with a spirit of love and unity. The Auxiliary Board members gave their total and invaluable co-operation for the election of

the new National Spiritual Assembly (1976) and although we are unable to report many outstanding activities during the period under review the new spirit evident among the believers at Riḍván 1976 gives the National Assembly high hopes of winning the goals through a new leap forward.'

PERU

'At Riḍván 1973 there were one hundred and three Local Spiritual Assemblies in Peru. The first Bahá'í winter school was held in Chupaca at an altitude of 3,500 ft. In October a National Youth Conference was held on Cuzco with one hundred friends participating. Mr. Raúl Pavón of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South America attended the conference and assisted with proclamation meetings at the university and in nearby towns.

'Nearly one hundred believers from all regions in Peru gathered at the national Centre in Lima in July 1973 at the invitation of the Continental Board of Counsellors. A television crew filmed portions of the meeting which were shown on local news programmes for two consecutive days. The Continental Board of Counsellors introduced the friends to the newly-appointed Counsellor, Mrs. Leonora Armstrong, and bade farewell to Counsellor Hooper Dunbar who was departing to take up his duties at the International Teaching Centre in the Holy Land. The Counsellors also participated in a National Teaching Conference and two of them were interviewed on a popular television programme, "Twenty-four Hours", which is viewed throughout the country. In addition, Bahá'í programmes in Quechua were presented over a Cuzco radio station.

'The seventh international Bahá'í summer school was held with more than two hundred participating including many believers from Brazil. A vigorous forty-day teaching project was initiated in the ancient Inca capital, Cuzco, and the first public Bahá'í talk in Quechua ever to be given there was presented by Exaltación Quispe.

'One hundred and fifty persons received the Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizí with special welcoming songs and banners which attracted much interest among airport officials and members of the public. Mr. Faizí inspired young parents with his talk on child education



Peruvian Bahá'í youth who participated in a teaching project in Cuzco, Peru.

when he appeared as the honoured guest at the national conference held 6–7 July 1974.

‘Several half-hour television programmes, “Man and the World”, were presented over the University of Lima’s channel under the direction of Counsellor Mas‘úd Khamsí and Auxiliary Board member Fernando Schiantarelli. Through the participation of Bahá'í youth, their hidden talents were discovered. The tragic passing of an active and dedicated youth, Iris Morales, deeply affected the youth of Peru and inspired closer bonds of affection among the young friends. Many enquirers embraced the Faith following her passing.

‘The year 1975 initiated a new era of native pioneering with seven Bahá'ís settling in goal areas in the Amazon jungle and the high Andes mountains. During the summer school twelve persons accepted the Faith.

‘The Hand of the Cause Dr. Adelbert Mühlischlegel gave a public talk and appeared on television while visiting the Bahá'ís of Lima. Bahá'í women honoured Mrs. Ursula Mühlischlegel at a tea and round table discussion before her interview on television.

‘Our particularly cherished visitor was the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm whose presence in our country, with

members of the Green Light Expedition, created numerous opportunities to present the Faith in Peru. Her talk at the summit of Macchu Picchu stimulated the Indian believers through the recognition and appreciation accorded the old Inca culture. Also stressed was the great future of the Indian peoples prophesied by ‘Abdu'l-Bahá.

‘With the permission of the Universal House of Justice the Continental Board of Counsellors in South America planned an international teaching conference for Quechua-speaking believers from Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador which was held in Cuzco, the ancient Inca capital. Our beloved Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm remained in South America especially to participate in this gathering, inspiring the friends and assuring them of their future in the Faith. Thus, four hundred years after the arrival of the Spanish conquerors, the Bahá'í Indians of these countries for the first time had an opportunity to gather and, in their own language, consult on the affairs of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in a three-day programme.

‘Through the special encouragement, and assistance of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm visits were made to the Aguaruna tribe, a branch of the Jivaro (or Shuara) Indians who were



Bahá'is and their friends who gathered to hear Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm speak about the Green Light Expedition, Lima, Peru; June 1975.

formerly known for their practice of "shrinking" heads. The Aguaruna are one of the tribes mentioned by Shoghi Effendi in his Ten Year Crusade. After the visit of Enrique Sanchez, a youth from Lima, Shahrok Zargarpour, and Alberto Guerrero, a native of Chiclayo, Temashnun became a nucleus of Bahá'í activities for the tribe.

'After the Green Light Expedition, one of the places that started to bloom was Leticia which is the central Amazon port of three countries; a conference sponsored there by the Continental Board of Counsellors was attended by friends from Brazil, Colombia and Peru. Later the International Committee of Amazonas whose membership is composed of believers from these three countries continued teaching activities with good results.

'During the year 1976, Mr. K. Dean Stephens of Puerto Rico, a radio and television engineer, offered technical advice and helped the National Radio Committee plan their programmes. He also shared a television interview with Counsellor Mas'úd Khamsí.

'Two Local Spiritual Assemblies were formed in Chinchá among the Negro people after this area was opened to the Faith. Vista Alegre and

Cabbo Cocha on the Amazon river were also opened.

'Peru was the site of a conference and training institute attended by sixty Indian believers many of whom arose as travelling teachers in their own areas.

'The presence of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muḥájir on the final day of the international summer school stimulated a most successful campaign of teaching in surrounding areas.

'Peru is once again blessed with the presence of Miss Eve Blanche Nicklin, the "mother" of Peru, who despite her failing health continues her pioneering in Ica where she assisted in forming the first Local Spiritual Assembly, aided by a native teacher.

'Five sixteen-year old Bahá'í youth participated in a successful three-month teaching trip under a plan made in collaboration between the National Spiritual Assemblies of Bolivia, Paraguay, Argentina, Peru and Chile.'

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

'The Hand of the Cause Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá arrived in Trinidad on 16 August 1973 and



The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir (centre), accompanied by three members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Trinidad and Tobago, paying a courtesy call on the Hon. Sir A. H. McShine, Acting Governor-General; 5 October 1974.

departed on 21 August. Publicity was arranged for him through the news media—radio, television and the two local newspapers. Dr. Varqá met the Bahá'ís of north and central Trinidad and imparted his love and guidance. He also visited the Temple site at Five Rivers, Arouca.

'The Hand of the Cause Jalál Kházeh made a brief and inspiring visit to Trinidad in May 1974 during which he met with the National Spiritual Assembly, attended two Bahá'í meetings in central Trinidad, lectured at a secondary school in Couva to an audience of more than fifty students and teachers, and was interviewed on Radio Trinidad.

'Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir visited Trinidad from 29 September to 7 October 1974. Dr. Muhájir paid a courtesy call on the then Acting

Governor-General of Trinidad and Tobago, The Honourable Sir A. H. McShine, C.B.E., in company with three representatives of the National Spiritual Assembly. Dr. Muhájir also appeared on "Community Dateline", a special television interview programme. A reception in Dr. Muhájir's honour was held in Couva with many dignitaries and Government officials present, as well as representatives of the news media. Dr. Muhájir spoke to the gathering on the principles of the Faith and emphasized that Bahá'ís are obedient to the Government of their country. On 6 October, International Children's Day was celebrated with fifty Bahá'í children and their friends attending. The entire programme, prepared and conducted by the children themselves, was most spirited and successful. The highlight of the gathering was the

presence of Dr. Muhájir whose love for all present was a precious bounty.

'The quarterly meeting of the Continental Board of Counsellors for South America was held in Trinidad in August 1974 with five members of the Board in attendance. Some of the Counsellors attended the first national summer school held at Fairy Queen Bay, Tobago from 11 to 18 August 1974. During their meeting in Trinidad the opportunity was taken to have the Counsellors, accompanied by a representative of the National Assembly, pay courtesy calls on the Governor-General, His Excellency Sir Ellis Clarke, and the Mayor of Port-of-Spain. A most successful press conference was held for the five Counsellors at the national Bahá'í Centre in Port-of-Spain. An extract from the interview was released on the radio news broadcast the same night and both national newspapers, *The Express* and *The Guardian*, published a short account of the interviews at the press conference.

'On 16 August 1974 Counsellor Mas'úd Khamsi and representatives of the National Spiritual Assembly paid a courtesy call on His Excellency President Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara of the Gambia who, with his wife, was visiting Trinidad to attend the Ninth International Convention of the Caribbean Veterinary Association; His Excellency is president of the Commonwealth Veterinary Association. The delegation was cordially received by the President and his party in his private suite at the Hilton Hotel. The Bahá'ís expressed their gratitude for being granted the pleasure of meeting him, as he had extended a similar honour to the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum when she visited his country in 1971 during the course of her African safari. The President expressed his satisfaction with the Bahá'ís residing in The Gambia and his appreciation of the work they are doing, and accepted a copy of a Bahá'í news bulletin containing a photograph and an account of his audience with Rúhíyyih Khánum.

'In December 1975 Mrs. Leonora Armstrong, a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors for South America and the spiritual "mother" of Latin America, visited Trinidad *en route* to Brazil, and met the friends from the north and central regions of Trinidad. She recounted her experiences during her first visit to Trinidad in 1927 when there were no Bahá'ís living here and expressed her joy that the Bahá'í

community of today was accomplishing all that she had been unable to accomplish during her brief stay. She stressed that the power of God to establish His Cause is infinite. Her brief visit, so warm and loving, inspired all who met her.

'In October 1973 two representatives of the National Assembly were accorded a cordial interview by His Excellency Sir Ellis Clarke, Governor-General of Trinidad to whom they presented *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh* and *The Prisoner and the Kings* which he received with pleasure and expressed an interest in reading. Fifteen copies of various Bahá'í books including *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, *Paris Talks*, *Some Answered Questions* and *The Divine Art of Living* were donated to the public library in Port-of-Spain, and the library later requested additional books. A well-known local book store in Port-of-Spain now displays and sells Bahá'í literature and the public has been informed of its availability regularly through our radio programme. Public response has been good.

'A parcel of two lots of land was acquired as an endowment at Carolina Village in central Trinidad, and an acre of land was donated to the Local Assembly of Palmyra in south Trinidad for use as the site of the local *Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds* and an endowment land. A group of one hundred and fifty Bahá'ís gathered at the site for a celebration at Naw-Rúz 1976.

'The Women and Children's Education Committee held several activities in connection with International Women's Year in 1975 in various villages of central Trinidad where most of the women, many of them of East Indian background and members of sugar-belt families, have traditionally been deprived of higher formal education and freedom of activity. The Bahá'í women themselves arranged and conducted the activities which took place. The highlight of observances of International Women's Year in Trinidad and Tobago was a half-hour programme on television moderated by Miss Shamsi Sedaghat who interviewed a panel of three Bahá'í women. The panel members, rather new Bahá'ís with little formal education, so lucidly and spontaneously described the effect of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings on their lives that they stimulated a warm, enthusiastic and favourable response from the public.

'In addition, Bahá'í women were invited to

participate in several meetings held by the Commission for the Status of Women, as well as the International Women's Year celebration held in Trinidad in March 1975 under non-Bahá'í auspices. The contributions made to these events by the Bahá'ís emphasized the principle of equality between men and women as delineated in the Bahá'í Writings.

'Several well-attended Bahá'í children's classes have been held in Trinidad on a regular basis during this period and some of the children have been invited to appear on the Bahá'í television programme. One entire class session was televised. Using charts and other materials, the children explained progressive revelation and a programme of songs with Bahá'í themes was interspersed between the presentation each child offered about one of the great religions of the world. The participation of Bahá'í children in television activities helped open the way for the presentation of more sophisticated programmes utilizing panels of Bahá'í youth with Bahá'í children singing songs occasionally during the broadcast, the showing of Bahá'í films and slides with live commentary, and others. Two representatives of the Bahá'í community were invited to appear on a panel programme for adults arranged by the Inter-Religious Organization on an aspect of ecumenism. The comments offered by the Bahá'í panelists were well received.

'In addition to the above television programmes the weekly five-minute free radio broadcast continued during this period. Programming included a presentation of basic facts about the Bahá'í Faith, an outline of its teachings and principles, and special programmes were presented on Bahá'í Holy Days. Response has been encouraging. An excellent relationship has been established with the news media and the two major newspapers have, from time to time, published articles on the Faith and reported significant events including the visits of outstanding Bahá'í guests.

'The National Youth Committee conducted the first National Youth Conference under the joint auspices of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South America and the National Spiritual Assembly. It was held for two days in Mayaro, a village on the south-eastern coast of Trinidad. In the past, due to the fewness of Bahá'í youth in the country, most activities for youth consisted of primary teaching and deepening, culminating in this wonderfully

successful conference. Visitors to the country were also in attendance.'

URUGUAY

'The period between Riḍván 1973 and Riḍván 1976 saw many interesting and important activities in the development of the Faith in Uruguay. Outstanding among these were the visits of two Hands of the Cause. Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir visited the country in early December 1974 at which time he met with the National Spiritual Assembly and the Bahá'í communities of Montevideo and Maldonado. The friends were deeply impressed with his great spirit of devotion and love of the Faith. At that time he told the National Assembly that it must prepare itself to conquer the country in the name of Bahá'u'lláh.

'In early May 1975 the Hand of the Cause Dr. Adelbert Mühlischlegel, accompanied by his wife, visited the community of Montevideo and held deepening sessions for the friends. His simple yet profound exposition of basic Bahá'í principles was inspiring and of great value to all those who heard him.

'Many visits of members of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South America were also received during the period. An especially frequent visitor was Counsellor Athos Costas whose counsel and vigilance have been of inestimable value to the national Bahá'í community. We also received two visits from Counsellor Leonora Holsapple Armstrong—the first permanent pioneer to Latin America—one at the international summer school held in Paysandú in February 1974, and the second in January 1975. All who had the privilege of meeting her were moved by her great devotion to the Faith. We also had the privilege of being visited by Counsellor Raúl Pavón in January 1975. His visit, coinciding with that of Mrs. Armstrong and Mr. Costas, provided an opportunity for the three Counsellors to meet with the National Spiritual Assembly in a special meeting to give greater impulse to achieving the goals of the Five Year Plan. During the period under review, Mr. Aminu'lláh Mandegari, a devoted Persian pioneer who has spent many years in this country and who has been instrumental in opening many new localities to the Faith, was appointed to the Auxiliary Board.

'Several conferences were held during the period. In August 1973 a deepening institute was



Some Bahá'ís of Montevideo and Porto Alegre, Brazil, who participated with the Bahá'ís of Uruguay in a teaching project in Rivera, Uruguay; 1974.



Bahá'í children's class, Montevideo, Uruguay; 1974.

held for the first time in El Dorado, Canelones, attended by approximately thirty-five believers. During the same month a similar institute was held in Montevideo for the friends of that city. Another national meeting, particularly animated in nature, was held in March 1974 for the purpose of discussing the goals of the Five Year Plan. In November 1974 a national administrative conference was held attended by representatives from several Local Spiritual Assemblies from throughout the country. Counsellor Athos Costas and Auxiliary Board member Ramón Moreira also participated as instructors for the various sessions.

'During the period two travelling teachers visited us, Mr. Miguel Paniagua of Argentina and Mrs. Eugenia Pritchard of the United States. Mr. Paniagua visited many communities in the interior of the country where he conducted deepening classes and taught the Faith to enquirers. Mrs. Pritchard visited communities in Canelones, teaching the Faith through the assistance of a translator.

'The incorporation of two Local Spiritual Assemblies was achieved during the period. These were pending goals of the Nine Year Plan and were accomplished shortly after that plan had terminated.

'A very successful endeavour was the initiation of a correspondence course which was announced through advertisements in a national newspaper. In the space of a few months in 1974 nearly one hundred persons wrote enquiring about the Faith and requesting literature and correspondence lessons.

'An interesting sidelight of the period was the showing in the residence of the United Kingdom Ambassador to Uruguay, Mr. Peter Oliver, C.M.G., in February 1974, of two Bahá'í films to a group of Bahá'ís and interested friends. About twenty people were present including Mrs. Pritchard who had brought one of the films, *It's Just the Beginning*, from the United States.

'Although at the time of the writing of this report, Uruguay is still far from fully achieving its goals, the believers are confident that the goals will be won through the co-operation of the friends and the promised assistance of Bahá'u'lláh.'

VENEZUELA

'As we enter the second half of the Five Year Plan we find ourselves with some important

goals accomplished but with many others awaiting urgent attention. Perhaps the most important change is not a measurable accomplishment at all, but a subtle difference in atmosphere among both the Bahá'ís and students of the Faith. There is a rising spiritual awareness, more interest in deepening and prayer and a burgeoning of activity among the youth in some parts of the country. Awareness of teaching opportunities has increased and some of the friends are spontaneously undertaking teaching trips, often by bus.

'There have been several experiments in proclamation in universities and cultural centres. These have given us some valuable preparation for the nation-wide proclamation effort scheduled for the autumn of 1976. Local Spiritual Assemblies have been asked to prepare places for exhibitions, follow-up meetings, and firesides, and some of the people who were involved in earlier programmes are helping to prepare various aspects of the project including exhibitions, slide programmes, articles, radio spot announcements and so on.

'A recording studio has been nearly completed in the national Centre and soon scripts will be prepared and the actual taping will be undertaken.

'In the rural areas the problems of expansion and consolidation are as challenging as ever. There has been some progress on the part of Local Spiritual Assemblies in the construction and acquisition of *Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds*. There are new local Centres in Cabimas, Bejuco and Villa del Rosario in the State of Zulia. The community of Ciudad Bolívar has acquired land and cleared it and is raising funds for the purpose of beginning construction. In the Amazon Territory in the far south of the country the National Spiritual Assembly has recently acquired three houses for use as a teaching institute. This was sorely needed, as the area is a large one with many indigenous believers scattered over hundreds of square miles of river and jungle. A central location for teaching near the major town of the region will contribute greatly to the level of deepening in the area.

'Teaching in the Indian areas continues to expand slowly. There are now Bahá'ís among the Motilón (Barre) of the Sierra de Perijá, the Paraujano of the Guajira Peninsula, the Maco of the Amazonas and the Cabloco of the Rio Negro near the Brazilian border. Representatives of

these tribes were introduced to the Faith and enrolled since the beginning of the Five Year Plan. The first translations of Bahá'í prayers have been made into Maco and Piaroa. Previously, no Bahá'í literature existed in these tongues.

'There have been consistent efforts to encourage women to become active in teaching and administration, particularly in the area of children's classes and children's committees; and, in fact, in many parts of the country the women who are teachers of the Cause outnumber the men.

'Correspondence courses have been prepared and are being readied for production in time to be used in the follow-up programme after the national proclamation project is launched.

'At Riḍván 1974 there were 157 Local

Spiritual Assemblies in Venezuela and the Faith was established in 462 localities. By Riḍván 1976 these figures had increased to 172 and 491, respectively. Nevertheless, herculean effort will be required to meet the goals of the Five Year Plan.

'Early in the period under review we had two visits by Hands of the Cause. In February 1975 Dr. Adelbert Mühlischlegel spent some time with us and in March of that year Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum visited during the course of the Green Light Expedition and was cordially received by His Excellency Dr. Pablo Anduze, Governor of the State of Amazonas. Since her visit there has been a marked increase in the attention given to the Amazon area, largely because of the interest she expressed in that region and the love she holds for it.'

C. ASIA

Three new National Spiritual Assemblies came into being in Asia in the period under review, two at Riḍván 1974 (one of these being Hong Kong with its seat in Kowloon) and one at Riḍván 1975 (Jordan, with its seat in Amman).

For the purposes of the functioning of the Continental Boards of Counsellors, Asia is divided into four zones:

- North-eastern Asia
- South Central Asia
- South-eastern Asia
- Western Asia

A number of the national communities within these zones function under external circumstances inimical to the Faith. The situation in some of these territories is described under 'Efforts toward the emancipation of the Bahá'í Faith' on pages 136 to 138 of this survey.

Set out below are excerpts from reports from some of the National Spiritual Assemblies in Asia which operate under benign circumstances.

North-eastern Asia

THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

'In December 1973 the National Spiritual Assembly initiated production of a thirteen-part half-hour colour videotape television series entitled "The New World". Through songs with Bahá'í themes, and interviews of Bahá'ís, the

series presents an introduction to the Bahá'í Faith. The Hand of the Cause of God William Sears prepared scripts and narrated, or appeared as a guest in, the series. Many other outstanding Bahá'ís appeared in the series which was broadcast by a Honolulu television station twice in 1975 and once again in 1976. The State Legislature of the Hawaiian Islands (both Houses) passed resolutions commending the series which received wide acclaim in the newspapers.¹ As a result of the series the Faith has become better known, respect for it has grown and more enquiries about it are received. The series has been made available for purchase by other National Assemblies and has already been used with great success in Alaska and American Samoa. Early in 1976 a weekly half-hour radio series also entitled "The New World" was initiated over a Honolulu radio station.

'The largest and first international Bahá'í conference ever held in Hawaii—the Bahá'í International Youth Conference—took place in 1974 and generated the most publicity ever given to the Faith in the islands. More than sixteen thousand persons attended proclamation meetings held in conjunction with the conference, while thousands more heard the Bahá'í message over radio and television. Held from 4–8 August in Hilo, the conference was attended by one

¹ See p. 378.



PROCLAMATION
OF THE
BAHÁ'Í FAITH
IN THE
HAWAIIAN
ISLANDS

Some members of the Hawaiian Bahá'í chorus. The joyful performances of this multi-racial singing group proclaimed the Bahá'í Faith through music and song.



Judge Betty M. Vitousek (left) of the Family Court of the State of Hawaii receiving the Agnes Baldwin Alexander Award for Service to Humanity from the Bahá'í Community of Hawaii for her outstanding contributions to community life; July 1975. (See p. 231.)



thousand Bahá'ís from thirty-five countries. The Hands of the Cause William Sears, H. Collis Featherstone, and Abu'l-Qásim Faizí attended and addressed the conference. Also in attendance were three members of the Continental Board of Counsellors and many Auxiliary Board members. Featured entertainers at the proclamation programmes were the noted musicians Seals and Crofts, and England Dan and John Ford Coley.

It should be noted that Mr. Sears visited Hawaii several times during this period in relation to the filming of the television series. During his visits he also met with the National Spiritual Assembly and spoke at general meetings for the Bahá'ís. On 23 December 1973, with Mr. Robert Quigley, a distinguished American Bahá'í, he presented a programme on the life of Lua Getsinger, who was designated by the Guardian "the mother teacher of the West." On 24 March 1975 Mr. Sears again visited, accompanied by Mr. John Birks "Dizzy" Gillespie, an outstanding American Bahá'í who is internationally renowned as a musician; and on 4 May 1975 Mr. Sears was accompanied by Dr. Victor de Araujo, the accredited representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations.

The meeting of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir with the National Spiritual Assembly in December 1975 resulted in a new teaching effort. Dr. Muhájir also spoke to the Bahá'ís on all the islands.

In 1975 the National Assembly established NAHBOHR (the National Spiritual Assembly of Hawaiian Bahá'ís Office for Human Rights) and in conjunction with the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of the late Hand of the Cause Agnes Baldwin Alexander¹ created an award bearing her name which is presented to citizens of the Hawaiian Islands who render outstanding service to humanity. On 20 July 1975, the anniversary date, an International Women's Year banquet was held in Honolulu sponsored by the National Assembly and NAHBOHR at which the Judge Betty M. Vitousek of the Honolulu Family Court became the first recipient of the award. A number of United States Senators and Congressmen sent messages of congratulation to the National Assembly for creating the award, and the

function resulted in considerable publicity and enhanced prestige for the Faith.

In August 1973 a National Public Information Office was established. It prepares and distributes to the public information representatives of Local Spiritual Assemblies press kits relating to Bahá'í special events, Holy Days and visitors, and sponsors public information workshops. Publicity about the Faith has increased throughout the islands as a result of the work of this office.

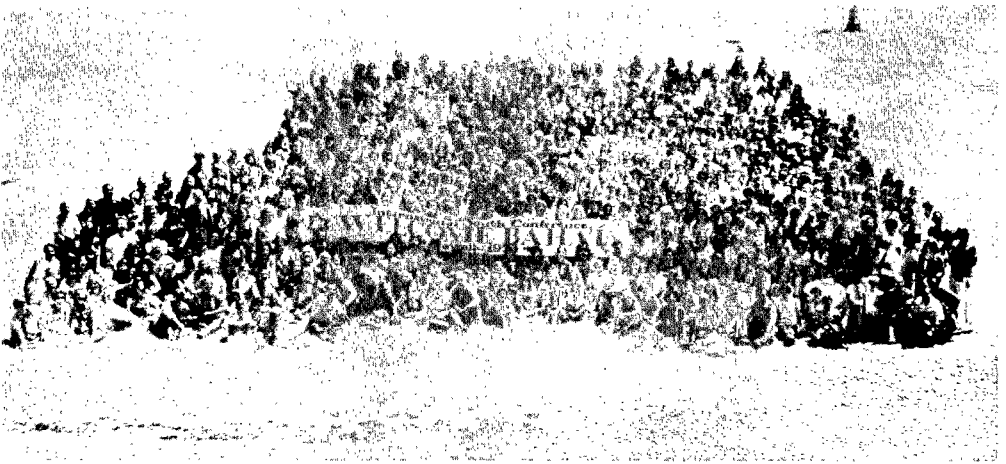
Each year the Hawaiian Bahá'í community has entered a float in the annual Aloha Week Parade held each October in Honolulu. In 1973 the Bahá'í float received second prize, in 1974 second prize, and in 1975 first prize in its category. Each year the float was seen by thousands over local television. In the last two years the float was also seen by millions of persons over national network television on Thanksgiving Day. The parade was also seen over television in Japan and in the United States Trust Territory.

In 1973 the National Assembly launched a one year teaching plan to maintain current pioneers and to assist the National Spiritual Assembly of the North West Pacific Ocean with pioneers, travelling teachers and the publication of literature. In June 1974 the Universal House of Justice sent a message outlining specific goals for the Hawaiian Bahá'í community. There have been many teaching conferences held at the local and national levels to achieve Hawaii's goals. In addition, many special public meetings have been held on days commemorating Bahá'í special events to attract the public to hear about the Faith. Early in 1976, as a result of the inspirational visit of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir, mass teaching programmes were again activated on all islands and consequently contact has been made with thousands of enquirers.

An international pioneering and travelling teaching staff was established by the National Assembly to assist all potential pioneers and travelling teachers. All of Hawaii's pioneering and travelling teaching goals were achieved within the period under review.

The Legislature of the Hawaiian Islands in 1974 approved a bill recognizing Spiritual Assemblies as marriage officiants; heretofore licenses to perform marriage were granted to individuals on the same basis as to clergymen.

¹ See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, p. 423.



Participants in the Bahá'í International Youth Conference held in Hilo, Hawaii; 4-8 August 1974. Approximately 1,000 Bahá'ís from 35 countries were in attendance. An audience of more than 10,000 attended the subsequent proclamation programme at Waikiki on Oahu Island.



Approximately 150 Bahá'ís of the Hawaiian Islands participated in the construction of this float which took first place in its category in the Aloha Week Parade in Honolulu; October 1975. An estimated 80,000 persons witnessed the parade which was filmed and later broadcast over television.

On 25 April 1974 the bill was signed by the Governor.¹

'The Governor, each year in the period being discussed, has signed World Peace Day Proclamations; and each year on or about 21 March a Bahá'í has been asked to read the opening prayer in the State Senate.

'Classes for children are held weekly in eight Bahá'í communities. The first Bahá'í children's summer camp in Hawaii was held in August 1973 at Kalopa State Park on the island of Hawaii with twenty-five children ranging in age from six to thirteen in attendance. In 1975 a similar camp was held with thirty-three children attending, ranging in age from five to thirteen.

'Clearing of the land and the planning of the site was begun during this period at the permanent Bahá'í school at Puna on the island of Hawaii; the land was acquired in 1971. Building plans were submitted to the County and State Commissions. In addition, land for the Puna Bahá'í Centre was purchased.

'The National Child Education Committee continued publication of the periodical *The Lamplighter*. In 1974 it published a "Bahá'í Puzzle Book" and a revised edition of "Bahá'í Quotations on Education"; and in 1975 it produced a children's colouring book with Bahá'í themes. The Short Obligatory Prayer and a prayer of the Báb were translated into Hawaiian in 1974.

'On the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of the Hand of the Cause Agnes Baldwin Alexander, the National Spiritual Assembly arranged to place on her grave in Kawaihao cemetery in Honolulu a new headstone suitably inscribed and bearing an indication of her station in the Faith.

'In 1975 Evelyn Musacchia, recording secretary of the National Assembly, was appointed a member of the Advisory Council of the Hawaii State Board of Education. A year earlier, at the request of the Hawaiian chapter of UNICEF that a Bahá'í be appointed to its board, the National Spiritual Assembly appointed Mrs. Serrita Herbert to this post.'

JAPAN

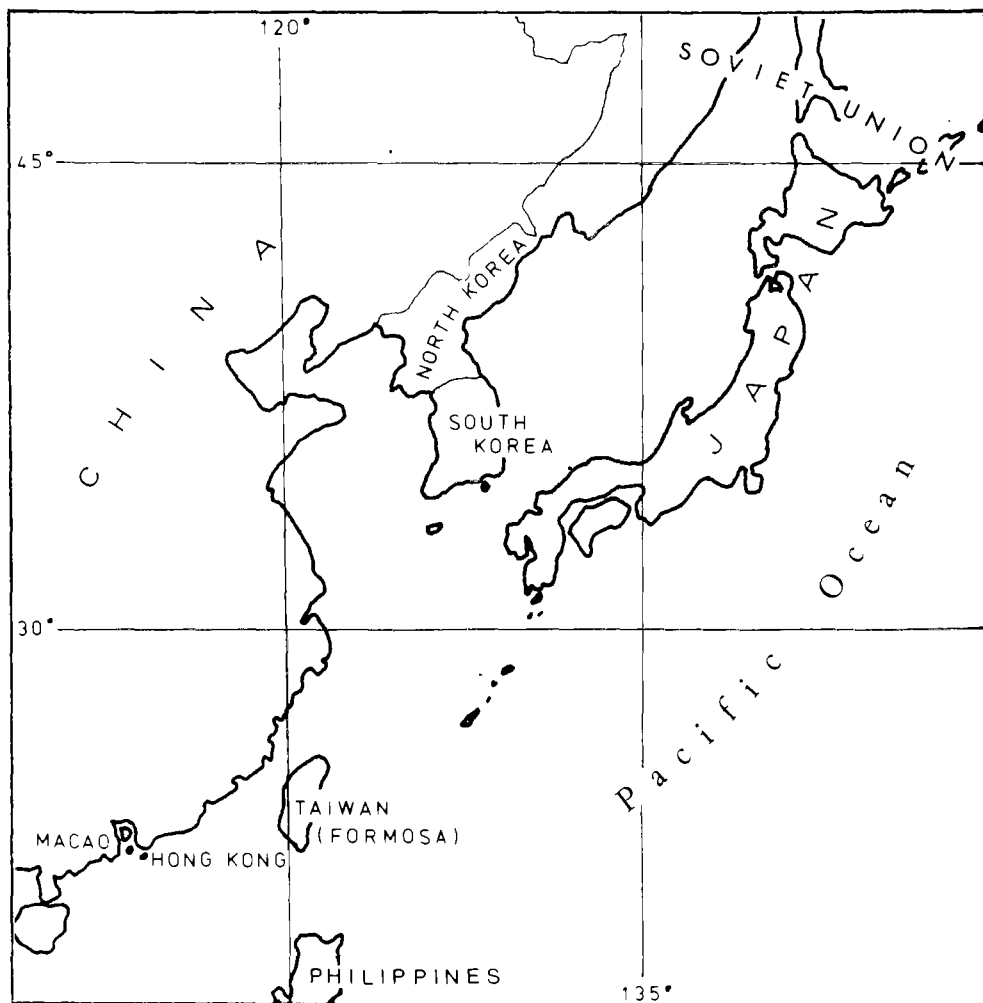
'The National Spiritual Assembly of North East Asia came into being in 1957 with its seat in Tokyo, Japan and has experienced several

changes of jurisdiction. In 1974 it was dissolved with the formation of two independent administrative entities, the National Spiritual Assemblies of Japan and Hong Kong, with their seats in Tokyo and Kowloon, respectively. Japan is a land of sagacious people and the country is now emerging as an economic giant among nations. Vital forces propel Japan toward the great spiritual destiny foretold for her in the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi. The Hand of the Cause William Sears who represented the Universal House of Justice at the inaugural convention in 1974 at which the Five Year Plan was launched dramatically quoted in his address the Words of the Master: *Japan will turn ablaze!*

'As we stand at the mid-way point of the plan some significant teaching activities shed some illumination on the path leading to this destiny. A pioneer, Mr. Masaaki Ushibata, volunteered to assist the National Spiritual Assembly of the North West Pacific Ocean on a full-time basis, and he has been blessed with notable confirmations in the islands of that area. Native believers and pioneers from Japan served as travelling teachers in Korea, enabling that country to see a marked increase in the number of new believers and a strengthening of the consolidation work there. Within Japan, teaching was greatly accelerated; every week teams or individuals travelled to goal cities. The expansion of the Faith in the country was reinforced through the engagement of a Japanese Bahá'í serving as a travelling teacher on a full-time basis. No doubt a numerical increase in the number of believers from Japan who are making their pilgrimage to the World Centre and attending international conferences has stimulated travelling teaching abroad and weekend visits to communities on the homefront. Individual teaching continued in several areas in northern Japan including Chugoku, Kansai and Kyushu, and the new Bahá'ís in these communities have shown remarkable teaching and administrative capacities. A non-native believer in Kyushu has developed direct teaching and close association with English-Speaking Clubs in thirty-two widely scattered universities; this often results in well-attended firesides in the home as well.

'Youth have travelled occasionally, visited some universities, and assisted in consolidating new localities. A youth conference held in the first year of the Five Year Plan, as well as other

¹ See marriage license issued to the Spiritual Assembly of Lihue, p. 376.



conferences in Kyushu and Hokkaido, and the summer schools, fulfil this goal of the plan.

'The Bahá'í women of Japan appear to outshine the men in the initiation of activities. In Tokyo, Kansai and Kyushu, Bahá'í women hold children's classes. More women than men serve as travelling teachers; three serve as members of the Auxiliary Board; in the period under review a second woman was elected to the National Assembly. One Bahá'í woman visited nearly all twenty goal cities, another volunteered to devote a year to travelling teaching within the country, and several women are active in translation and developing material for children.

'The publication in English of *Japan Will Turn Ablaze!* strengthened the capacity of the new Japanese Publishing Trust established in 1974 and attracted world-wide interest. Translation

into Japanese has been completed of the *Kitáb-i-Íqán, The Constitution of the Universal House of Justice*, and *Bahá'u'lláh by the Hand of the Cause* Hasan M. Balyúzi, and other translations are in process. The publication of these titles as well as the Japanese edition of *Japan Will Turn Ablaze!* will greatly enhance the work of deepening the knowledge of the friends. The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá recently produced by the Trust, and a booklet on the functions of a Local Spiritual Assembly put out by the National Assembly, attracted widespread interest among the believers. Assisting the Malaysian National Spiritual Assembly with a work in Chinese took us a step closer toward our goal of reaching the Chinese people.

'Two Hands of the Cause visited Japan, adding an inestimable impetus. Mr. William



Presentation of Bahá'í literature to Mr. S. Oyama, Mayor of Kurashiki, Japan; April 1975.

Sears, accompanied by his wife, Marguerite, travelled to several communities prior to the inaugural convention. He saw many believers in the Tokyo area, Kansai, Hiroshima and Ube (Chugoku); met with members of the Continental Board of Counsellors and their Auxiliary Boards; addressed a youth conference and spoke to individual believers and to groups. His enthusiasm, humour and acute insights lifted the spirits of the friends to another dimension and stirred their desire to serve.

'Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir visited twice, each time stimulating new or renewed teaching activities directed to the goals of the plan. Dr. Muhájir's visits to Tokyo, Kansai, Chugoku and Kyushu were very successful, resulting, specifically in Kyushu, in a number of people accepting the Faith. At the 1976 annual convention, Dr. Muhájir inspired many to volunteer for travelling teaching within the country as well as in Korea.

'Two new buildings were erected for use as Centres, one in Sapporo and another in Amagasaki, as replacements for the small houses which had served as centres in the early years of the Ten Year Crusade. The Centres in Nagasaki and Hiroshima have been repaired, repainted

and decorated; they are used for many Bahá'í activities. A substantial sum has been allocated by the National Spiritual Assembly toward the purchase of the Hong Kong Temple site and we expect this goal to be accomplished soon.

'The national office has greatly increased its communications with the community. Circulars, information sheets, news bulletins and the Japanese Bahá'í News are published regularly and frequently, thus significantly aiding the deepening of the knowledge of the maturing friends and Local Assemblies. A growing recognition of the importance of observing Feasts and Holy Days has been noted throughout the national community. In addition to an increase in the number of those engaging in travelling teaching it also has been noted that newly-registered believers are becoming fully active in community affairs more quickly than in the past. Another observable trend has been an increased use of advertising. Some communities are inserting free announcements in a section of the newspaper reserved for notices of meetings resulting in larger numbers of people attending the gatherings. Plans have been laid for the increased use of mass media, particularly radio and television, during the remainder of the Five

Year Plan. The use of tapes and slides provided by the Audio-Visual Committee to attract the public and to provide deepening is another trend that is lighting the path.

'We labour individually and collectively, aware of gradual progress, moving ever closer toward a large-scale response on the part of the public, confident that eventually the key will be turned in the last door barring us from ultimate victory.'

KOREA

'The development of the Bahá'í Faith in Korea in the period from Riḍván 1973 has been characterized by a strengthening of local communities, a deepening of the knowledge of the Faith on the part of the individual friends, an increased use of audio-visual teaching materials, the enrichment of Bahá'í literature translated into Korean, a steady growth in the number of localities where Bahá'ís reside from 565 to 640 and an increase in membership of approximately 5,500. Significant highlights of the period were the first courtesy visits paid by a distinguished Bahá'í traveller to high-ranking Government officials, and the first live television interview and publicity about the Faith in other mass media on the occasion of the marriage of two Bahá'ís.

'The Korean community had the privilege of the presence of the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone for a five-day visit commencing on 14 July 1974. Mr Featherstone paid courtesy calls upon the Deputy-Governor of Chung-cheongnam-do Province, the Deputy-Mayor of Taejon city, the Provincial Police Superintendent and the Provincial Superintendent of the Board of Education. This was the first time in Korean Bahá'í history that visits have been made to high-ranking Government figures. A fifteen-minute live television interview featuring Mr. Featherstone was broadcast by MBC Taejon television station.

'The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muḥájir made several visits to Korea and spent his time primarily in advising and encouraging the National Spiritual Assembly in its teaching efforts.

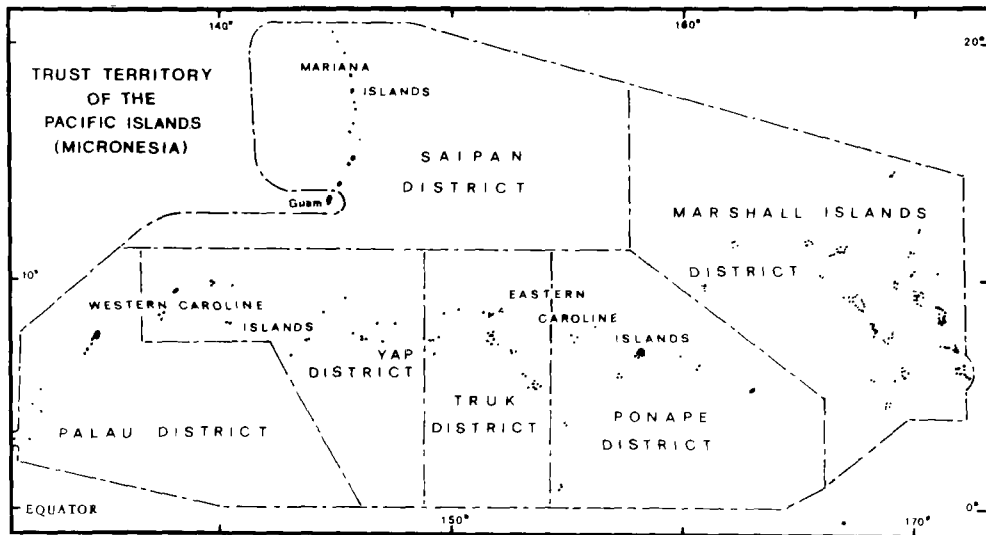
'Mr. Rúḥu'lláh Mumtázi and Mr. Richard Benson of the Continental Board of Counsellors in North-eastern Asia also met with the National Spiritual Assembly and members of the Korean community on several occasions, offering encouragement and advice in relation to the

teaching effort. The presence of Counsellor Mumtázi at the twelfth national convention resulted in expressions of unreserved allegiance to the Cause on the part of all the delegates and friends who were in attendance. During his visit to Korea in September 1974, Counsellor Benson visited Sangha-ri and Dun-ri where groups of approximately eighty and one-hundred and thirty, respectively, both Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís, came to listen to his presentation of the message of Bahá'u'lláh.

'A stream of pioneers and international travelling teachers spent time in Korea. Among the visiting teachers were Dale and Nahid Eng who arrived in May 1973 and spent four months teaching extensively and seeking particularly to bring the Faith to the attention of college students in Taejon; Mrs. Shirin Fozdar who visited for the second time in July 1975 following her attendance as a representative of the Bahá'í International Community at the International Women's Year Conference in Mexico and who consulted with the National Assembly on means of increasing opportunities for Korean women to participate actively in the work of the Cause; and some groups of travelling teachers from Japan, of various nationalities and including the chairman of the Japanese National Assembly, who responded to the request of Dr. Muḥájir that they send teachers to Korea. The teaching teams from Japan whose services are much appreciated spent varying periods in Korea, visited a number of communities and took part in the National Teaching Conference held at Yesan Teaching Institute in January 1976. One visiting teacher, Mr. Vahadad, accompanied by Mr. Sam-Bong Park, a member of the National Assembly of Korea, succeeded in opening to the Faith the village of Heukseong-ri in Kwangyang-gun county, after a week-long teaching effort in January 1976.

'Efforts to teach among college and high school students were pursued with some success. Mrs. Barbara Enger and Mrs. Florence Kelly played a great role in teaching these students in English, using *The New Garden*. A Youth Unity Feast was sponsored by Seoul youth in August 1975 with about eighty Bahá'í youth and their friends in attendance.

'The Bahá'í marriage of Mr. Kamál Riḍván-i-Nijid to Miss Hak-ja Choe resulted in considerable publicity for the Faith. The bridegroom is the only Iranian resident in Korea and the



wedding ceremony was reported in various daily newspapers, weekly magazines, by radio news programmes and on television. While being interviewed he was asked about the Faith and he offered a brief outline of the history and principles. The interview was seen three times on MBC television and broadcast on the radio on "News of the Day", and several newspapers and weekly magazines carried a photograph of the couple.

'In February 1976 the Bahá'í Publishing Trust of Korea was established and formally registered with the Government,¹ thus achieving one of the major goals of the Five Year Plan for Korea. Bahá'í literature available in Korean was greatly enriched through the translation and/or publication of twenty books and pamphlets. *Some Answered Questions* and *Ninety-Five Bahá'í Questions and Answers* were the major works produced during the period. Audio-visual teaching materials were purchased in great numbers and almost all Bahá'í filmstrips and slide programmes available from the United States Publishing Trust were acquired.

'The National Spiritual Assembly has taken initial steps to gather, edit and publish a booklet outlining the first half-century of the history of the Bahá'í Faith in Korea, the volume covering the period from 1921, when the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh was first brought to Korea by the Hand of the Cause Agnes Baldwin Alexander, up to 1975. Material for this work has been collected as the first phase of the plan for its ultimate publication.'

¹ See p. 380.

THE NORTH WEST PACIFIC OCEAN

'The one year plan of the National Spiritual Assembly for 1973-1974 included a teacher training class, radio programmes and new publications. This programme was supported by several pioneers and travelling teachers recruited by the National Teaching Committee.

'The teacher training class was held in Guam in December 1973 for one or two Bahá'ís from each of the main island groups: Palau and Yap, in the Western Carolines; the Marianas; Truk and Ponape, in the Eastern Carolines; and the Marshalls.

'Radio programmes translated into the principal island languages were broadcast in the administrative centre of each of the island groups. The booklet *God's New Age* was published in Palauan and Japanese. The pamphlet *Bahá'í Proofs from the Bible* was published in Marshallese. Later during the Five Year Plan publications included *The Message of Bahá'u'lláh*, a pamphlet in Palauan; and *Bahá'í Teachings: Light for All Religions*, a booklet printed with the English and Ponaapean texts appearing side by side.

'Mrs. Rose Makwelung, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly, was the first Micronesian Bahá'í from this national community to participate in an International Bahá'í Convention and to make a pilgrimage to the World Centre of the Faith. After her return from the Holy Land she travelled to each island group

to share her experience with the Bahá'ís and their friends.

'By Riqván 1976 ninety-six of the minimum two hundred localities called for in the Five Year Plan were opened to the Faith: twenty-three in the Marshalls, thirty-nine in the Eastern Carolines, twenty-one in the Marianas, and thirteen in the Western Carolines. Thirty-four of the fifty Local Spiritual Assemblies called for in the plan were formed, a net increase of nine since 1973. The greatest increases were in the Marshalls and in the Truk District of the Eastern Carolines, with seven and five more, respectively, than in 1973. Three significant trends were seen in the establishment of these Assemblies: extension teaching by Local Spiritual Assemblies, an increase in travelling teaching projects of several months' duration, and the arising of resident Micronesian believers to carry the Faith to other islands.

'A total of twenty-two travelling teachers served in Micronesia during the past three years. They included eighteen international travelling teachers: five from the United States, five from Hawaii, one from Alaska, two from Tonga, two from the Gilberts, two from Japan and an

American friend from the South West Pacific. The four local residents who taught in other island groups were from Ponape.

'There were pioneers in each island group except Yap; a total of five families and three individual pioneers had come within the year. In addition, two couples arrived in Ponape in the summer of 1973 but neither remained at Riqván 1976. Our feeling of loss is great for both, but especially for one of the couples forced to leave after three months because of a near fatal accident to the wife.

'The Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone, accompanied by his wife, Madge, visited the Marshalls, Ponape, Truk, Guam and Saipan for twenty-five days in September 1974. This visit drew the friends close to the World Centre of the Faith, gave them clearer understanding of the progress and scope of the Cause and strengthened them for the tasks ahead in the next four years. Mr. Featherstone met with the National Spiritual Assembly to discuss the Five Year Plan. He also met with Local Spiritual Assemblies, with groups of believers in conferences, and with individuals, answering questions, inspiring them to greater service. He spoke



The Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone and Mrs. Featherstone being welcomed to Guam by Governor Carlos Garcia Camacho (seated); September 1974.

at several public meetings, met the press in Guam and in Saipan, and was interviewed on television in Saipan. Accompanied by local Bahá'ís, he called on the Governor of Guam and the Bishop of Guam.

'The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir visited Guam, Saipan, Ponape and Ebeye during eight days in December 1975. Coming at the direction of the Universal House of Justice, he met with the National Spiritual Assembly in a special meeting on Saipan, a meeting in which Mr. Richard Benson of the Continental Board of Counsellors in North-eastern Asia also participated. Dr. Muhájir stressed the need for immediate, systematic and continuous action to accomplish "the greatest task" given to any National Spiritual Assembly in the Five Year Plan, namely, to prepare for the formation of four National Spiritual Assemblies within its own jurisdiction. The Hand of the Cause also met with the National Teaching Committees of the Marianas, Eastern Carolines and Marshalls. An article and a photograph of Dr. Muhájir were published in a Guam daily newspaper. Dr. Muhájir spoke at several public meetings, was interviewed on radio in Ponape, and on television in Saipan, and in Ebeye, Marshall Islands.

'From Ebeye, Dr. Muhájir went to Hawaii and then to the continental United States where he raised the call for travelling teachers and pioneers. There was immediate response and pioneers and travelling teachers began to arrive in the islands before the end of January 1976. Astonishing results from acceleration of teaching after his visit included completion of the goal of nine Local Spiritual Assemblies in the Marshalls, the formation of the new Local Spiritual Assemblies in Truk and a marked increase in enrolments in Guam.

'In June 1973 the area of the North West Pacific Ocean was transferred from the jurisdiction of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Australasia to that of the Continental Board of Counsellors in North-eastern Asia, at which time the Universal House of Justice announced the appointment of Mr. Richard Benson of Guam to membership on the Continental Board for the North-eastern Asia zone. The Continental Board of Counsellors appointed a third member of the Auxiliary Board in February 1976 specifically for the Marshall Islands.

'The Five Year Plan calls for at least one

National Teaching Conference each year. The first two immediately followed the national conventions of 1974 and 1975, held in Ponape and Majuro respectively. The third was a successful two-part conference, the first part meeting in Koror, Palau, and the second in Yap.

'In local communities numerous activities and discussions were held on such subjects as the life and sufferings of Bahá'u'lláh, the Covenant, Bahá'í consultation, women in the Bahá'í Faith, teaching the Faith, and prayer, to help the friends gain "a clearer apprehension of the purpose of God for man."¹ A Counsellor's conference was held on Guam in November 1974 on "The Individual and the Five Year Plan." Four nine-day institutes were given designed to assist individuals to plumb the Writings as an aid to spiritual growth and timed to reinforce the effect of Dr. Muhájir's visit in accelerating teaching activity.

'The North West Pacific Ocean embraces two political national entities; thus "Bahá'í Properties, Incorporated" was established as a non-profit corporation in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands where only citizens of the Trust Territory may own land, while a similar body was incorporated in Guam, a territory of the United States. These were necessary steps in order to acquire the four Temple sites, the four district Ḥaziratu'l-Quds, and other properties called for in the Five Year Plan.

'Youth activities included several conferences, activity in the University of Guam Bahá'í Club, travelling teaching and participation in general Bahá'í community work. The National Youth Committee sent a youth from Ponape as its representative to the International Youth Conference in Hilo, Hawaii in July 1974.

'Bahá'í classes for children—another goal fulfilled—were held regularly in Guam, Saipan and Majuro. Bahá'í activities and classes for women were initiated in the Marianas and Marshalls.

'After a year of preparation, the National Assembly began a programme of informing Government and island leaders in all districts of the aims and purposes of the Bahá'í Faith by presenting to selected individuals kits containing publications on the Faith.

'Conducting children's art festivals, participating in parades, offering displays and movies

¹ The Universal House of Justice, message to the Bahá'ís of the World, Riḍván 1967.

for United Nations Day and purchasing a newspaper insert highlighted proclamation efforts of the Bahá'ís in these years.

'The community of the North West Pacific Ocean suffered the loss of two active and well-loved believers. David Russell Benson, a dedicated Bahá'í teacher and member of the National Bahá'í Youth Committee, lost his life in a drowning accident in 1974. Dr. Scott Wilson, widely admired and loved professor at the University of Guam, who served on the National Teaching Committee and on the National Spiritual Assembly, died after a long illness in 1975. Through the prayer services held at the time of the burials of these friends the healing Words of Bahá'u'lláh about the soul and life after death reached many hearts among people of all classes, religions, races and ages in Guam.

'In its message at Ridván 1976 the Universal House of Justice announced the joyful news that the National Spiritual Assembly of the Marshall Islands is to be formed at Ridván 1977, a supplementary achievement of the Five Year Plan. May the other three island groups—the Marianas, Western Carolines and Eastern Carolines—soon win similar victories!'

TAIWAN

'The following is a list summarizing the most significant activities that have taken place in Taiwan since the inception of the Five Year Plan, as well as some events, now in the planning stage, that will take place before the mid-way point:

'June 1974: Children's classes began at the Tainan Bahá'í Centre. Middle school students came on Saturdays to classes devoted to a half-hour study of English and a half-hour study of the Bahá'í teachings.

'July 1974: A three-day deepening institute was held with Mr. Jack McCants, a member of the Auxiliary Board.

'October 1974: The Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone visited for three days.

'November 1974: A nine-day institute was held. The institute included six days of deepening and three days of teaching. As a result three people embraced the Faith including a village Chief of the Taroko tribe. This tribe was represented in the Bahá'í community prior to the inception of the Five Year Plan.

'December 1975: The Women and Children's Committee sponsored a one-day institute at the



Participants in the institute on Bahá'í family life, sponsored by the Women and Children's Committee of Taiwan, held at the Tainan Bahá'í Centre; 25 December 1975. Auxiliary Board member Roxanne Gardner is seen standing on the extreme right, second row.

Tainan Bahá'í Centre on "Bahá'í Family Life". Thirty-eight people, including twelve children, participated in this exciting and successful event.

'February 1976: A winter school sponsored by the Youth Committee was held in Taichung with more than fifty people of various backgrounds in attendance. The event was considered one of the most successful in the history of the Faith in Taiwan. A one-day teaching institute followed. After some discussion and study the friends dispersed to teach in the city. Three thousand introductory leaflets were distributed, a public meeting was held and one enquirer accepted the Faith.

'A mass teaching effort was designed by the National Spiritual Assembly and launched in Pingtung. During the first nine days of the project personal invitations were sent to Government officials, a proclamation kit was presented to a radio station in the area, seventeen thousand full-page Bahá'í inserts were distributed through five newspapers, a reception was held for officials and leading citizens. Five people became Bahá'ís; follow-up efforts, primarily by the Kaohsiung Bahá'í community with assistance from a few international travelling teachers, resulted in an additional eight new believers. A Local Spiritual Assembly was elected, fulfilling one of the goals of the Five Year Plan for Taiwan.

'March 1976: The Women and Children's Committee sponsored an institute on the subject "Education of Children" at the national Bahá'í Centre. Twenty friends attended this lively two-day institute. In that same month the National Central Library invited various independent religions to participate in an exhibition devoted to the scriptures of the religions of China. An attractive display was laid out which included Bahá'í books in English, Persian, Arabic and Chinese, and several Bahá'í photographs. During the exhibition an estimated three thousand people heard of the Faith for the first time.

'May 1976: The Women and Children's Committee sponsored an institute on the subject "Bahá'í Marriage" at the Hualien Bahá'í centre, and a second institute the following month at the Tainan Bahá'í centre.

'Publications in the period included, in addition to various booklets in Chinese, some

compilations of the Universal House of Justice on different subjects, *The Trusted Ones of God* (an illustrated primer for Local Spiritual Assemblies) and *Finding God*, by Charles Duncan.

'Projected plans call for the holding of a summer school in July 1976 at the national Ḥazíratu'l-Quds under the aegis of the National Youth Committee, a National Teaching Conference scheduled to take place in Taipei in December 1976 as a follow-up to the International Teaching Conference in Hong Kong, and other activities organized by the National Youth Committee, the National Teaching Committee, the National Proclamation Committee and the Women and Children's Committee.'

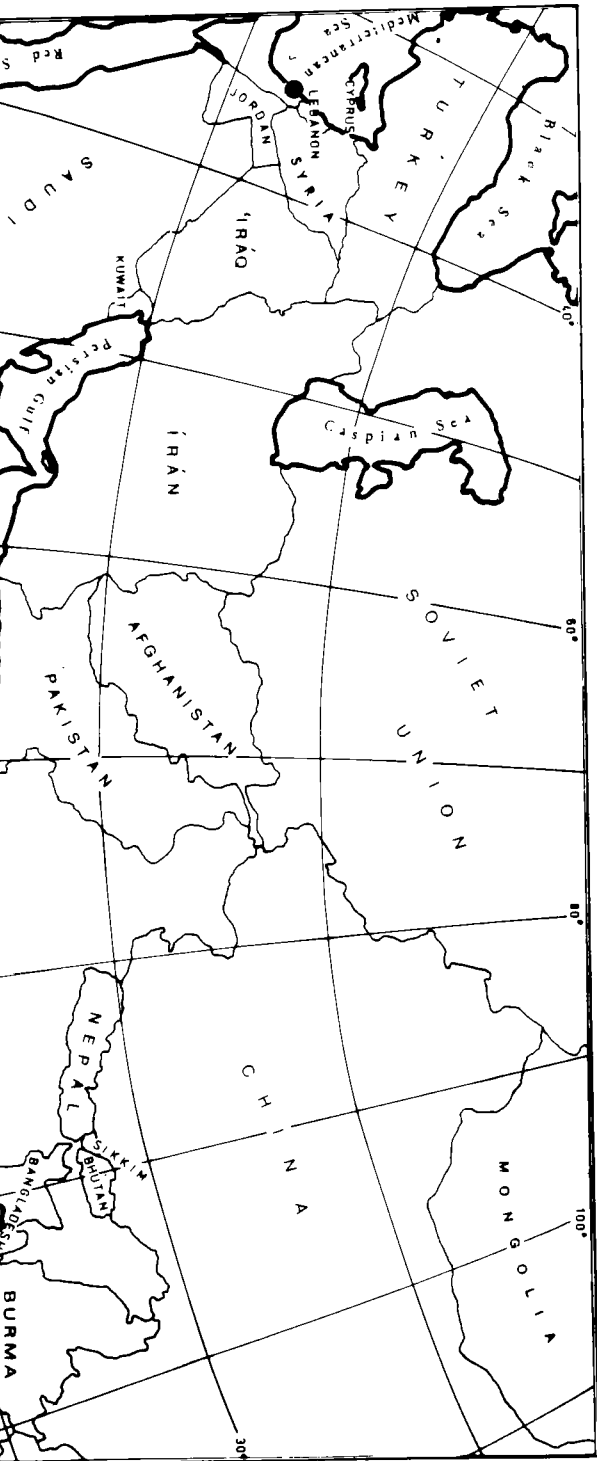
South Central Asia

BANGLADESH

'Riḍván 1974 witnessed the launching of the Five Year Plan throughout the world. The Universal House of Justice blessed the community of Bangladesh by giving it a share in the glorious task of executing the plan. The National Spiritual Assembly, in consultation with the Continental Board of Counsellors in South Central Asia, phased out the goals and called upon the Bahá'ís of Bangladesh for action in fulfilment.

'The arrival of pioneers from Írán, India, Malaysia and the United States greatly aided the work in the period under review. These friends have settled in various goal towns of Bangladesh and have been instrumental in initiating teaching activities and in the consolidation of the Bahá'í communities. Five major towns of the country, namely Chittagong, Jessore, Khulna, Rajshahi and Mymensingh have been particularly strengthened through the settlement of these dear friends from our sister countries.

'The efforts of the believers were rewarded by rapid growth of the Faith and an increasingly impressive list of achievements won for the Blessed Beauty. To date the number of localities where Bahá'ís reside has been raised to two hundred and one, of which thirty-one have formed Local Spiritual Assemblies. Seventeen



Local Assemblies are incorporated and steps are being taken to expedite further registrations.

The Bahá'ís of Bangladesh were overwhelmed with joy when the National Spiritual Assembly announced in June 1975 the purchase of land near Dacca for the site of the future *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár*. The friends gathered to dedicate the land on 18 June 1975.

The acquisition of a district *Ḥazíratu'l-Quds* in Mymensingh, one of the two called for in the Five Year Plan, enabled the National Assembly to set aside another piece of land there for use as a national endowment. Through the generosity of one of the friends a house has been acquired in Mirpur, on the outskirts of Dacca, for use as a *Ḥazíratu'l-Quds*. Two more local *Ḥazíratu'l-Quds* are in process of acquisition in Fatehabad and Chakrashala on the outskirts of Chittagong.

Young Bahá'ís were the main asset of the National Spiritual Assembly in these years; they participated in the work of propagating the Faith to a wonderful degree. They were willing and resourceful workers whenever the National

Assembly launched a project. Particularly noteworthy was the participation of Bahá'í youth in the project entitled "Saturation Teaching" launched as a result of the visit of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir; the minority teaching project; and the programme known as "Project One Hundred Localities" recently launched by the National Assembly to fulfil the remaining goals of the Five Year Plan. Inspired by the visits of the Hands of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih *Khánum* (May 1974) and Dr. Muhájir (November 1975), the youth of Bangladesh penetrated into villages, reached out to contact minorities and tribes, and enrolled in the Faith many people from diverse backgrounds. They were the organizers of and participants in two beautiful gatherings designed for youth, the second summer school held in Chittagong and the fifth winter school held in Dacca. They were also the main inspiration for the friends in the two National Teaching Conferences held during the period under discussion. Their present plans call for the



The Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum (front row) being welcomed to Bangladesh by some Bahá'ís of Mírebagh; May 1974. Seen in the back row are (right) Mrs. Violetie Nakhjaváni and (left) Counsellor Shirin Boman of the South Central Asian Zone.



The Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum (second from right) with His Excellency President Mohammadullah of Bangladesh; 7 June 1974. Counsellor Shirin Boman is seen on the right; Mrs. Violette Nakhjaváni, on the left.

holding of a summer school in October 1976 and a Bahá'í Children's Conference in November.

'Regular tutorial schools were organized for the children of the villages of Tetka and Khadun by two young village Bahá'í teachers, and a third school in Ragunathpur is in process of establishment. Children's classes are being held in Dacca and Mymensingh, and newly declared believers from villages are invited to attend regular weekly deepening classes in these two communities.

'On her visit to Bangladesh in the spring of 1974 Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum was accompanied by Mrs. Shirin Boman of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South Central Asia. Rúhíyyih Khánum's stay in Dacca, and her short visit to Chittagong, were crowded with meetings, the most important of which undoubtedly was that with President Mohammadullah. The friendly and cordial interview lasted more than half an hour and created an opportunity for Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum to present the President with a copy of *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII.

'International Women's Year provided a wonderful opportunity for the presentation to

the public of the Bahá'í principle of equality of men and women. A dramatic change witnessed in this period was the degree to which Bahá'í women participated in the teaching field; many of them worked shoulder to shoulder with their fellow believers in the villages and towns which produced splendid results including the acceptance of the Faith by many of their own sex. This was unprecedented in this country.

'With the assistance of the Bahá'í International Community, the Bahá'ís of Bangladesh seized all possible opportunities to foster good relationships with the Public Information Department and various representatives of the United Nations in Bangladesh. United Nations Day and similar events were befittingly observed, meetings were held in observance of International Women's Year, United Nations publications were distributed to the public and the co-operation of UNDP and UNICEF was obtained in organizing film shows and poster displays to dramatize important United Nations events. In the somewhat remote island of Bhola the Bahá'í community of Charfassion organized an essay competition for International Women's

Year through the co-operation of all the educational institutions of the area. This competition, and the seminar and prize-giving ceremony which followed, were the only observances of International Women's Year on the whole island. Many local dignitaries verbally applauded the role of the Bahá'í community in the celebration. A Bahá'í speaker at the seminar—the only lady to address the meeting—spoke of the Bahá'í principle of equality of the sexes. In addition to these activities some deepening classes throughout the country were devoted to studying the relationship of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations.

'The flow of travelling teachers, the increased participation of ladies and youth, the unity demonstrated by groups of believers of different backgrounds and the sacrificial participation of many Bahá'ís from the villages resulted in spreading the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh far and wide in the country.

'A heart-warming new trend in the period under review is the unprecedented involvement of village Bahá'ís in the teaching work. The spirit of such believers is illustrated by the sincere

appeal recently uttered by a new believer, a boatman by profession, who exclaimed to the teaching team who introduced him to the Faith: "I will take you to all these villages to talk about this wonderful religion. While others hold meetings to spread hatred, why can't we carry love to them?"'

INDIA

'India has a very special role as the largest Bahá'í community with correspondingly formidable goals and as one of the first areas of successful mass teaching. The bounty of visits by the beloved Hands of the Cause since Riḍván 1973 reflects both the love and concern of the Universal House of Justice—Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥiyyih Khánum, 'Alí-Akbar Furútan (on two occasions), Jalál Kházeḥ, H. Collis Featherstone and Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir no less than four times; all these precious visits gave tremendous inspiration and impetus to the teaching work, especially the National Teaching Conference at Bombay in May 1974 honoured by the presence of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥiyyih Khánum, and were later greatly reinforced by visits from Counsel-



Members of the National Bahá'í Youth Committee of India; 1976.

lors 'Azíz Yazdí and Hooper Dunbar of the International Teaching Centre, as special representatives of the House of Justice.

'A major turning point was marked in May 1975 at the first National Teaching Conference of the Five Year Plan held at Bangalore when, for the first time, the majority of the participants were Indian believers.

'The National Teaching Committee is now giving sustained support and guidance to the twenty-four State Teaching Committees and helping them to systematically concentrate their energies with perseverance on the twin processes of expansion and consolidation of the Faith. Emphasis is on the development of Local Spiritual Assemblies, old and new, as vigorous teaching instruments. The National Teaching Committee has issued a series of twenty-two teaching briefs for this purpose, now available in English and Hindi and presently being translated into fourteen regional languages. A revised correspondence course is also in process of translation. Through the English and Hindi editions of this course, approximately 1,000 new believers are being accepted into the Faith annually. In all, about 7,500 people completed the course. Currently 4,000 are receiving it. Approximately 9,000 enquiries were received and 14,000 pieces of literature were issued.

'The youth, stimulated by a vigorous National Youth Committee, are in the fore in all teaching

projects, notably the East-West Project in Kerala (winter 1975) where many eager new believers are now engaged in regular systematic teaching. A successful West Asia Youth Conference was held in Bangalore in July 1973 and subsequent youth conferences have become progressively even more mature and purposeful.

'Substantial buildings have been acquired as State *Házíratu'l-Quds* at Madras, Cannanore, Panchgani, Bangalore, Bhubaneswar, Kanpur, Allahabad, Cochin, Chandigarh, Patna; and village *Házíratu'l-Quds* at Sabalgarh, Rarua, Badka Pura and other places.

'An outstanding proclamation event at Lucknow in July 1975, inaugurated by the State Governor, produced unprecedented nationwide publicity in newspapers, radio, television and cinema newsreels.

'Representatives of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South Central Asia and of the National Spiritual Assembly met and presented copies of *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII and *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh* to Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, President of India, and to Mr. Basappa Danappa Jatti, Vice-president of India, in September 1974. More than five hundred jurists attending an International Law Conference held in New Delhi in December 1974 received specially prepared brochures entitled *Justice and Peace* and *A Pattern for Justice*. Copies were later sent to all Judges of the



The Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum with His Excellency Varahagiri Venkata Giri, President of India; 14 June 1974.



Mr. Kasu Brahmanada Reddy, Minister of Home Affairs of India (left), accepting a copy of The Bahá'í World, vol. XIV, during an interview with (front to back) Counsellor Shirin Boman, of the South Central Asian Board of Counsellors; and Mr. R. N. Shah and Mr. K. H. Vajdi, secretary and chairman, respectively, of the National Spiritual Assembly of India; 24 January 1976.

Supreme Court and Judges of State High Courts.

'Counsellor Hooper Dunbar, with representatives of the National Assembly, called on the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, in October 1975 and presented a copy of *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV. Contacts were also established with Central Ministers and Secretaries as well as with State Ministers, Governors and other high officials.

'Notable among the many local proclamation events which made the Faith known to many thousands in cities, towns and villages all over the country were those in Chandigarh, Bombay, Mangalore, Madras, Bangalore, Pilani and Lucknow.

'In the period under discussion 18,965 people have accepted the Faith and an additional 3,921 localities have been opened. Members of the Koya tribe in Andhra Pradesh have become Bahá'ís.

'A Hindi translation of *Foundations of World Unity* has been published and *The Dawn-*

Breakers has been translated and is in process of being published. Thirty other titles in various regional languages have appeared and a number of other works are nearly ready.

'Although women still constitute only about two or three per cent of the community, there are hopeful signs of progress. In Panchgani a two-day Bahá'í seminar for women was attended by thirty-seven women from surrounding villages. The number of special classes for women is growing steadily and in Kerala one Local Assembly was formed with nine women members.

'Children's classes are being held in a growing number of cities and villages. A second series of lessons for children (twenty-nine in all) was produced by the National Bahá'í Education Committee. Both series, Level I and Level II, have become popular in Africa, South America and the Pacific Islands.

'The New Era High School¹ celebrated its thirtieth anniversary in September 1975. More

¹ See 'The History of New Era High School', p. 320.

than sixty friends from Írán came for this important event and contributed generously to the fund for necessary expansion of the school which is now organizing a Junior College and planning for a Teachers' Training College, a significant step towards evolving into a Bahá'í university as intimated by the beloved Guardian. A rural development project initiated by the school, with an international Bahá'í team of experts in the fields of health, agriculture, education, hygiene, rural industries, etc., has attracted the interest and support of the State Government of Maharashtra and is greatly adding to the prestige of the Faith.

'A number of distinguished travelling teachers from abroad have given great stimulation to the work in India including Mr. M. A. Faizi and Mr. Bakhtawar from Írán, Mr. Jenabe Caldwell from Alaska, Mr. Jamshed Fozdar from the United States and Mr. Nagarathnam from Malaysia, as well as many young Bahá'ís from Australia, England, Ireland, Canada, Germany, New Zealand and the United States.'

SRI LANKA

'The period from 1973 to 1976 has been marked by a steady progress in teaching and proclamation of the Faith in Sri Lanka. Approximately 1,200 new believers accepted the Bahá'í Faith, twenty new localities have been opened and a number of new Local Spiritual Assemblies have been formed bringing the total to fifty-four. Five endowments for establishing local Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds have been pledged and negotiations are in process for the acquisition of land and a building for a large Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds at Vavuniya.

'Two couples settled in the Maldive Islands as pioneers in the period.

'Thirteen books have been translated into Tamil and one book was published in Sinhalese. Three additional books have recently been selected for translation into Sinhala.

'Three National Teaching Conferences, most of them trilingual, were held in various cities in Sri Lanka. A training class drew an attendance of eighteen believers. Through the news bulletin correspondence courses in Tamil have been initiated, designed to increase the believers' knowledge of the Faith.

'We have received pioneers and travelling teachers from Australia, Canada, Persia, the

United Kingdom, India, Malaysia, the Fiji Islands and Norway.

'Proclamation work was carried out at the University of Sri Lanka and information about the Faith has been presented to Government officials and other dignitaries.

'The National Bahá'í Youth Committee held various conferences which resulted in an increased participation on the part of local believers. Two summer schools were conducted by the Youth Committee with enthusiastic participation by members of the community.

'The visits of members of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South Central Asia were of great assistance in the stimulation of activities for Bahá'í women, the establishment of classes for children, the holding of meetings for dawn prayers, the acquisition of local Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds and a cemetery, and in general administration. The importance of active participation in United Nations activities, non-involvement in politics, and unity among the friends were topics that were stressed.

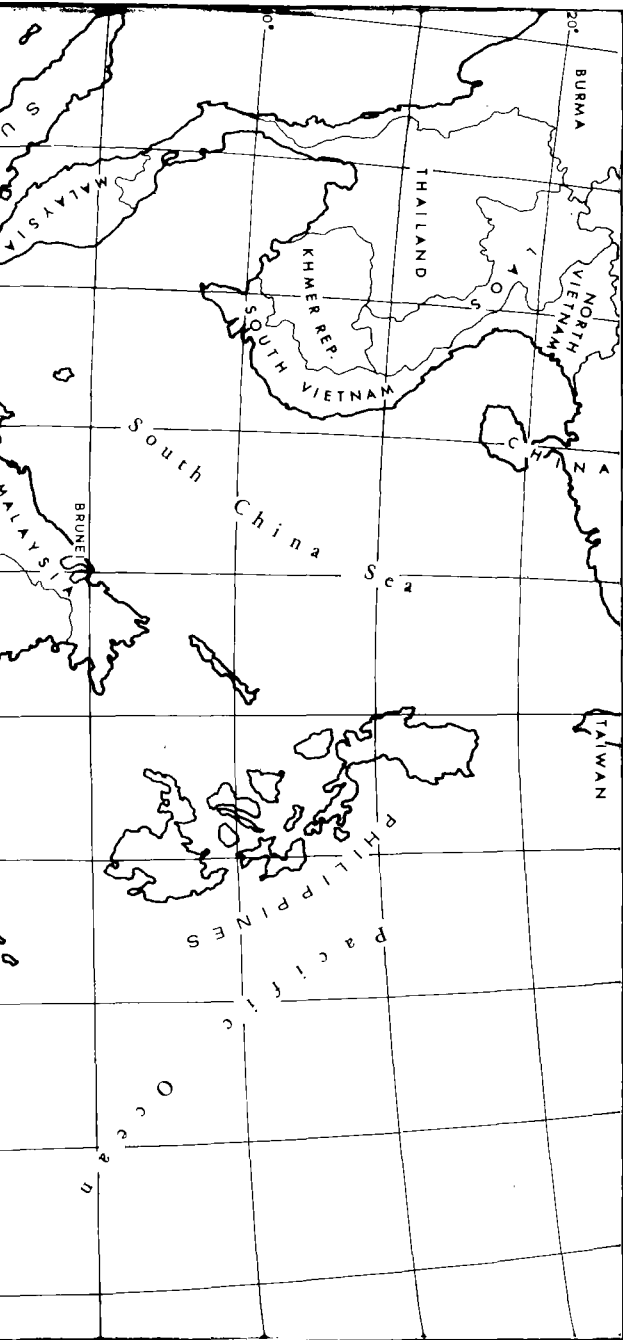
'Several public lectures were organized. Cordial relations were established with the news media and public officers which elicited enquiries from them and from serious students of comparative religion. As usual, representatives of the United Nations took part in events held under Bahá'í sponsorship.

'The Bahá'ís of Sri Lanka have extended the fullest co-operation to the National Spiritual Assembly in its efforts to fulfil the goals of the Five Year Plan. With the assistance and blessing of Bahá'u'lláh and the prayers and timely guidance of the Universal House of Justice, the Bahá'í community of Sri Lanka is confident that the remaining goals will be achieved before the end of the ensuing year.'

South-eastern Asia

BURMA

'Early in 1973 the Bahá'í community of Burma was visited by the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir who travelled to a number of local centres and spoke to the friends at the national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds. Dr. Muhájir outlined the development of the Faith around the world from the earliest days to the triumphant conclusion of the Nine Year Plan and



encouraged us to consolidate the victories we had won in that plan.

'The Burmese friends were overjoyed to welcome the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum and her travelling companion, Mrs. Violette Nakhjaváni, who spent a week visiting the believers and attending our annual convention in 1974. At the request of the Bahá'ís of Daidanaw the convention was held in their village instead of Rangoon. Daidanaw is the site of the resting place of Muşţafá Rúmí,¹ the exemplary and much loved pioneer and teacher who, accompanied by Jamál Effendi, carried the Faith to Burma in May 1878. Muşţafá Rúmí died at the age of ninety-nine and was in 1946 posthumously appointed a Hand of the Cause by Shoghi Effendi who wrote that his tomb is the foremost shrine of the Burmese believers. In this single-roomed building the Bahá'í youth had arranged a very comprehensive book exhibit. Here Amatu'l-Bahá exhibited a framed lock of Bahá'u'lláh's hair which she later presented as her personal gift to the newly-formed National Spiritual Assembly of Hong Kong to whose

¹ See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. X, p. 517.

inaugural convention she was *en route*. Approximately 1,200 Burmese believers filed by to view the frame with its precious contents and were anointed by Amatu'l-Bahá with attar of rose. It was a deeply moving experience.

'In her addresses to the friends in Burma, Rúhíyyih Khánum pointed out that ours is an old and distinguished community, much loved by both 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, and reminded us that the Burmese believers had provided the beautiful alabaster sarcophagus in which the Master placed the sacred remains of the Báb.

'The first National Youth Conference of Burma, sponsored by the National Youth Committee, was held during the visit of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum who exhorted the youth to devote their lives to service to the Faith.

'A banquet in Amatu'l-Bahá's honour was given by the National Spiritual Assembly of Burma at the Ḥazíratu'l-Quds in Rangoon, attended by prominent guests and members of the press, at which she gave a talk about the Faith.

'A very successful regional teaching con-



Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum visiting the tomb of the Hand of the Cause Muşţafá Rúmí, Daidanaw Village, Burma; April 1974.

ference was held at Laide in May 1974 with friends from nearby communities participating. Teaching teams composed of women, youth and members of the National Assembly visited various centres in the townships of Moulmin-gyun and Pyuntaza. The activities of one team resulted in the formation of Local Assemblies in the villages of Htitwelai and Chaungbya, the opening of seven new localities to the Faith and the enrolment of one hundred and forty-one new believers; a second team succeeded in establishing five Local Assemblies in the villages of Ngabebin, Ayewya, Zaloadgyi, Alalwya and Zetawzu, opened ten new localities to the Faith and enrolled two hundred new believers; and a third teaching group enrolled twenty-six new believers and formed Local Assemblies in Toegyaunglai and Thingungyun. Other regional conferences were held at Laide, Ngabyema and Kyigon and semi-annual National Teaching Conferences were held throughout the period. Bahá'í women and youth actively participated in the conferences and the teaching projects associated therewith. Other significant activities in the period include Bahá'í schools held in summer, winter and the rainy season and additional National Youth Conferences. Bahá'í women and youth took an active part in most of the activities outlined above. Dawn devotional gatherings were initiated in many local communities.

'Opportunities for proclaiming the Faith arose through invitations received by the National Assembly to provide a Bahá'í speaker for various gatherings including meetings of the Theosophical Society. Efforts were made to strengthen our relationship with the United Nations through sponsoring or participating in observances of United Nations Day, International Children's Day, World Health Organization Day and International Women's Year. The programmes for these meetings, some of which drew an attendance of two hundred people, often included local United Nations representatives and sometimes featured the showing of United Nations films.

'A booklet *The Commonwealth of Bahá'u'lláh* was produced and a number of other titles have been translated into Burmese and will soon be published. Some original songs with Bahá'í themes were composed by the friends.

'Some progress was made towards achievement of our property goals through the

acquisition at North Okkalapa of a plot of land and building for use as a Ḥaẓratu'l-Quds.'

HONG KONG

'The most significant event of the period from Riḍván 1973 to Riḍván 1976 was the inauguration of the National Spiritual Assembly of Hong Kong (under whose jurisdiction is Macau) at Riḍván 1974. The Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum graced the inaugural convention as the representative of the Universal House of Justice and infused the proceedings with her spiritual energy. We were also blessed with the visit of the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone in the autumn of 1974. The Hong Kong community has been visited on a number of occasions by the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir who has offered stimulation and guidance.

'Since Riḍván 1974 the National Spiritual Assembly has directed the believers in the proclamation, teaching and consolidation of the Faith and in meeting the goals of the Five Year Plan. A token site for a future Mashriqu'l-Adhkar is in the final stage of purchase on Lamma Island. The National Spiritual Assembly and all local Spiritual Assemblies in Hong Kong have been incorporated.¹ A Publication Committee has translated into Chinese the first five chapters of *The Divine Art of Living* for use in proclamation, teaching and deepening. In addition, one of the local newspapers with a wide circulation in south-eastern Asia has been regularly publishing articles about the Bahá'í Faith.

'A Bahá'í Women's Committee has been formed. Among its other activities it arranged a proclamation effort, among various women's groups in Hong Kong, utilizing one of the visiting Bahá'í women who was a representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations International Women's Year Conference in Mexico. Regular children's classes are being held to help deepen children in the Faith from an early age.

'In December 1975 an international youth group comprising youth from Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, New Zealand and Hong Kong brought their songs and teaching skills for a fourteen-day teaching project. The presence of the team particularly affected our local Bahá'í youth whose Youth Committee has assumed

¹ See p. 356.

new responsibilities in teaching and organizing meetings. Our youth have also responded by forming a similar music group for teaching in Hong Kong.

'Considerable impetus was given to our consolidation efforts by the frequent visits to Hong Kong of Mr. Yan Kee Leong of the Continental Board of Counsellors. The presence of Counsellor Firaydún Mitháqián¹ and his family as residents of our community further strengthened our deepening effort. In addition, National Teaching Conferences, summer schools, and deepening classes are periodically held. A Nineteen Day Feast newsletter is published regularly to improve communication within the Bahá'í community. These and similar efforts are gradually building a stronger Bahá'í community in hopes of the eventual expansion of the Faith among the Chinese people.'

LAOS

'Two major fields of activity which were prominent in the period under review were children's classes and youth teaching. These trends which emerged only in the last year of the Nine Year Plan continued at an increased tempo

¹ Mr. Mitháqián was appointed to the Continental Board of Counsellors for the protection and propagation of the Faith in South-eastern Asia in June 1973.

which propelled the entire Bahá'í community forward in its process of development and lent it an unimaginably tremendous upsurge.

'The classes for the education of children and youth started among the humble refugees in the village of Hueiphay in Luang Prabang. When the friends asked permission of the local authorities to gather the children and youth once each week for classes, the authorities were doubtful about the true nature and purpose of the classes and sent a delegation to observe the first trial class which was held on a Sunday morning in a small assembly hall with a thatched roof. Pleased and convinced by what they saw, the authorities granted permission for the continued holding of classes and stipulated that the Bahá'ís were free to use a classroom in the village Government school once each week for this purpose. The following week the class was more completely organized with the youth being separated from the children. Having succeeded in their mission the Bahá'í organizers of the class jubilantly visited other villages for the purpose of establishing classes. Each step was confirmed by the guidance and bounty of the Blessed Beauty and the intangible barriers imposed by the local authorities yielded. Consequently, the authorities in some areas, hearing of the wonderful effect of the classes upon Bahá'í children and



Bahá'í youth of Luang Prabang area, Laos, who participated in a seminar held in November 1974.

youth, personally requested that Bahá'í classes for children and youth be established in their respective villages. The mighty force of this influence soon spread to non-refugee villages and finally to the town. As the capable workers were then very few, the organizers of the classes began training potential teachers in order to meet the demand from Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís. All classes were held in a dignified atmosphere on a regular weekly basis in Government schools with the endorsement and approval of the school authorities. The Province became ablaze and the classes served as an effective instrument in proclaiming the Faith, reaching people in the field of education, Government employees, members of hospital staffs, students, and others from various walks of life.

'Inspired by the achievement in Luang Prabang, activities for youth and children gradually began in the Provinces of Sayaboury, Vientiane, Borikhane, Khammouane, Savannakhet and Sedone. Activities in these Provinces were co-ordinated by the National Youth and Children's Committee. As if to crown its ceaseless endeavour the committee organized a highly successful and memorable first National Youth Conference which was held in Luang Prabang from 28-30 December 1973 with sixty youth from different Provinces in attendance.

'Seeing the capability of Bahá'í youth in serving as teachers of children and their fellow youth, the National Spiritual Assembly, in collaboration with the National Youth and Children's Committee, encouraged the youth, many of whom are students, to assume a larger share of the responsibility of teaching. These active and devoted young people were seen thereafter in their spare time assisting in deepening the knowledge of believers in some Local Spiritual Assembly areas by conducting Nineteen Day Feasts, explaining the importance and functions of a Local Assembly and organizing conferences and seminars of a general nature.

'After a number of unsuccessful attempts over the past years to establish teaching teams for the north and south, effective teams were found composed mostly of young local believers. Despite local restrictions which made it impossible to maintain contact with some communities the teams greatly assisted in reinforcing the teaching work, aided in deepening and co-ordinating the activities of Local Spiritual Assemblies and carried out a number of important tasks assigned by both the National Teaching Committee and the National Youth and Children's Committee.

'Two youth training institutes were held representing a significant step forward in



Participants in the second National Bahá'í Youth Conference of Laos which was attended by youth representing five provinces; Vientiane, 27-29 April 1975.



Some Bahá'ís of Mentawai and Padang, Indonesia, at the hostel operated by Mr. and Mrs. M. Tahmahsebian; 1976.

deepening the youth in their knowledge of the Faith with the aim of instilling in their minds the high moral and spiritual standards to be followed in leading a Bahá'í life. In general evaluation, the youth have demonstrated the Bahá'í standard in their daily personal lives and activities combined with a great love and devotion for the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh and would be of great service in advancing the Faith wherever they were.

'The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir made a brief visit in 1973 and consulted with the National Spiritual Assembly on how to accelerate the teaching work. The Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone, accompanied by his wife, visited Vientiane in September 1974 and consulted with the National Teaching Committee on vital teaching matters. Our distinguished guests, Mr. and Mrs. Featherstone, accompanied by a group of friends from Vientiane, attended a large meeting held in a refugee village on the outskirts of Vientiane. The entire village populace attended including some high-ranking Government officials from the district and the chief monks of a nearby Buddhist temple.

'Several pieces of Bahá'í literature were reprinted in the period under discussion and a translation into the Lao language of *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* was published.

'The course of the teaching work changed when the country was proclaimed a Republic in December 1975 and somewhat stringent restrictions were imposed. The Bahá'í community, faithful to the principle of obedience and loyalty to Government, complied instantly and completely with the instructions of the authorities. The National Assembly is working towards the recognition of the Faith on the national level. The plan of God for His mighty Cause is beyond our comprehension. The friends, meanwhile, labour steadfastly in carrying on the few activities in which they are permitted to engage.'

MALAYSIA

'The National Spiritual Assembly of Malaysia, with its seat in Kuala Lumpur, first came into being at Riqván 1964 and has existed ever since, with slight changes being made from time to time in the areas under its jurisdiction. Because of local conditions the territories of Sabah, Sarawak and Brunei were removed from

its jurisdiction at Riḍván 1972 and placed under the jurisdiction of the newly-elected National Spiritual Assembly of Eastern Malaysia and Brunei, with its seat in Kuching, until the dissolution of that body at Riḍván 1974 and the regrouping of the territories under the Spiritual Assembly of Malaysia which achieved incorporation on 26 September 1974.¹

'West Malaysia: At the close of the Nine Year Plan, in response to a call by the Universal House of Justice, the Malaysian community initiated a one year teaching plan the prosecution of which prepared the community for the goals of the global Five Year Plan launched by the Universal House of Justice at Riḍván 1974.

'At various stages in the period under review the beloved Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir visited Malaysia to inspire and encourage the believers to greater heights of achievement. During his three visits large conferences were held, attended by friends from throughout the country. In early November 1974 the dearly loved Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone came on a short visit to Malaysia. Three regional conferences were organized to provide maximum opportunities for the believers to meet Mr. Featherstone.

'Mass teaching, which began in 1971 and continued in 1972, gathered momentum in 1973 with significant changes in the approach. "Musical firesides" became recognized as a popular and successful method of teaching. The first presentation of this type was staged at the Ipoh Bahá'í school in mid-1973; a "musical fireside" at the Port Dickson summer school in December of that year resulted in forty-six people accepting the Faith at the presentation alone. It was realized that the use of music in presenting the Faith to the public was undisputedly successful. In December 1974 a seven-day institute employing music was held at Penang to spiritually prepare for a project in Thailand and Hong Kong and to produce tapes of songs with Bahá'í themes and a "musical fireside". Two tapes were produced, followed by a song book entitled *Notes of Love*. In Thailand the Malaysian musical team appeared on television, and in Hong Kong the team performed at the prestigious Hotel Plaza. The successes in this field were beyond doubt and resulted from the enthusiasm of the Malaysian Bahá'í youth. A great deal of the credit goes to the National

Bahá'í Youth Committee which was instrumental in maintaining the high spirit of the youth.

'A significant step in organizing classes for the education of Bahá'í children was taken with the establishment in Penang of the Child Education Committee. Among the activities of that committee was the organizing of institutes for children of ages ten to fourteen. These institutes have become very popular among children of that age group and have become as regular a feature of community life as summer and winter schools.

'Among the Aborigines of Malaya the first representatives of the Temiar tribe and the Negrito people have accepted the Faith in West Malaysia. Teaching among the tribes is now done by the Aboriginal believers themselves. This has become necessary due to the security situation in the jungles but it also marks a positive step in the progress of the Cause.

'In addition to publishing in English the song book already referred to and a booklet about the Five Year Plan, three titles have been translated and published in Chinese including an introductory brochure, a compilation of deepening material for Bahá'í teachers and prayers for youth and children taken from a compilation of the Universal House of Justice; and four titles have been published in the Tamil language: *The Hidden Words* of Bahá'u'lláh, a new edition of the pocket-sized prayer book, a teaching aid designed by Margery McCormick, and the booklet *On Becoming a Bahá'í*. In July 1974 the *Malaysian Bahá'í News* was replaced by the *Malaysian Bahá'í Bulletin*, a news magazine. A Tamil magazine, *Oli Uthayam*, was also brought into circulation.

'In the period under review the National Spiritual Assembly placed the acquisition of properties high on the list of priorities and succeeded in achieving the property goals of the Five Year Plan for Malaysia.

'In 1973 the Government of Malaysia issued a circular listing the Holy Days of the religions in Malaysia. Government employees are entitled to unrecorded leave on the days listed in the circular. For the first time all nine Holy Days of the Bahá'í Faith were listed in the circular.²

'On 19 December 1974 a small party was held to commemorate the twenty-first anniversary of

¹ See p. 357.

² See p. 374.

the establishment of the Faith in Malaysia. Present on this auspicious occasion was the first believer of Malaysia, Mr. Yan Kee Leong of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South-eastern Asia who, in a brief and touching address, expressed his gratitude to Bahá'u'lláh for having so greatly blessed the Malaysian Bahá'í community: the Bahá'í youth of Malaysia have arisen to pioneer in different lands, the music teams and travelling teaching groups of Malaysia have been able to serve the Faith in many parts of Asia, and Malaysia has had the honour of being referred to by the Supreme Body as a beacon of light for this region.

'The current trend is a concerted effort to fulfil the outstanding goals of the Five Year Plan, to enrol believers in ever-increasing numbers and to establish an even stronger base for the development of the youth into a dynamic force for the teaching and proclamation of the Bahá'í Faith.

'East Malaysia: Having successfully achieved the goals of the Nine Year Plan, the Malaysian community in 1973 was keyed to immediately set out to win the goals of the Five Year Plan. The National Spiritual Assembly gave certain assignments to the believers in eastern Malaysia. The number of localities to be opened to the

Faith in eastern Malaysia (i.e. Sarawak and Sabah with special attention to be paid to Brunei) was 800 out of a total of 1,500. The target was rapidly achieved and at Riqdán 1976 the figure stands at 853. The number of Local Spiritual Assemblies for us to establish was 200 out of a total of 400. This is the only goal which is not yet achieved; our figure for Local Assemblies stands at 140. Most of the Local Assemblies are in the rural areas where administrative concepts, for various reasons, take root slowly, but we are persevering in our efforts and at present are concentrating on new localities and communities where we may establish the remaining Local Assemblies to meet our goals. All communities in towns regularly elect their Local Assemblies.

'Eastern Malaysia was to acquire ten Centres, five large and five small. At first maturing communities were assisted by the National Teaching Committee which contributed the cost of the roof but so many communities complied with the stipulated requirements that it was no longer feasible to provide assistance and under the present policy all mature communities are free to erect their own Bahá'í Centres at their own expense. Several large communities have built large Centres to serve the needs of



Participants in teaching institute held at the Bahá'í Centre, Kampong Tun Razak (Triboh), Sarawak, Eastern Malaysia; 29 March 1975.

neighbouring areas and to function as teaching institutes. Since 1974, twenty large and three small centres have been erected.

'Inter-Assembly projects were assigned to twenty communities in eastern Malaysia but more than that number participated. These projects usually consisted of strong communities assisting weaker ones by ensuring the holding of Nineteen Day Feasts and even children's classes. The initial enthusiasm has somewhat diminished but projects are still continuing in some areas. In a typical project, the believers of a mature community, sometimes numbering more than ten people, will go to four or five neighbouring communities to attend a Nineteen Day Feast and to ensure a successful meeting. Often neighbouring communities will jointly labour to erect a Bahá'í Centre. Generally there is good co-operation among Bahá'í communities with a frequent interchange of visitors. Teaching trips to neighbouring communities and sometimes even to distant ones are frequently undertaken. Lately, in the fourth division of Sarawak, large numbers of believers, sometimes numbering twenty or thirty, will move about visiting and encouraging weaker communities. This inter-Assembly co-operation is reflected at conferences and study courses. Whenever such a function is organized, even distant communities will send representatives to participate.

'Efforts are being made to improve the quality of Bahá'í life. Prayers are being made a daily regular activity; many communities hold devotionals at dawn. A wonderful opportunity was given to us when we approached the Government authorities in Sarawak and obtained permission to broadcast dawn prayers over Radio Malaysia, Sarawak at 6 a.m. every fifth morning; thus the Words of Bahá'u'lláh are broadcast throughout the whole State and its neighbouring territories. Individual prayers are commonly used; many prayers have been translated into local languages and a small selection of these is distributed to new Bahá'ís without cost. Large numbers of illiterate Bahá'ís, even the aged, have memorized the prayers. Members of the community generally recognize the value and power of prayer and use it before setting out for work.

'Our youth are the backbone of the communities. They are responsible for the teaching activities, the organizing of meetings, serving as travelling teachers, caring for Bahá'í Centres, the

upkeep of cemeteries, and planting crops in the Bahá'í communal farms. They also organize sports meets between communities to foster greater unity and fellowship. They undertake to organize deepening courses and arrange summer schools and conferences. The majority of our local travelling teachers are youth. Our pioneer to Taiwan is a youth and it was a youth who filled our goal of sending a travelling teacher to Seychelles. Many communities have active youth committees; invariably they conduct the children's classes.

'There has recently been a great upsurge in women's activities. The National Women's Committee based in Kuching has organized many women's committees in the first and second divisions of Sarawak. They have had their own conferences and courses on the Bahá'í teachings and laws, and on such subjects as health, hygiene and mother-craft. At these meetings the Bahá'í men care for the children and prepare the food. Women also help to tend the Bahá'í communal farms, where these exist, and they also prepare handicraft articles the sale of which augments the funds. Many women are now memorizing prayers and recite them with confidence.

'In addition to sending a pioneer to Taiwan and a travelling teacher to the Seychelles, we have sent travelling teachers to Hong Kong and Thailand. Local teachers constantly visit neighbouring communities and sometimes distant ones. This activity originates at the local level though once or twice a year intensive projects for teaching, organized by the National Teaching Committee, result in large numbers of Bahá'ís travelling throughout eastern Malaysia spreading the Glad Tidings. Homefront pioneering has been implemented during the past two years. This involves one or two knowledgeable believers from strong communities leaving their homes, taking their families with them and settling in weak areas selected by the National Teaching Committee. Youthful teachers who are students or Government employees also consult the committee about where to seek posting. This has produced splendid results in the fourth and fifth divisions of Sarawak. In one year the number of Assemblies in the fourth division increased from seven to twenty-eight and we are hoping for similar results in other regions where this principle will be similarly applied.'

PHILIPPINES

We cannot but feel optimistic about the way the Bahá'ís of the Philippines are facing the challenges given by the Universal House of Justice in the Five Year Plan. In both the teaching and administrative fields the Bahá'ís have shown great capacity in fulfilling these goals and, if this trend continues, we can certainly be assured of a victorious culmination of the plan at Ridván 1979.

Somewhat remarkable progress has been made, in a modest way, in meeting the three main objectives of the Five Year Plan: the preservation and consolidation of the victories won; a vast and widespread expansion of the Bahá'í community; and the development of the distinctive character of Bahá'í life, particularly in the local communities. Years ago we had only about eight maturely functioning Local Spiritual Assemblies. Now there are twenty-two Local Assemblies initiating their own teaching activities, regularly celebrating the Nineteen Day Feasts and Holy Days, sending the minutes of their meetings to the National Spiritual Assembly, enrolling new believers without the assistance of travelling teachers, contributing

regularly to the funds, conducting Bahá'í marriages, and organizing deepening classes, children's classes, firesides and public meetings. What has deeply encouraged the National Spiritual Assembly is the fact that some of these communities appeared to be dormant for some time and they have now emerged, together with some newly-established ones, as strong communities. We witness this development most especially in the Provinces of Cagayan, Pangasinan, Nueva Ecija and Quirino.

How happy we were to receive the report that one Local Spiritual Assembly had assisted in the election and formation of fifteen other Local Assemblies in their area; to receive enrolment cards from Local Assemblies and individuals in areas where no travelling teacher or pioneer had been to initiate teaching activities; to learn that one community built its own Bahá'í Centre through contributions of money, material and labour of local believers; to be advised that a Local Assembly on its own initiative appointed a number of vital committees including one for children, one for youth, one for teaching and one for community counselling; and to be informed that some local communities have organized meetings for dawn prayers, encouraged atten-



Participants in Regional Teaching Conference, Los Banos, Philippines; 1976.

dance of the members of the community at these gatherings, and taken steps to improve attendance at Nineteen Day Feasts! These are indeed the signs of a developing and maturing community. One factor in the increase in the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies formed at Riḍván 1976 is felt to result from the initiative on the part of Assemblies in assisting communities in their areas to achieve Assembly status. To a degree, the Assemblies have been vying with each other in this activity and in the establishment of children's classes.

There have also been marked increases in the numbers of believers and localities opened to the Faith. The trend of Local Assemblies themselves initiating teaching trips, conducting firesides and public meetings, will increasingly free the travelling teachers to visit new areas.

When the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muḥájir visited in November 1975 he encouraged us to concentrate on teaching families and to devote special attention to tribal groups in the islands of Luzon, Mindoro and Palawan. The National Spiritual Assembly adopted these suggestions and most of the travelling teachers were requested to concentrate their energies in these areas. To supplement the expansion in the tribal areas the National Assembly made plans to establish tutorial schools in these regions. One is now established in the Mangyan area of Occidental Mindoro and we are hopeful of obtaining Government recognition of the school this coming year. Groundwork is at present being laid to establish at least three tutorial schools in the tribal areas of Palawan, Quirino Province and Mindanao. The purpose of these schools, the National Assembly has stressed, is to serve the needs of Bahá'í families, and particularly their spiritual needs. Although they may attract non-Bahá'ís, the schools are primarily instruments for deepening the knowledge of the Bahá'ís.

In the field of proclamation, the Bahá'í Faith was represented at the first Asian Ecumenical Congress in December 1975 by a Bahá'í delegation that included Mr. Vicente Samaniego of the Continental Board of Counsellors. More than one hundred people attended the Congress, representing various religious groups. In response to questions by various delegates, Mr. Samaniego presented a short outline of the history and teachings of the Bahá'í Faith, and

some literature was distributed. The four-day Congress included workshops and planning sessions, and Bahá'ís served as recording secretaries in two workshop groups. The climax of the meeting was a courtesy call on President Ferdinand E. Marcos and the First Lady, Imelda R. Marcos, at Malacanang Palace, the official residence of the President of the Philippines. In a devotional programme in which representatives from all religious groups took part, a member of the Bahá'í delegation read a Bahá'í prayer for unity. As a result of the Congress, the Asian Inter-Faith Council was formed. Mr. Samaniego was one of the fifteen people elected to it. Accompanied by a number of other believers, Mr. Samaniego attended the induction party in Pangsajan, Laguna. The diversity of the Bahá'í representatives attracted the attention of the press and an article, accompanied by a photograph of the Bahá'ís, appeared in the local press. All the reporters accepted Bahá'í literature. A few weeks after the Congress, the Faith was represented in the Philippines Mental Health Seminar where Bahá'ís introduced the teachings into discussions and workshops.

The Bahá'í community has also been invited to participate in various religious, civic and Government-sponsored activities which followed the Ecumenical Congress. Through these events a greater public recognition has been obtained of the independent stature of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh and of its teachings and principles.

(Based on various reports received by the World Centre)

SINGAPORE

'At the half-way mark of the Five Year Plan we thank Bahá'u'lláh for the victories we have been enabled to win and the goals He has aided us to achieve; yet we are in the unhappy position of having to report that a number of goals are outstanding and to these we are directing our urgent attention.

'The National Spiritual Assembly of Singapore was first formed at Riḍván 1972; hence the challenging tasks given to us by the Universal House of Justice in the Five Year Plan were the first faced by our community. We list below the goals specifically assigned to our community and describe the progress to date:

'Establish a Local Spiritual Assembly in each of the civil administrative divisions of the



Participants in National Bahá'í Youth Conference, held at the Bahá'í Centre, Singapore; 18 August 1974. Counsellor Yan Kee Leong is seen in the second row, second from the right.

country. This goal has been achieved. At the beginning of the Five Year Plan we had six Local Assemblies, our maximum for the plan being eight. The seventh Local Assembly, Geylang, was formed on 27 November 1974; the eighth, Stanford, on 21 April 1976.

'The goal of incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly is now in the final stages of achievement. Until this is accomplished, we cannot proceed with the goal of raising the number of incorporated Local Spiritual Assemblies.

'Acquire a national endowment. A modest house has been acquired and a committee has been formed to expedite the finding and purchase of a suitable property.

'The translation of Bahá'í literature into Chinese is a goal toward which we are to work in co-operation with the National Spiritual Assemblies of Malaysia, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Although handicapped by a lack of skilled Chinese translators in our community a beginning has been made through the partial translation of *Bahá'í Administration*.

'A committee has been formed to do the initial planning for a major National Teaching Conference which will be held in mid-November 1977 and to which believers from other areas in south-eastern Asia will be invited.

'Although we have not yet had much success in reaching all strata of society nor in enrolling in the Faith representatives of the diverse cultures

which comprise Singapore, membership in our community has increased in the period under review.

'As to our supplementary goals, weekly dawn devotionals are held by one Local Spiritual Assembly, one pioneer settled in Hong Kong and another is preparing to locate in Taiwan, and travelling teachers have been supplied to Hong Kong, Taiwan and Thailand.

'Significant teaching activities have included several successful "musical firesides"; a public meeting in observance of United Nations Day in November 1974 attended by an official of the United Nations and the member of parliament for the area in which our *Ḥazíratu'l-Quds* is located; a particularly successful public lecture at a local hotel with many enquirers in attendance; and annual National Teaching Conferences. A teaching project was held in conjunction with each of the above events. Weekly children's classes are conducted by the Women's Committee with an average attendance of ten children.

'In 1972 recognition was obtained of Bahá'í Holy Days the dates of which were published in the *Government Gazette* of Singapore.¹ In 1973 official recognition of Bahá'í marriage was obtained thus obviating the necessity of Bahá'ís having a civil marriage ceremony. In 1976 the President of the Republic of Singapore received a delegation of Bahá'ís in a cordial interview and accepted a copy of *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV.

'During 1974 a delegation from the Bahá'í Women's Committee visited the Tanjong Katong Technical Secondary School and were warmly welcomed by the principal who accepted three Bahá'í books for the school library. This success inspired the introduction of a plan for similar presentations to other schools. Bahá'í Clubs were established at the University of Singapore and at Ngee Ann Technical College.

'In the period under review we received the added blessings of visits of the Hands of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone and Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir. Mr. Featherstone, accompanied by his wife, arrived in Singapore from Malacca on 7 November 1974. A large gathering of Bahá'ís welcomed the beloved Hand and were inspired by his moving and unusual stories about the Faith. His account of teaching activities in Laos encouraged us to resolve to strive harder in serving the Cause.

¹ See *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, p. 404.

'Dr. Muhájir visited twice in March 1974, on one occasion being accompanied by Mr. Khudáraḥm Paymán. Dr. Muhájir met with the National Spiritual Assembly for detailed discussion of the goals given to Singapore in the Five Year Plan and initial plans were drawn for the achievement of these goals.

'In November 1975 Dr. Muhájir addressed a gathering of approximately forty friends upon his return from Malaysia. He delivered an inspiring address on the importance of the administrative order and the Universal House of Justice and described the spiritual significance of the permanent seat of that institution. The progress of our work in the Five Year Plan was discussed and we were exhorted to follow the example of the Malaysian friends in pledging to achieve our goals by the mid-point of the plan.'

THAILAND

'Much is left to be accomplished in fulfilling the goals of the Five Year Plan in Thailand. The first two and a half years, to which this report is confined, witnessed a slow start by the community as a whole but even now there are intimations of a surge of activity throughout the entire country.

'In 1974 the Hands of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone and Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir visited the Thai community. Dr. Muhájir returned again in 1975 and encouraged us to take measures to double the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies then existing. He also urged us to publish more books. To date, the following have been published: *Bahá'u'lláh*, by the Hand of the Cause Ḥasan M. Balyúzi; and *Guidance I and II*, compilations of basic facts of which Bahá'ís should be aware. As a direct result of Dr. Muhájir's suggestion that additional Bahá'í literature be made available in Thai, Mr. Jai Gopal Jand, a pioneer to Thailand from India for fifteen years, in association with a native Thai, Mr. Chit, translated into Thai: *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, *The Seven Valleys*, *The Reality of Man*, *The Divine Art of Living*, *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh*, *Foundations of World Unity*, *Principles of Bahá'í Administration*, *Release the Sun*, *The Renewal of Civilization*, *The Good Message* and other titles including compilations relating to child education and living the Bahá'í life. These works are currently under revision by the newly-appointed Translation Committee. In addition to the

translations, a Thai correspondence course was prepared and the first lessons have already been distributed.

'In 1975 a Bahá'í music group from Malaysia spent two weeks in Thailand assisting in proclamation activities. We witnessed the opening of colleges and universities to the message of Bahá'u'lláh. Literally thousands of students heard about the Faith during these fourteen days.

'On World Religion Day, 1975, the dignitaries of Chiangmai, an important city in Thailand, attended a special public meeting. The practice of proclaiming the Faith to local and national dignitaries is a continuing effort and in preparation for the International Teaching Conference to be held in Hong Kong in December 1976 more than five hundred booklets will be mailed to Government ministers and officials.

'The youth have been active in teaching the Faith. In one project they dispatched balloons containing introductory literature and a reply card. It was reported that some of the balloons travelled as far as one thousand miles before finding their way into the hands of people who became eager enquirers. As the reply cards were returned to the national Centre, the youth took charge of sending packets of Bahá'í literature to each person who had replied.

'In 1974, children's classes were conducted in the north-eastern sector of Thailand and in Chiangmai to the north. During this year there were some articles about the Faith printed in major publications in the southern city of Songkhla and in Bangkok.

'In 1976 it became possible for the friends in Yasothon, which has long been a stronghold of Bahá'í activity, to use the local radio station for announcements of Bahá'í meetings, conferences and teaching institutes. This achievement was made possible through the efforts of Auxiliary Board member Sawai Thongsut, and has proven to be most effective in reaching the believers living in rural villages and isolated areas. The response is very encouraging.

'One of the major goals of the Five Year Plan was accomplished in 1976 with the purchase of a regional Bahá'í Centre in Haad Yai in the south of Thailand. There was also a contribution of a parcel of land by Mr. Daow Ruansri in the village of Ban Yo in Yasothon. A local Bahá'í Centre, designed by a native believer, will eventually be constructed there.

'A most significant event which occurred at Ríḍván 1975 was the election of a Local Spiritual Assembly among members of the Meo tribe residing in northern Thailand. The Meo tribes are Laotian refugees and contact with them is limited; nevertheless they continue to exist within the framework of the Bahá'í administration.

'The progress of the Faith in Thailand may appear slow to outsiders but to those within the country there is the satisfaction of knowing that an increasing number of native believers are assuming the responsibilities formerly assumed by pioneers. Early 1976 brought the appointment of three new Auxiliary Board members—Mr. Boonlert, Mr. Sawai Thongsut and Mrs. Chusri Faridian—all Thai nationals. It is events of this type that assure us of the success of our plans.'

VIETNAM

'At Ríḍván 1973 there were 687 Local Spiritual Assemblies and the Faith had been established in 1,685 localities of Vietnam. During the first year of the Five Year Plan 1974–1975 significant accomplishments had been achieved. The National Teaching Committee was strengthened, participation in activities by youth and women had increased and teaching had been initiated among minorities with some success. *A Synopsis and Codification of the Laws and Ordinances of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas* and *The New Garden* were translated into Vietnamese and an introductory leaflet has been translated into a local dialect; all were available to the friends in mimeographed form.

'In the latter part of the period under review circumstances beyond the control of the Bahá'ís have hindered the completion of the goals. An administrative committee has been appointed to function on behalf of the National Spiritual Assembly.'

Western Asia

ÍRÁN

'In spite of the difficulties prevailing in the country the Bahá'í community of Írán has been successful in achieving some part of their objectives. They are greatly encouraged by the constant guidance and co-operation of the Hands of the Cause residing in Persia—

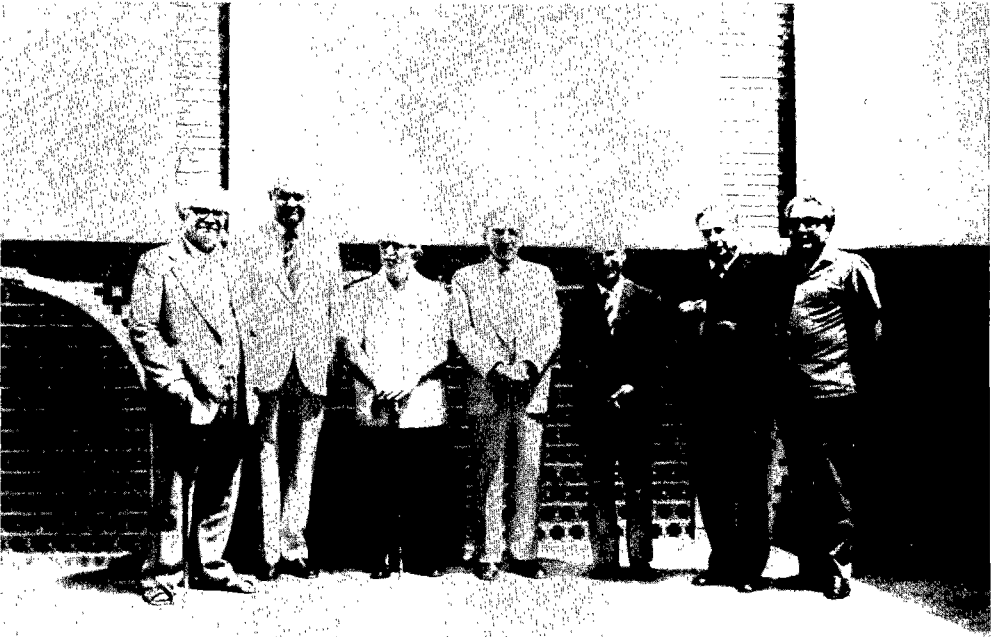
Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í, Jalál *Kházeh* and Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá—as well as the Continental Board of Counsellors in Western Asia and their Auxiliary Board members and assistants. During the period under review the Bahá'í community was blessed by the visits of the Hands of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery, 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir and Abu'l-Qásim Faizí.

'There are 526 travelling teachers and members of committees among the Bahá'ís. A total of 400 national and regional conferences were held in the presence of thousands of believers, and 577 selected guests attended the meetings. There were 2,200 firesides held on a regular basis and 460 short-term institutes have been held with the participation of thousands of youth and other friends. The purpose of the conferences was to deepen the knowledge of the friends in the teachings and also to explore new means of presenting the Faith. Extensive use was made of audio-visual facilities and materials; 71,000 books, pamphlets and teaching albums were produced and distributed. The Faith was presented to approximately 55,000 people of whom a number have accepted the Cause; some of these have registered as Bahá'ís.

'In this period the Bahá'í women of Persia extended their activities. There have been conferences, classes, dawn prayer gatherings, and meetings for the purpose of discussing Bahá'í family life. We held Bahá'í women's conventions and women teachers were dispatched throughout the provinces.

'Youth have been successful in all fields of activities such as teaching, pioneering, conducting classes, etc. They have organized four travelling teaching groups totalling 154 youth who have travelled to African countries and India. Small teams of these youth travelled and taught and their services have been confirmed with good results. A fund has been created for the purpose of providing scholarships to needy Bahá'í youth who wish to pursue a higher education. To date, scholarship loans have been advanced to eighty-five Bahá'í youth. The education fund has been strengthened.

'Child and youth education is a constant process in the activities of the friends in Persia. There is a five-year educational plan and a programme has been established for encouraging Bahá'í youth to attend regular Bahá'í classes on holidays and weekends.



During his visit to Írán in 1974, the Hand of the Cause ‘Ali-Akbar Furútan (centre) met with his fellow Hands of the Cause (left to right) Jalál Kházeh, ‘Ali Muḥammad Varqá, and Shu‘á’u’lláh ‘Alá’í; and with Counsellors Masih Farhangí, Hádi Raḥmani and Íraj Ayman.

‘*Varqá* magazine for children is very popular and well received. We have beautiful publications of prayers and Tablets by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá for children. There is a Bahá’í children’s library in Tíhrán with a branch in Mashhad. There has been a Bahá’í exhibition for children and new books for children’s classes have been published. Fifty classes have been held for the teachers of children’s classes and cassettes and various publications have been utilized. Bahá’í teachers of children’s classes have also been dispatched to various provinces.

‘The Bahá’í Publishing Trust of Írán has acquired a printing machine of the type which is allowed under the restrictive laws of the land. With the aid of a number of committees the Publishing Trust has been successful in bringing out monthly Bahá’í news publications, the nineteen-day newsletter of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Tíhrán, a youth magazine *Áhang-i-Badí* and the Bahá’í women’s magazine, *Tarániy-i-Umid*. In addition to the regular Nineteen day Feast programme, in one twelve-month period in 1975 the Publishing Trust produced 181,390 books and pamphlets totalling 31 million pages. In addition to producing

various medallions and posters, 40,000 copies were made of twenty-seven cassette programmes of prayers, meditations, speeches and songs and twenty-eight reels of film were produced. Two of the writings of the beloved Guardian have been translated from English into Persian and over one million pages have been photocopied for the preservation of the sacred Writings and historical documents. New libraries have been opened and a specialized library of 2,000 volumes has been established for the use of scholars; eleven volumes of rare books have been photocopied and published in limited number. Bahá’í literature has been translated and published in Kurdish, Armenian and Turkoman.

‘The memoirs of prominent people who met ‘Abdu’l-Bahá have been collected and 250 cassette tapes have been recorded of the reminiscences of those who have been responsible for or connected with the Holy Places in Írán so that the historical background of these sites is preserved. A total of 2,800 Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and letters from the Guardian have been indexed.

‘Surveys, repairs and landscaping of the Holy Places is being pursued more intensively.

'Concerning charitable organizations, the Bahá'ís have extended the Mitháqíyyih hospital and 'Aṭṭár clinic in Ṭihrán by opening two branches in the tribal areas of Buyir Aḥmad and in the Province of Núr. The nursing school connected with the hospital has also been opened and the property on which the school is located has been purchased.

'Contributions were extended to the victims of floods in Pakistan. Steps for the establishment of a Home for the Aged have been taken and a special fund has been created for the treatment of needy patients.

'Human Rights Day was observed and celebrations were held in connection with the United Nations International Women's Year. We have continued to approach the Government about the elimination of the disabilities under which Bahá'ís operate.

'Members of the National Spiritual Assembly have travelled to various parts of the country and one member pioneered outside Ṭihrán.

'For the fulfilment of the goals of the Five Year Plan for Írán 1,366 teaching visits have been made to 2,734 localities; 429 pioneers have established themselves in homefront goals and 853 Bahá'ís from Ṭihrán have settled in various parts of the country. Eighty-three new Local Spiritual Assemblies were formed in the second year of the plan. The number of Local Assemblies that have drawn up extension teaching plans has increased considerably.

'Forty sessions of summer schools were held with more than 5,000 participating.'

JORDAN

Formerly a part of the regional National Spiritual Assembly of the Near East which was formed in 1970, the National Spiritual Assembly of Jordan was established at Riḍván 1975 as an independent administrative entity with its seat in Amman. By Riḍván 1976 it had achieved establishment of six local Spiritual Assemblies and Bahá'ís resided in twenty localities throughout the country.

In the period under review a number of travelling teachers including some youth went from this area to Tanzania, Turkey and India; classes for the education of Bahá'í children were initiated; dawn devotional meetings for youth were held once each Bahá'í month; successful summer schools were held, one of these attracting the attendance of sixty-five youth; a

number of National Teaching Conferences and Youth Conferences were held; deepening classes, primarily intended for youth, were inaugurated; an exhibition of arts and crafts was sponsored by the youth, the proceeds being contributed to the fund; various conferences for Bahá'í women were held with particular reference to their role in the Five Year Plan; and a children's book and three introductory pamphlets were produced and distributed.

The representative of the Universal House of Justice at the inaugural convention was the Hand of the Cause Dr. 'Alí Muḥammad Varqá whose presence thrilled and inspired the friends.

(Based on various reports received by the World Centre)

THE NEAR EAST

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Near East comprising Lebanon, Jordan and Syria came into being at Riḍván 1970 with its seat in Beirut, Lebanon. One of its primary goals in the Five Year Plan was to create a firm foundation for the Faith in Jordan in preparation for the establishment of an independent National Spiritual Assembly in that country at Riḍván 1975.

In the period under review a number of pioneers and travelling teachers settled in or travelled to foreign posts. Youth were active in both teaching and administration and a number of youth conferences and other gatherings were held.

The Publishing Trust of the Near East which was established in June 1970 continued to develop a programme for the publication in Arabic of an increasingly comprehensive range of literature to meet the needs of various National Spiritual Assemblies.

(Based on various reports received by the World Centre)

PAKISTAN

'The last four years of Bahá'í activities in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan have witnessed dramatic progress of the Faith. Pakistan is the only major Muslim country that has, by its written constitution, recognized all religious minority communities. Bahá'í delegates have participated in several conferences sponsored by the Government, some of these events being presided over by His Excellency Zulfikar Ali



Participants in first Continental Youth Conference of Western Asia, held in Karachi, Pakistan; 24–25 March 1976. The gathering which was attended by youth from ten Western Asian countries had as its theme 'The Spirit of Sacrifice'. During the conference the provincial Minister of Education invited the youth to his residence to discuss the Bahá'í Faith and praised their example.

Bhutto, the Prime Minister of Pakistan. A number of these, falling outside the period covered by this review, will be detailed in the next volume of the international record. Considerable publicity on radio, television and in the press resulted from these activities.

'International Women's Year was celebrated in Bahá'í communities throughout the country. A public meeting sponsored by the Bahá'ís of Karachi was addressed by a Parliamentary Secretary of Sri Lanka, Mr. Aziz Reimoo; by an assistant Attorney at Law and Advisor to the Minister, Mrs. Rashida; by various university professors and Mr. A. C. Joshi, Auxiliary Board member. An unprecedented programme was a Spring Festival held in honour of Qurratu'l-'Ayn at the Bahá'í Hall on 7 April 1974. Many prominent non-Bahá'í poets and writers recited impromptu poems in praise of this outstanding heroine, martyr and poetess, Ṭáhirih.

'The chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly served as chairman at a symposium of Faiths held in Karachi.

'On International Children's Day twenty

children with their Bahá'í teachers were invited to a celebration at the Sind Chief Minister's house. At this and the previously-mentioned functions several aspects of the Bahá'í teachings were discussed and messages of love and unity were expressed. Bahá'í literature was profusely distributed. Women's Week, sponsored by the Government, was also observed in Bahá'í communities throughout Pakistan.

'The contribution of the youth in the field of proclamation, consolidation of centres in mass teaching areas, and teaching and deepening about ten thousand enrolled Bahá'ís in Thatta, Tharparkar, Sind and Baluchistan earned encomiums from the Counsellors, members of the Auxiliary Board and the National Spiritual Assembly. Bahá'í women and the youth contributed through regularly conducting classes at the Teaching Institute and also through arranging firesides and public meetings in several centres. Bahá'í youth have started teaching the Faith among students at universities and colleges and are spearheading a programme under which the Faith is being drawn to the



Some Bahá'ís of Sivas, Turkey, who recently accepted the Faith. Bahá'u'lláh passed through Sivas on His overland journey from Baghdad to Constantinople in 1863. (See p. 504.)

attention of Government officials and leaders of thought throughout the country.

'The translation and publication of Bahá'í literature occupied considerable time of the National Spiritual Assembly and kept the Bahá'í Publishing Trust fully occupied. *The Bahá'í Magazine*, an Urdu monthly which has been published for more than a half century, was further developed and improved under the editorship of Mr. Anisur Rehman Dehlavi and the number of its readers was greatly increased. Translations of prayers and Tablets into Baluchi, Gujari, Sindhi and Urdu were published. Several original Urdu brochures and pamphlets were published; some of these are running into reprints. The great task of translating into Urdu *God Passes By* has also been accomplished. Printed monthly Bahá'í bulletins are meticulously compiled and issued.

'The Audio-Visual Aids Committee has compiled recordings of songs with Bahá'í themes, some in the format of folk music and some in more classical or traditional style. In addition, the committee has prepared and marketed film strips and slides depicting local

Bahá'í community life, tapes and cassettes on various subjects, greetings cards and Bahá'í calendars.

'With the help and guidance of the members of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Western Asia, ten major and ten medium-sized *Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds* have been acquired. In addition, ten endowments have been acquired and a teaching institute was constructed at Thatta and is functioning well.

'Two members of the community have been appointed registrars of Bahá'í marriages under Section 4 of the special Marriages Act of 1867, thus according official Government recognition to Bahá'í marriage.

'Activities for Bahá'í children are not ignored. Secure foundations have been established for a full-fledged children's school in Karachi, and regular classes for instructing Bahá'í children in the Faith are held in Karachi, Quetta, Hyderabad, Lahore, Thatta, Sanghar, Mirpurkhas, Tando Adam, Abbotabad, Rawalpindi and other large centres.

'Pakistan has twenty-eight incorporated Local Spiritual Assemblies; twenty-two are still

to be registered. Pioneers have been sent to a number of countries and a few posts still remain to be filled.

'The period under survey witnessed the enrolment of thousands of new believers from among the Bhil, Koli, Malhi, Rajput, Mengwal, Mengal and Kurd tribes.'

TURKEY

At Riḍván 1973 there were twenty-two Local Spiritual Assemblies in Turkey and fifty-seven localities had been opened to the Faith. By Riḍván 1976 Local Assemblies had been established in thirty-one centres and the Faith had been established in an additional forty localities, bringing the total to ninety-seven.

Achievements of the Turkish community in the period being surveyed include translation into Turkish and publication of *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, *Some Answered Questions* and *The New Garden*; the acquisition of two local Ḥazíratu'l-Quds, one at Gaziantep and one at Bornova; the supplying of pioneers to other areas and a flow of travelling teachers from this community to other countries abroad including

Australia; and the holding of special classes and conferences for Bahá'í women, youth and children.

A Bahá'í book, *Beklenen Çağ*, published in Turkey, was presented to a number of high-ranking Government officials as well as journalists; letters of appreciation were received from a number of the recipients including a former Prime Minister of Turkey.

An individual believer received an invitation from a society that supports the concept of world peace and unity to address its members on the subject of the Bahá'í Faith. A few Bahá'í friends, including members of the Teaching Committee, attended the gathering which attracted seventy people, most of whom were young. A brief outline of the history and teachings of the Faith was presented and slides of the Bahá'í Holy Places were shown. A lively discussion took place and Bahá'í literature was distributed.

In 1975 the believers of Turkey welcomed the Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan whose presence greatly inspired them.

(Based on various reports received by the World Centre)

D. AUSTRALASIA AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Nine National Spiritual Assemblies existed in Australasia at the end of the Nine Year Plan and none came into being in the period under review. In its letter to all National Spiritual Assemblies at Naw-Rúz 1976, the Universal House of Justice called for the formation, at Riḍván 1977, of the National Spiritual Assembly of the New Hebrides with its seat in Port Vila. The responsibility for the establishment of this body rested with the National Spiritual Assembly of the South West Pacific Ocean whose territory comprises New Caledonia, the New Hebrides Islands and the Loyalty Islands.

Set out below are excerpts from the reports received from the national communities within the jurisdiction of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Australasia.

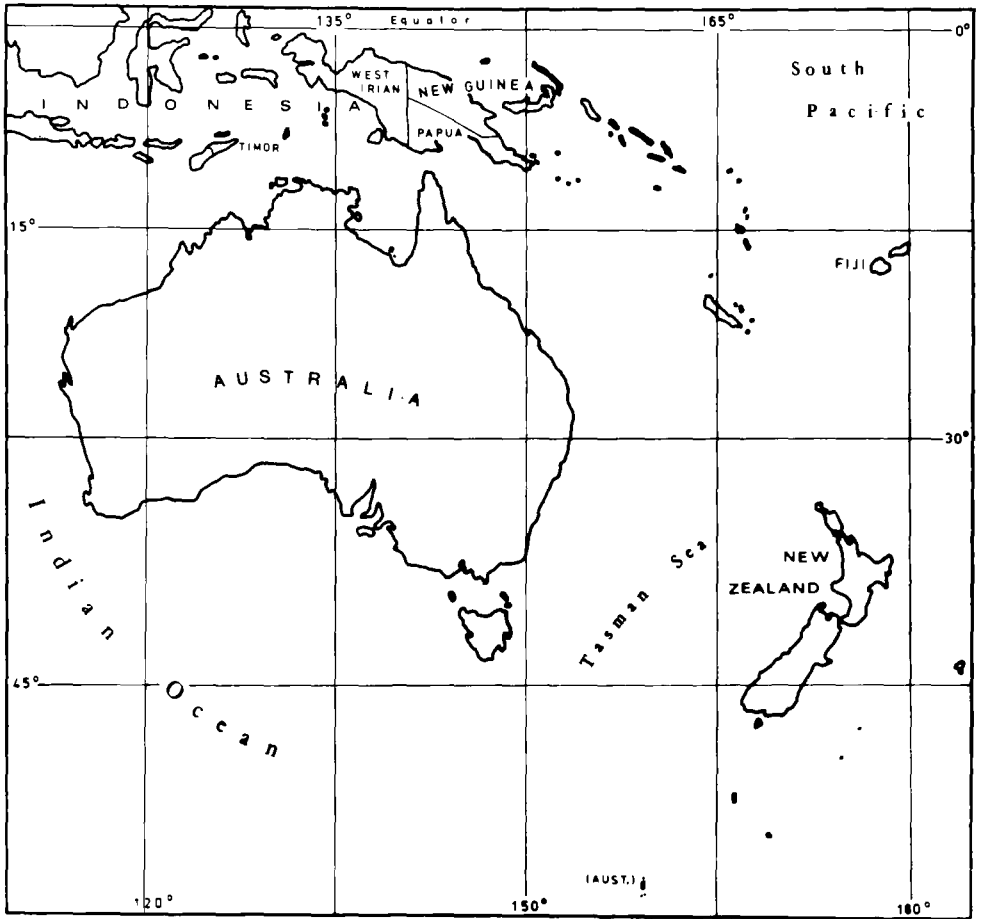
AUSTRALIA

'The Australian Bahá'í community breathlessly reached Riḍván 1973 with all but one goal

of the Nine Year Plan achieved. This goal was providentially fulfilled when on 29 April our hopeful pioneer to Bathurst Island secured permission to accept employment on the island's Aboriginal reserve. On 24 April the Universal House of Justice had cabled "... CONSIDER ALL AUSTRALIAN GOALS FULFILLED ...".

'Whilst the community settled in for a year of consolidation, the National Spiritual Assembly formed the basis of a new committee and department structure that would assist in launching the new plan of the Universal House of Justice, anticipated at Riḍván 1974. During 1973, plans were accepted for the new national Ḥazíratu'l-Quds to be built in the vicinity of the Bahá'í House of Worship in Sydney.

'The National Spiritual Assembly was invited to participate in the "Family of Man" service which was held in conjunction with the dedication of the Sydney Opera House in October 1973. An honoured guest on this occasion was the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone.



The Faith was mentioned in various news reports of that event and the Bahá'í prayer read at the service was included in a nation-wide television broadcast.

'Between Rīḍvān and December 1973, two large celebrations were planned nationally and locally to commemorate United Nations Day and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights. A specially publicized service for the latter event was held at the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár; 33,742 visitors were attracted to the Temple during 1973.

'The year 1974 was highlighted by three significant events. Firstly, the National Youth Conference held in Western Australia was the first such national conference ever held in that State. From that gathering, attended by more than eighty believers, enthusiastic youth dispersed to all parts of Australia to participate in teaching projects devised by various Local

Spiritual Assemblies and Regional Goals Committees.

'Secondly, we had the wonderful bounty of the presence of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir at our national convention in Melbourne. He challenged the Australian community to implement swiftly, and to achieve early and totally, all the goals of the newly-launched Five Year Plan.

'Thirdly, the exciting first part of the plan was climaxed by the dedication in October 1974 of the new Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in the Temple gardens. The new buildings include an administrative complex, a hostel for pilgrims and an assembly hall. A capacity crowd, including invited dignitaries, gathered in the House of Worship for a special service and later outside the assembly hall for talks and the official ceremony. The friends were reminded that day of the efforts of the Hands of the Cause "Mother" and



“Father” Dunn who brought the Faith to Australia in 1920 and whose dedicated and sacrificial efforts helped to bring to fruition the spiritual and physical structure of the Administrative Order in Australia. The day before the dedication of the new administrative centre, more than two hundred believers attended the first Australian national conference sponsored by the Continental Board of Counsellors in Australasia. During that same month in Perth, Western Australia, Bahá'ís participated in an inter-Faith service which was attended by 2,000 people and televised nationally.

The year 1974 also saw the recommencement of the publishing of the Bahá'í magazine *Herald of the South*, publication of which had been suspended for several years due to financial difficulties.

The Australian Government accorded recognition to the National Spiritual Assembly as a denomination for the purpose of the Marriage Act 1961–1973; an announcement of this action was published in the Australian Government *Gazette*, No. 48, 11 June 1974. This recognition, the only type presently available from the

Australian Government, was offered by the Attorney-General of Australia and was not solicited by the National Spiritual Assembly.

At Ridván 1975 Australia had the pleasure of having the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone attend for the first time in thirteen years the national convention of his own country, held this year in his home town of Adelaide. The theme was “stock-taking”; in an inspiring manner the Hand of the Cause led this consultation. For an entire year the Australian Bahá'í community took an in-depth look at its individual and community life.

By mid-1975 the Australian community was well on its way to achieving its international travelling teaching goals and had succeeded in sending out a number of pioneers to their posts. The steady expansion of the Faith into areas remote from city centres was accelerated.

Especially significant were the teaching activities, both international and domestic, undertaken by youth; this included many “package” teaching trips arranged by the National Goals and National Youth Committees, launched from the sixth National Youth

Conference in Canberra, and also two youth travelling teaching teams sent to Papua New Guinea and to the Gilbert Islands.

'At the mid-way point of the Five Year Plan, the Australian community seems poised for an early victory. Yearly National Teaching, National Youth and Regional Conferences, the Counsellors' Conferences and National Pioneering Conferences of 1974 and 1975, deepening schools, new believers' schools, weekend and summer schools, children's camps and children's classes (a new children's room was erected in 1975 at the Yerrinbool Bahá'í School)—all contributed to the consolidation and expansion of the Cause in Australia.

'An increased awareness of how to use the media to good advantage is helping the friends to bring the Faith to all strata of society. Of great assistance in the area of proclamation is the *Public Information Officer's Manual* published in the early part of 1976. Other publications of the Australian Bahá'í Publishing Trust, which was first established in 1974, have been a treasurer's and a secretary's manual, designed to assist the friends. Also published was a unique pamphlet for the non-Bahá'í parents of Bahá'í youth, entitled *From One Parent to Another*.

'In an endeavour to meet heart to heart all the members of the more than sixty Local Spiritual Assemblies scattered across the vast continent, the National Spiritual Assembly undertook an intensive travel programme between September 1975 and February 1976.

'The theme of the remainder of the Five Year Plan is to "Gladden the Hearts"—first, the heart of the individual as he commits himself to service to Bahá'u'lláh, and thence the hearts of his friends and neighbours as he expresses in deeds and words the bounty and responsibility bestowed upon him by having recognized the Manifestation of God for this day.

'At the national convention during Riḍván 1976 the Australian community again delighted in the presence of the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone. The goals yet to be achieved in the Five Year Plan were laid before the delegates and the means of achieving them were discussed. Each delegate committed himself to take the spirit of the convention back to his community and to help instil in the friends an even greater awareness of the significance of the Cause and the role each must play in furthering its establishment.'

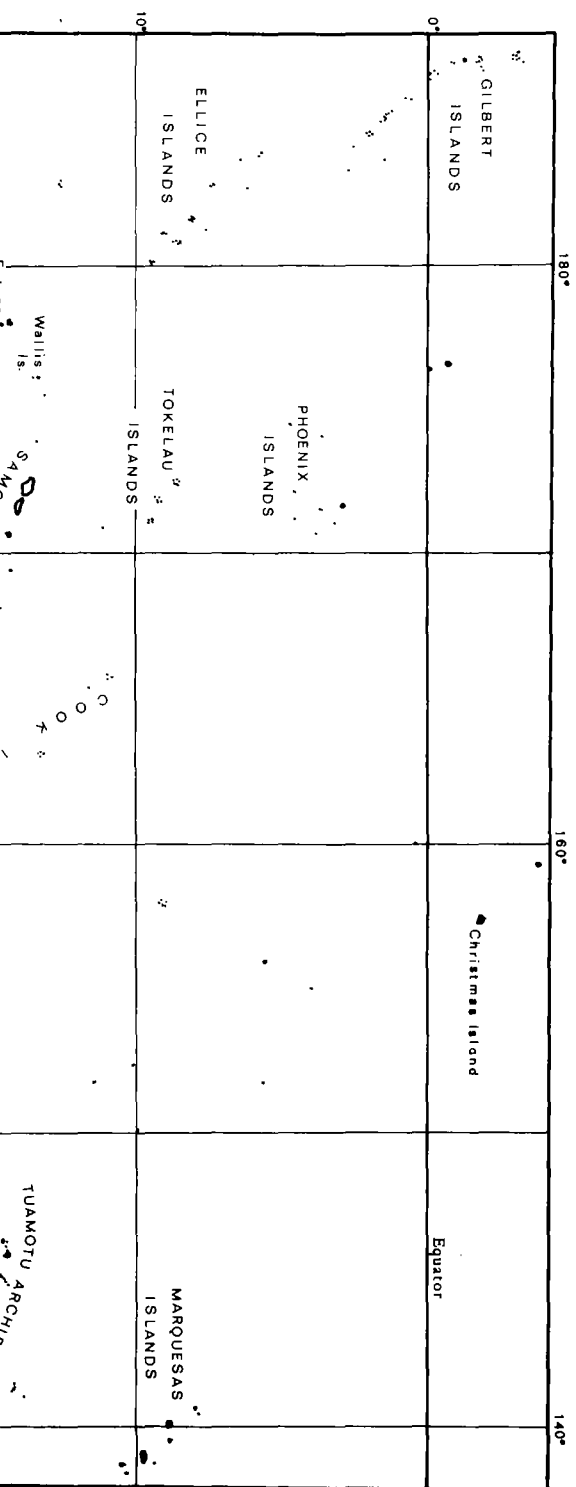
FIJI

'Throughout the years 1973–1976 a shortage of manpower and financial resources restricted proclamation and mass teaching activities and the Fiji community's major efforts were therefore devoted to deepening and consolidation. In this, we received invaluable assistance from large numbers of international travelling teachers from all parts of the world including, most notably, Mrs. Bertha Dobbins, the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for the New Hebrides, now well into her eighties, who made a teaching trip with a local believer to Nairai Island, assisted with deepening in Suva, and gave a talk at the University of the South Pacific. Regular and much loved visitors have included Mr. G. Tehrani, Mr. Q. Eshraghian and Dr. Arthur Dahl. In addition, youth teams have come from New Zealand during each long vacation period and have visited most of the remoter communities and islands. Meanwhile, local teaching teams have been active throughout the Fiji island group.

'Teaching events have included a National Teaching Conference immediately following each national convention; five Regional Conferences in each of the years 1973 and 1974; a Regional Conference and two Teacher Training Institutes in 1975; and a regular mid-year National Conference, held in Suva. The last-mentioned gathering took the form of a highly successful Women's Conference.

'In 1973 the National Assembly purchased a new national Ḥaziratu'l-Quds, larger and more centrally situated than the previous one. A small but devoted team has worked ceaselessly since then to refurbish, redecorate and maintain the new Centre. The first activity held there was a youth summer school which was blessed by the participation of the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone and Mr. Suhayl 'Alá'í of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Australasia. In the same year, and again in 1975, another youth summer school was held on the island of Moce in the southern Lau group.

'As a result of these teaching and deepening activities, many Local Spiritual Assemblies and Bahá'í groups are now holding regular children's classes, dawn devotionals, deepening classes, firesides and have initiated activities for Bahá'í women. Several Local Assemblies are undertaking extension teaching. Some village com-



munities raise money for the fund by producing for sale traditional handicraft items and household goods. The Bahá'ís of Moce brought to the 1975 Women's Conference large numbers of the beautiful *tapas* (hand-painted beaten-bark cloths) for which their island is particularly famous. The 1976 convention fund was swelled by the money raised from the sale of beads, mats, brooms, fans and baskets brought as gifts by believers from the outlying villages.

'The arrival in Fiji of six new pioneers has been of assistance. Two of these friends have had experience in publishing and are able to assist with the work of the Publishing Trust. The Publishing Trust was established in fulfilment of a goal of the Five Year Plan and registered on 2 April 1975 but its initial progress was slow owing to the fact that we were handicapped by lack of expertise and experience. Now, however, it is in a position to fulfil its purpose of providing a service to the entire South Pacific area by publishing Bahá'í books in the major Polynesian and Melanesian languages. We have approached other National Assemblies in the Pacific Area to ascertain their requirements. Meanwhile, a translations committee has been busy increasing the supply of Bahá'í literature in Fijian. Many of the translations have already been stencil-duplicated for use in teaching and deepening, and are now being checked and revised for submission to the Publishing Trust.

'Although limited in scope, proclamation activities have continued in the period under consideration. Literature has been sent to the head teachers of all the primary schools in the Dominion, to plantation owners and employers and, where appropriate, to Government officials serving on select committees. Travelling teachers in many areas have approached village Chiefs and invited them to discuss the Faith. A "Proclamation Week" in Suva in 1975 attracted much interest and favourable comment. Particular efforts were made to proclaim the Faith during International Women's Year and several Bahá'í speakers were invited to address gatherings of various local and regional women's associations. Exhibitions mounted in conjunction with other United Nations activities have been well publicized and well attended.

'An outstanding event in 1973 was the appointment of Mrs. Tinai Hancock, a Fijian believer, as a member of the Auxiliary Board. Mrs. Hancock later left Fiji and Mrs. Irene

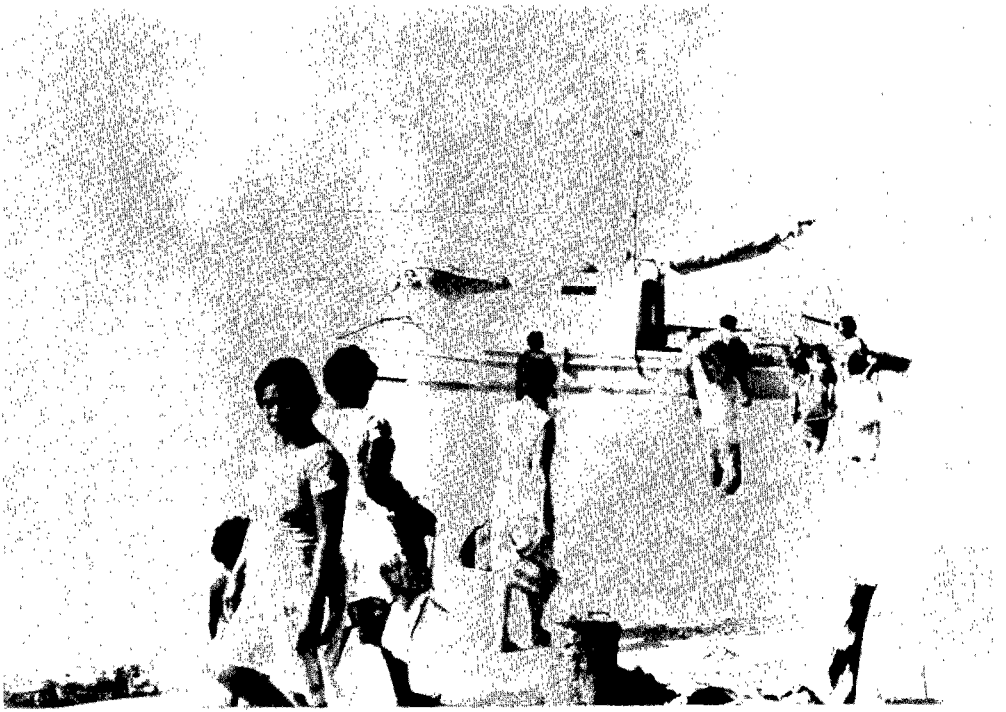
Williams, an Australian pioneer of long standing, was appointed to the Auxiliary Board in 1975. She has since appointed two assistants, Mr. Joji Toka, a Fijian believer living in Lakeba, and Mrs. Rambai Woodrow, a Gilbertese believer living in Rabi Island. It is at Buakonakai, on Rabi Island, that the first local Ḥāzīratu'l-Quds has been established under the Five Year Plan; this was dedicated at Naw-Rúz 1976.

'Throughout the period under review, the National Spiritual Assembly has had the constant support, encouragement and advice of the Continental Board of Counsellors. Prior to the 1974 national convention, the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir and Counsellor Howard Harwood consulted with the National Assembly and gave invaluable guidance on the presentation to the believers of the Five Year Plan goals, and on the various stages by which they might be accomplished. Counsellor Thelma Perks represented the Continental Board at the 1975 annual national convention. In 1976 she and Counsellor Violet Hoehnke travelled to the island of Lakeba and conducted a conference there. Counsellor Suhayl 'Alá'í has been a frequent visitor to Fiji and has given unstintingly of his time to consult with the National Assembly.'

THE GILBERT ISLANDS AND TUVALU

'The National Spiritual Assembly of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands came into being in 1967 with its seat in Tarawa and was known by that name until January 1976 when the Ellice Islands formed a Legislative Assembly and became known as Tuvalu.

'Riḍván 1973, marking the end of the Nine Year Plan, saw the Bahá'ís of this area rejoicing that all the goals of the plan had been met. Soon after, news came from the Universal House of Justice of the Five Year Plan which would be given to the Bahá'í world in 1974. To provide the inspiration for a running start, two representatives of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Australasia visited the islands. In January 1974 Counsellor Violet Hoehnke arrived in time to attend a Nineteen Day Feast with the friends on Tarawa Island. She flew to Butaritari for several days' visit, then to Tabiteuea Island, with a stop-over at Abemama, and sailed by canoe to North Tarawa to visit the Temple site. On the return journey the ship's mast broke and Miss



A 24-foot craft built by Mr. John Thurston, a pioneer in the Gilbert Islands, for the use of Bahá'í teachers in reaching the many small islands in the area, separated by vast stretches of open sea. In the centre is seen Mrs. Collis Featherstone who boarded the catamaran at Tarawa, Gilbert Islands, to journey to Abaiang Island; September 1975.

Hoehnke had to walk back many miles in the dark through sea passages between the islets in order to reach Bahá'í headquarters. Her visit resulted in publicity on the radio and in the weekly newspaper.

'Counsellor Suhayl 'Alá'í arrived in March to consult with the National Assembly about the Five Year Plan and to visit the friends. Several consultations with the National Assembly resulted in detailed plans for implementing the goals of the Five Year Plan on every island, beginning with the presentation of the plan to the national convention. Some time after the convention, Auxiliary Board member Mosese Hokafonu of Tonga visited the colony.

'A number of pioneers arrived from Australia, Tonga and the Solomon Islands and we were visited by travelling teachers from a number of centres. Among these was Mrs. Mary Berg of the Yukon Territory, Canada. A team of two young men and two young women from Australia, trained singers and experienced teachers, visited several islands attracting many souls. One of the

team, seeing the need for pioneers in our area, resigned from his job in Sydney and remained on Tarawa where he has organized several good teaching programmes especially for children in North and South Tarawa. During this time three Gilbertese teachers travelled to other areas including the United States Trust Territories, Micronesia and the Solomon Islands. Gilbertese travelling teachers are sent out regularly; each has had at least one training course at the teaching institute in Bikenibeu.

'Mr. John Thurston, a pioneer from Hawaii, built a catamaran which is used for transporting Bahá'ís, and also freight, between nearby islands; and he is now building a larger forty-foot catamaran for ocean voyages among the islands.

'In September 1975 we were overjoyed and greatly aided by a three-week visit from the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone who, accompanied by Mrs. Featherstone, visited Abaiang, North Tarawa and Tabiteuea. An important event during Mr. Featherstone's stay

was the reception tendered in his honour by the National Assembly to which the Governor and all top officials were invited. The Governor engaged Mr. Featherstone in conversation for almost four hours and received with appreciation a copy of *The Bahá'í World*. Mr. and Mrs. Featherstone were interviewed on Radio Tarawa. In addition to meeting with the National Assembly on two occasions, Mr. Featherstone participated in the dedication of the new Ḥazíratu'l-Quds at Betio and Bikenibeu.

'Some events which have furnished publicity for the Faith have been a book stall where Bahá'í books are displayed and sold at the Queen's birthday celebration every year and radio and regular weekly newspaper publicity for such events as the annual convention, the arrival of Bahá'í visitors, and United Nations activities. The twentieth anniversary of the coming of the Faith to this colony was celebrated and publicized and at the time of the separation of the Ellice Islands on 1 January 1976 the Bahá'ís were requested to include a Bahá'í prayer in the worship service commemorating this event. The departure of Mrs. Mabel Aritiera, a pioneer to this colony for fourteen years, and her attendance at the international convention for the election of the Universal House of Justice and at the Bahá'í conference in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1974, resulted in an article and photograph being printed in the Government newspaper. The National Assembly is fortunate in having a five-minute programme on the radio each Saturday evening, and a series of morning five-minute talks every weekday morning for one week in each six-week period.

'A project with which the National Assembly is proceeding slowly is the presentation to leading Government officials of an attractive information kit containing quotations from Bahá'í Writings and statements on such Bahá'í principles as non-involvement in politics, loyalty to Government, etc. Members of the National Assembly sit on various governmental advisory committees for religious broadcasts, welfare, family planning, and religious education in elementary schools.

'Since Riḍván 1973 the following translations have been made: *God and His Messengers* in Gilbertese; *The Hidden Words* (Arabic) in Gilbertese; *Light for all Regions* in Ellice; Appendix Notes to *Release the Sun* in Ellice; *God's Great Plan* in Gilbertese; and a book of

children's prayers in both Gilbertese and Ellice. These are to be printed soon by the new Bahá'í Publishing Trust of Fiji.

'Five communities have morning prayers; the friends of Bikenibeu gather every day for dawn devotionals.

'A number of observances have been held in commemoration of United Nations activities. A lunch was tendered by the National Assembly for United Nations specialists working in the islands. An art contest was sponsored in elementary schools on the topic of United Nations work here, with prizes being given by the Governor's wife. Pictures of this event were sent to the UNICEF office in New York.

'Mr. Samuel Tranter of Canada was appointed a member of the Auxiliary Board and two assistants were named in the period.

'President Hammer DeRoburt of the Republic of Nauru, while on a brief visit to Tarawa, graciously accepted a copy of *The Bahá'í World* which was presented to him by a believer from Nanumea.'

NEW ZEALAND

'In April 1974 the National Spiritual Assembly awaited with happy expectancy a meeting with the Continental Board of Counsellors for the Australasian zone to discuss the goals of the Five Year Plan. A telegram from the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone stating "BEST WISHES PRAYERS CONSULTATION COUNSELLOR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY APPLICATION FIVE YEAR PLAN . . ." gave, at the outset, that spiritual impetus and encouragement that these "edifiers of the souls of men" never fail to impart. Counsellor Howard Harwood reminded us that we only get what we expect, that New Zealand should expect a great deal and, in view of the situation in the world, we should launch the Five Year Plan rapidly.

'For our homefront, plans were made to achieve the consolidation of Local Spiritual Assemblies, for the purchase of local Ḥazíratu'l-Quds, for the opening of new localities and for extending our contact with the Polynesian population. To date in the plan, five additional Spiritual Assemblies have been incorporated: Bay of Islands, Palmerstone North, Christchurch, Dunedin and Tauranga. One more, Gisborne, is in process. The two local Ḥazíratu'l-Quds called for in the plan have been acquired, in the communities of Wanganui and Whangarei,



Some participants in the National Youth Conference of New Zealand, held in Hamilton; 29–31 August 1975. Twenty of the 200 youth who attended arose to serve as travelling teachers to fulfil a goal of the Five Year Plan.

respectively. Three new Local Spiritual Assemblies were formed: Mt. Eden, Onehunga and Thames. Twenty new localities have been opened so far and the youth have been specially encouraged to assist in this area of extension.

'The Polynesian Goals Committee, whose main task is to keep in constant touch with the many friends from the Pacific now resident in New Zealand, is tackling this assignment successfully. Closer contact with our Polynesian friends has given us a Spiritual Assembly in Onehunga on which eight Tongan believers serve. A Maori Advisory Committee was formed in May 1976 and plans have been made for a meeting in August to be attended by members of this committee, representatives of the Continental Board of Counsellors, and members of the National Spiritual Assembly and the National Teaching Committee. Translations of prayers and of *The Hidden Words* into Maori have been made and sent to the World Centre.

'A romantic story began to unfold following the visit of the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone and Hawke Bay friends to the home of Mr. Maurice Chambers in Havelock North. Mr. Chambers' association with a Dr. Felkin who had met the beloved Master, and the former's quiet acceptance of Bahá'u'lláh in 1914, is an early chapter, hitherto unknown, in the history of the Cause in New Zealand.

'On the international front we have had the bounty of being able to assist the friends of the North West Pacific Ocean with the achievement of their property goals.

'Our gratitude goes to all pioneers and to the thirty youthful travelling teachers who visited the Pacific last year. Reports of their achievements have warmed our hearts.

'The great bounty bestowed upon us by the Universal House of Justice in granting us the honour of hosting the International Teaching Conference to be held in Auckland in January

1977 has opened many doors for the proclamation of our beloved Faith. Early in 1976 His Excellency Sir Edward Denis Blundell, Governor-General of New Zealand, granted the Bahá'ís an audience and with gracious courtesy received *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, and a verbal explanation of the mission of Bahá'u'lláh.

'Opportunities for the use of radio and television have considerably increased. Three radio interviews have been recorded and three interviews were televised. One of these, an hour-long interview featuring Mr. Barry Crump, a New Zealand Bahá'í who is well known as an author, resulted in a number of enquiries about the Faith.

'Bahá'ís took a leading role as delegates to national conferences and similar gatherings of various organizations relating to child care, Maori welfare, play centres and education for the deaf. Bahá'ís also played a prominent part at one national convention for women and presented a paper on the Faith.

'Some additional recognition was accorded us by Government departments. The Inland Revenue Department granted us notable exemptions from income tax and the Department of Justice, in a letter dated 30 March 1976, stated that in view of the well-established credentials of the Bahá'í community it is agreeable to gazetting Bahá'í marriage officiators without the hitherto usual yearly formality of renewal of application by the individual.

'Much still remains to be done. Although conscious of the world upheaval following in the wake of God's major plan, we are confident that we shall execute the part of His minor plan entrusted to us and stand ever grateful for the loving guidance and the unerring wisdom of His Universal House of Justice.'

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

'The community of Papua New Guinea felt it had come of age in 1973 when, for the first time, it sent delegates to the international convention for the election of the Universal House of Justice. Lopena Vera of Papua and Lundeng Capenias of New Ireland were the first representatives of their respective races to visit the Holy Land. The members of the National Assembly were able to attend the international convention with the knowledge that all goals for Papua New Guinea in the Nine Year Plan had been completed. The teaching work had progressed faster than anyone

had ever dreamed it would. Sixty-seven Local Assemblies were formed, thus more than doubling the goal of that plan.

'The annual national convention in 1973 was the largest ever held in the country, with seventy-six delegates. During the year the House of Justice approved our request to change the system of electing delegates from Local Assembly Areas. The following year an electoral unit system was employed. The initial problems, such as some tribal groups not being represented, were countered by gradually increasing the number of regions which totalled eighteen by 1976. The regional system proved to be a considerable improvement over the previous method, firstly by reducing expenses and secondly by increasing the sense of responsibility of the delegates. It also brought to light a greater number of believers of capacity.

'The first youth conference of Papua New Guinea was held in Sogeri in November 1973 with approximately forty youth and visitors in attendance. In various communities, and particularly in Port Moresby, there are now youth who have been raised as Bahá'ís. These young people have a marked sense of responsibility towards helping with the work of the Faith.

'Auxiliary Board member Mosese Hokafonu of Tonga visited various communities in Papua New Guinea in December 1973 and attended teaching institutes in Madina and Sogeri. The first appointment of a Papua New Guinea Auxiliary Board member, Lundeng Capenias of Madina, was announced towards the end of the year.

'A Papuan couple, Saino and Koivoi Aumo, became caretakers of the *Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds* in Lae. Saino was the first believer from Mountain Brown and had initiated the teaching work in his home village. Mountain Brown subsequently became a fertile teaching field. The teachings spread like a bush fire from village to village. As the Faith spread, Missions began to complain, particularly about Mission teachers educating the children of Bahá'ís. This problem had arisen in other districts, such as Talasea and Siane, and contributed to inactivity in both cases. However, in Mountain Brown, after some negotiations, the problem was solved by Local Spiritual Assemblies paying Mission teachers who had previously been paid by contributions to the Mission. Another solution emerged which was even more satisfactory and which probably



Some Bahá'ís of Lae, New Guinea, who marched in a parade in observance of Independence Day; 17 September 1975. The Bahá'ís—the only multi-racial group participating—received enthusiastic applause as they passed the official dais carrying a banner reading: 'Bahá'ís long to see the diverse peoples living in Papua New Guinea become united as one people.'

contributed to the spread of the Faith in Mountain Brown: many teachers, known as "Pastors", themselves became Bahá'ís.

'Subsequently the Faith began to spread to the coastal region near Mountain Brown where people of the same language group were living. By 1976 there were more than fifty villages with sufficient believers to form Local Assemblies. Other fertile fields were found in the mountain region in the centre of Papua, and in the north in an area known as Afore.

'The annual convention in 1974 was attended by the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone. Held in Sogeri, it was a stirring occasion, blessed by the presence of the Hand of the Cause and inspired by the new Five Year Plan. In consultation with the National Assembly after the convention, Mr. Featherstone urged us to quickly proceed with proclamation plans, to preserve and consolidate the victories already won and to launch an immediate widespread expansion of the community.

'The Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir visited Papua New Guinea briefly in March 1974 and consulted with the National

Assembly on the Five Year Plan. He urged the National Assembly to consider purchasing Ḥazíratu'l-Quds in the major towns and assisted with the planning of opening many new islands and districts in a visionary far-flung campaign. It proved too expensive to purchase Centres in the major towns but to date seven villages have built local Ḥazíratu'l-Quds and eight more have commenced construction of their Centres.

'Restrictions concerning the use of land have handicapped us in obtaining a suitable Temple site but an unexpected bounty fell to us through the generosity of a Bahá'í family who donated their home and garden in Sogeri for use as a national endowment.

'The use of radio as a means of teaching and proclamation has not yet developed adequately. However, many news items about the Faith have been broadcast. The activities of travelling teachers have been reported on the radio. Several attacks on the Faith have been reported in nation-wide broadcasts and as a result the Bahá'ís were given an opportunity to present the true spirit and purpose of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.



Mrs. Elti Kunak of Papua New Guinea was awarded the British Empire Medal in June 1975 in recognition of her work with women's clubs in the Bismarck Archipelago.

'A new type of teaching activity was inaugurated in December 1974 with the arrival of youth teaching teams from overseas. The first team came from Australia. The youth travelled to various centres, enrolled more than one hundred believers, and opened up a new district, the Jimmi Valley in the Western Highlands. The following year three teams came, two from New Zealand and one from Australia. This time more ground was covered and the teams stayed for longer periods. Their sacrificial efforts to assist the teaching work were greatly appreciated by the National Assembly and the believers. The youth encouraged the singing of songs with Bahá'í themes. A youth string band is now functioning in New Ireland.

'The year 1975 was an eventful and historic year for Papua New Guinea. The country achieved independence on 16 September and a series of events affecting the Bahá'í community seemed to arise out of this. In May, Auxiliary Board member Dr. Peter Khan of the United States, accompanied by his wife Dr. Janet Khan, visited Lae and Port Moresby. Dr. Peter Khan

spoke at public meetings in both towns. These lectures were attended by hundreds of students and visitors and both meetings had a dynamic and almost electric effect on the audiences—a very positive proclamation.

'In June 1975 when the Queen's Birthday Honours List was announced, everyone rejoiced to learn that Mrs. Elti Kunak, of Madina, New Ireland, who was among the first to embrace the Faith when it came to New Ireland in 1957, had been awarded the British Empire Medal for her work with women's clubs. The distinguished and truly remarkable believer who has never received any formal education was a member of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Madina village and the first local woman to serve on the National Spiritual Assembly.

'Independence celebrations held all over Papua New Guinea became a means of proclamation for the Faith and the believers in various communities participated in different ways. In Kwikila, the Bahá'ís were the only people to attend the celebrations in national dress. In Rabaul, a colourful float, skilfully decorated and carrying nine children of different races, proclaimed the unity of mankind. In Lae, a marching group dressed in colourful traditional costume, representing nine different races or tribes, and bearing a banner inspired by the Bahá'í teachings, marched in the independence parade; two believers played traditional flutes. The banner expressed the idea that all peoples in Papua New Guinea should work together in unity. In New Ireland a Bahá'í choir sang at the official ceremony and Bahá'í prayers were read.

'A special issue of the Bahá'í newsletter, commemorating independence, told the story of the development of the Faith in Papua New Guinea and was illustrated with photographs of Bahá'ís and Bahá'í events. It was sent to the Governor-General, all Government ministers, heads of Government departments and other dignitaries, and to councils and schools. The edition produced very favourable comments from various sources.

'Publications in the period included a newsletter in English; a newsletter-booklet called *Kundu* published approximately every three months in Pidgin and Motu; a simple teaching book in English, *Kingdom Comes*, by Geoff Heard; and a book of prayers and readings in Melanesian Pidgin, for use at Feasts.

'The first conference sponsored by the

Continental Board of Counsellors was held in Lae in July 1975 with Mr. Suhayl 'Alá'í, Miss Thelma Perks, Mr. Howard Harwood, Miss Violet Hoehnke and believers from six districts in attendance. After the conference, Counsellors 'Alá'í and Hoehnke travelled to Rabaul for an exposition organized by the Local Assembly. In November, Counsellor Hoehnke pioneered to a homefront goal, Mt. Hagen in the Western Highlands. Three Local Assemblies have now been formed in villages near Mt. Hagen, their membership including representatives of tribes not previously represented in the Faith.

'Near the mid-point of the Five Year Plan it is apparent that the teaching goals are almost completed. Enough locations with sufficient believers already exist to form the required number of Local Assemblies. The incorporation goals are almost complete. Sufficient local *Házíratu'l-Quds* to fill this goal have been completed or commenced. Teaching in the Highlands—particularly in the Papuan Highlands—is again progressing. Travelling teachers have gone to Australia to assist with Aboriginal teaching. The practice of holding dawn prayers is operating in some villages. The acquisition of a Temple site, and consolidation, are still problems. The remaining goals which the National Assembly has under active consideration are the development of radio teaching and the dispatching of pioneers to the New Hebrides.

'The Faith in Papua New Guinea is firmly established and although deepening lags behind there are many firm, dedicated believers throughout the country. The relationship of the Bahá'í community with the Government at the present time is favourable and the Constitution allows freedom to practise religion and freedom to teach religion. The future appears to be promising for the progress of the Cause of God and the establishment of its institutions.'

SAMOA

'The Bahá'ís of Samoa experienced the bounty at Riqván 1973 of learning of the announcement to the Bahá'í world community that His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II had become the first reigning monarch to accept Bahá'u'lláh. The travel of four members of the Samoan National Spiritual Assembly to the World Centre to participate in the election of the

Universal House of Justice also added to the spiritual blessings showered on the Samoan Bahá'í community.

'Following the Samoan national convention, a very difficult teaching trip was undertaken by Mr. Tumanuvao White to the Tokelau Islands, an extension teaching goal assigned to Samoa. Later his wife, Manasesa, journeyed there after her husband returned to Samoa, and the result of their efforts was the formation of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Fakaofu at Riqván 1974. Other victories won for the Faith during this period included the translation and printing of the first of four parts of the Samoan edition of *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, and the formation of a Regional Audio-Visual Committee with sister National Assemblies in the Pacific area. John and Violet Ott ended the teaching effort for the year by opening Anu'u Island to the Faith.

'The Five Year Plan had a unique beginning in Samoa when the friends gathered for the national convention in 1974 were greatly honoured by the visit of His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II who graciously consented to be photographed with the believers. Contact with His Highness by delegates and other friends attending the convention stirred many to redouble their efforts to teach the Cause and brought them a greater awareness of the significance of the Faith.

'In August, the Hand of the Cause William Sears visited Samoa after attending the International Youth Conference in Hawaii. Much excellent publicity was obtained for the Faith including a front page article which appeared in the newspaper in Pago Pago, American Samoa. Mr. Sears' visit to Samoa helped spark awareness of the need to purchase a new Temple site and the need to recruit pioneers to replace those who had been unable to remain at their posts. Within a few months the teaching work in Western Samoa was reinforced through the arrival of two pioneers from Hawaii, two from Australia and one from Japan; some pioneers from the United States later settled in American Samoa.

'During December and January a visiting youth teaching team from New Zealand helped to renew interest in teaching and contact on the village level. During the intercalary days and the beginning of the Fast, the Hand of the Cause William Sears once again visited Samoa and met



His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II of Western Samoa (front row, fourth from the right) held a reception in honour of the Hand of the Cause William Sears (fifth from the right) during Mr. Sears' visit in August 1974.

at length with the National Spiritual Assembly and members of the community. His effort bestowed fresh and badly needed inspiration and guidance for winning the goals of the Five Year Plan and aided in dispelling the pall that had settled as the result of the departure of a number of pioneers. Rídván 1975 found a determined contingent of delegates attending convention and participating in the consultation.

'As a result, in part, of the arrival of pioneers, a new spirit of dedication and teaching began to manifest itself throughout Samoa. In November a new local Centre was dedicated in Sasina, Savaii Island, Western Samoa. This was a great victory, as it was located in a village which had shown much opposition to the Faith for many months.

'A very active National Proclamation Committee began televising a series of thirteen shows prepared by the National Spiritual Assembly of Hawaii with the Hand of the Cause William Sears as moderator. This series was complemented by a weekly fifteen-minute radio broadcast each Sunday morning. An influx of

newly awakened souls began to respond to this excellent proclamation activity. Several new publications in the Samoan language were published including excerpts from *The Advent of Divine Justice*, a small prayer book, and the first publication by a Polynesian Bahá'í author, *Searching for the Truth*, by Auxiliary Board member Tumanuvao White. The presentation by the National Spiritual Assembly in December of a gift of medical supplies to the hospital in Apia—a gift made possible through Dr. Larry Beers and the Hawaiian National Assembly—resulted in excellent publicity in the newspapers.

'Another youth teaching team from New Zealand came to Samoa in January and provided excellent follow-up teaching to the successful summer school which had been held in Apia in late December. Seventeen travelling teachers from many different countries participated in the teaching work in Samoa during the year and made valuable contributions.

'In March a second local Centre was dedicated in Pago Pago. Mrs. Filifili Tuiamalo sacrificed her home to make this gift, and the release of



A Five Year Plan goal was fulfilled through the acquisition of a local Ḥaẓratu'l-Quds (shown above) in Pago Pago, American Samoa. Dedication of the Centre took place 21 March 1976.

spirit due to this sacrificial gesture brought a new momentum to the teaching and proclamation work. The dedication service was attended by Mr. Suhayl 'Alá'í, Auxiliary Board member Tumanuvao White and the entire body of the National Spiritual Assembly. The year ended with the election of twenty Local Spiritual Assemblies, a considerable increase in membership of the Bahá'í community, and a growing sense of urgency to win the goals of the Five Year Plan.

'One of the most important goals was won during the year, the purchase of a twelve and one-quarter acre site for the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár to be built in Samoa.¹ The property is located high on the mountainside overlooking Apia and the Pacific Ocean; an excellent caretaker's cottage already existed on the site. This goal was achieved through the unified efforts of the entire community and the loving co-operation of the institutions of the Faith. The deed was signed on 31 October 1975.

'This brief summary of the activities in Samoa in no way reveals to the reader the majestic power of Bahá'u'lláh in fulfilling His purpose in

the hearts of the people of Samoa, a power which has raised up the first reigning monarch to embrace His Faith, is rapidly working toward the erection of the first Temple of the Pacific islands, and is enthroning His love in the hearts of troops of light-seeking souls in these tropical islands in the mid-most heart of the ocean.'

SOLOMON ISLANDS

'During the years 1973–1976 we were visited by the Hands of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone and Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muḥájir. Dr. Muḥájir spent a week with us just prior to the commencement of the Five Year Plan and assisted the National Spiritual Assembly to take measures to launch the plan. Mr. Featherstone visited the Solomons in September 1975. While here he addressed the friends in Honiara and he dedicated the first national institute building in Auki, Malaita, the island where most of the Bahá'ís are located. The institute has since served as a means of deepening many new believers in the Faith.

'A project of special significance was the series of "Heroes and Victory Conferences" held in Honiara in December 1974 and April 1975. At

¹ See 'The First Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Pacific Islands', p. 489.



Participants in the first Bahá'í Women's Conference of the Solomon Islands, held at Auki Village, Malaita Island; 8-9 February 1975.

the December gathering the believers deepened their knowledge of the teachings and were invited to participate in a three-month teaching project. They were encouraged to gather again in April to report on their activities. More than thirty teachers arose at the December conference and carried the Faith to fifteen new areas including some islands not previously opened to the Cause. Following this series, the first National Teaching Conference was held in Honiara.

'The first Bahá'í Women's Conference was held in February 1975 at Auki. More than ninety enthusiastic Bahá'í ladies attended. The opening roll call revealed that twelve villages were represented by as few as one and by as many as twenty-seven women. The conference co-ordinators were deeply impressed by the quality of the consultation and the degree of participation. This conference marked a new stage in the development of the Faith in the Solomons and since that time participation by Bahá'í women in the teaching and administrative work of the Faith has greatly increased.

'Equally significant has been the increased participation of Bahá'í youth. Local youth groups have been formed in areas where there

are strong Local Spiritual Assemblies. These youth groups visited each other, organized singing bands and entered music competitions. One group was invited to record some songs with Bahá'í themes for the local radio station. Another music group from Hau Hui participated in and won a singing competition held at the Catholic Centre at Buma, Malaita, competing against music groups of various denominations from other parts of Malaita. This event was given radio news coverage. In September 1975 the first National Youth Conference of the Solomons was held in Auki. In attendance were more than one hundred and fifty youth from ten areas, two members of the Auxiliary Board and eight National Spiritual Assembly members. More than five hundred people attended a public proclamation programme held in conjunction with the conference. Significantly, the youth met all the expenses arising from the conference, including the cost of their food and transportation.

'Two Bahá'í schools were operated by the National Assembly during this period; however, due to changes in the Government's education policy, both schools were closed. Later in 1975, a tutorial school at Laulasi, site of a previous

Bahá'í school, was re-opened and operated by the National Assembly.

'Approaches were made on three separate occasions to have a Bahá'í programme on the radio but permission for this was not granted. However, an achievement and a consolation was our being accorded the opportunity to announce Bahá'í Holy Days and related activities in a programme devoted to "church" news. More recently, news items and interviews with Bahá'í visitors to the Solomons have been broadcast on the national news by Solomons Radio. The National Assembly also, for a time, published quotations from the Bahá'í Writings in the recently established weekly newspaper.

'One new publication was produced during the period, a translation into the Langa Langa language of *The Lord of the New Age*. A supplementary goal was achieved in 1976 through the provision of a pioneer family to the Gilbert and Ellice Islands (now Tuvalu). Through the signing of an agreement between land owners and Local Assemblies in village areas, land may be leased for the construction of local Ḥazíratu'l-Quds. Ten such sites are to be obtained in the Five Year Plan. Two have been acquired in the period and another three are in process.

'There has been a large increase in the number of localities opened to the Faith and the total allocated in the Five Year Plan was achieved in this period. However, the provision of deepening classes was a major task and some areas slipped back because of lack of these. Perhaps the most significant developments during this period were the activities of the youth and the increased involvement of Bahá'í women in community activity, the latter being an even more remarkable development in an area where traditionally women have played a passive role.

'In 1974 and 1975 the National Assembly sponsored activities commemorating United Nations Day. One such event was attended by the Governor of the Islands, members of the Council and other leading dignitaries. During the Auxiliary Board members' conference held in Honiara in 1974 a reception was held at the Bahá'í Centre to provide an opportunity for Government ministers, heads of Government departments and religious leaders to meet visiting Bahá'ís. Through these means closer liaison with Government officials was established.'

SOUTH WEST PACIFIC OCEAN

'Since 1972 the territory under the jurisdiction of this National Assembly has comprised New Caledonia, the New Hebrides Islands and the Loyalty Islands. The general trend of this three-year period has been one of consolidation rather than of widespread expansion. At the close of the Nine Year Plan at Riḍván 1973, the area had attained its allotted goals of ten Local Spiritual Assemblies, of which four were in New Hebrides, three in New Caledonia and three in the Loyalties. Overseas, the Local Spiritual Assembly of Tahiti, Society Islands, had been formed. By Riḍván 1976 the number of Local Assemblies in the area totalled nine—five in New Hebrides, three in New Caledonia and one in the Loyalties—and the Local Assembly of Tahiti was also maintained.

'In October 1976 the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone visited Port Vila, New Hebrides and Noumea, New Caledonia.

'Significant teaching activities of the period include:

'1. A marked emphasis on teaching through the use of displays and audio-visual materials. In both New Hebrides and New Caledonia, particular use was made during 1973–1974 of "Expos", or portable public displays that were set up in several centres including Port Vila, Erakor, Fila Island, Lenakel, Whitesands, Port Resolution, Norsup and Luganville (New Hebrides), and in Nouméa, Robinson and Yaté (New Caledonia). Use was also made of the portable Bikoh projectors, and of filmstrips purchased from the International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre. In New Caledonia and the Loyalties the teaching work was greatly assisted by the showing of Bahá'í movie films, under the guidance of a National Audio-Visual Committee.

'2. A notable expansion of the Faith on the island of Tanna, New Hebrides, leading to the formation of a new Local Spiritual Assembly at Whitesands, Tanna, at Riḍván 1974.

'3. Attempts by various Local Spiritual Assemblies to teach in extension goal areas allotted to them by the National Spiritual Assembly in accordance with the Five Year Plan objectives.

'4. The holding of National Teaching Conferences in Port Vila in October 1974 and October 1975; and in Nouméa and its suburbs in

April 1974, April 1975 and February 1976; together with summer schools held in Thio, New Caledonia, in December 1975 and Filá Island, New Hebrides, in January 1976.

'Consolidation of the community has been aided by a number of weekend schools and institutes held in various centres. These have been organized by the Local Spiritual Assembly concerned or by the National Teaching Committees, and the teachers for the most part have been local believers. The National Teaching Committee of New Hebrides has begun a correspondence course on the Faith suitable for both teaching and deepening. Several communities have been strengthened by the movement of pioneers. Eleven Bahá'ís pioneered on the homefront, settling for limited periods of time in Tanna, Erakor, Maré and Ouvéa; one pioneer went to Tahiti; and nine pioneers arrived from Canada and one from the United States to settle in Nouméa, Yaté, Lifou, Port Vila and Tahiti. The National Spiritual Assembly has endeavoured to send its members to consult with the various Local Spiritual Assemblies on a regular basis, thus forging stronger communications with the grass roots of the com-

munity. Attempts have been made in two localities to initiate community meetings for dawn prayers.

'All Local Spiritual Assemblies have been given goals of fostering special activities for Bahá'í women, youth and children. Two "Women's Congresses" were held during December 1975, in Erakor, New Hebrides, and in Maré, Loyalty Islands, at which the entire attendance comprised Bahá'í women. The education of Bahá'í children through regular classes has been carried out on a small scale in five localities.

'The period 1973-1976 has seen an increase in the use of the mass media for the proclamation of the Faith. Regular announcements of Nineteen Day Feasts and monthly public meetings have been made on Radio Nouméa since 1974. Radio Vila has broadcast several items about the Faith during its transmissions in Pidgin. These announcements have included Feast notices, an interview with two Bahá'ís on the nature of the Faith, the playing of four five-minute tapes of Bahá'í talks and music, and a considerable amount of publicity for the official opening of the national Ḥazíratu'l-Quds of New Hebrides.



Mrs. Bertha Dobbins, the first Bahá'í to settle in the New Hebrides (for which service she was named a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh by Shoghi Effendi), with Commissioners R. Gauger (right) and J. Champion (left) at the dedication of the national Ḥazíratu'l-Quds of the New Hebrides, in Port Vila; 2 April 1976.

In 1973 the New Caledonian press published a photo of Melanesian and other delegates to the third international convention in the Holy Land. Regular advertisements are now being inserted in the two newspapers of the New Hebrides. An impressive proclamation of the Faith which reached a large audience was made through a Bahá'í float entered in Port Vila's first Agricultural Show in 1973, and through Bahá'í participation in an inter-Faith service held in Nouméa cathedral in 1975. The Faith's links with the United Nations have been emphasized by public meetings held in Port Vila in 1973 and in Nouméa in 1974.

'Translations of Bahá'í texts and pamphlets have been made into the following languages: Fila Island, Erakor, Maréen, Tahitian and Pidgin. Publication of these, however, has been confined to a Pidgin version of the Short Obligatory Prayer and the Pidgin pamphlet *Sam Stori Abaot Bahá'u'lláh*. The Local Spiritual Assembly of Erakor has produced a cassette tape of several songs with Bahá'í themes in various languages.

'One of the salient developments of the period has been the attainment of important property goals, particularly in New Hebrides. Measures have been taken to acquire a national endowment in Santo, New Hebrides. A site for the future *Mashriq'l-Adhkár* of the New Hebrides was purchased in Port Vila in June 1975. Work on the construction of the national *Ḥazíratu'l-Quds* of New Hebrides was completed in April 1976. Also completed that month were the administrative formalities regarding the transfer to the Faith of the national endowment in Maré, Loyalty Islands.

'Since 1974 the National Assembly has sought ways of fostering cordial relations with Government officials. In New Hebrides, Bahá'í delegations have met with the French Resident Commissioner and four District Agents. Both the British and French Resident Commissioners, together with other leading citizens and members of the new Representative Assembly of New Hebrides, attended the official opening of the national *Ḥazíratu'l-Quds* in April 1976.

'Finally, one of the most significant and heart-warming trends of the period has been the development of a much closer collaboration between the National and Local Spiritual Assemblies on the one hand, and the Continental Board of Counsellors and their Auxiliary Boards

on the other. Following the first meeting between the National Spiritual Assembly of the South West Pacific and the Continental Board of Counsellors for Australasia in Nouméa in February 1974, during a hurricane, came the appointment of the first two resident Auxiliary Board members in the area, and later, of four assistants.'

TONGA

'Twice during the period from Riḍván 1973 to Riḍván 1976 the Kingdom of Tonga was honoured by visits from dearly-loved Hands of the Cause of God. On 21 December 1973 the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone, accompanied by his wife, arrived in Tonga for a week-long visit. Upon arrival, Mr. and Mrs. Featherstone, Counsellor Suhayl 'Alá'í of the Australasian zone, and Auxiliary Board member Mr. Mosese Hokafonu participated in a two-day national conference held in the capital city, Nuku'alofa, which is located in the Tongatapu island group. Then Mr. and Mrs. Featherstone, Mr. 'Alá'í, Mr. Hokafonu and others from the southernmost island group of Tongatapu flew to the northernmost island group of Vava'u, approximately two hundred miles away, to participate in the two-day national summer school programme. On 25 December, while in Vava'u, Mr. Featherstone delivered a very well received talk on the Bahá'í Faith at a public meeting in the major village, Neiafu, the first public presentation about the Faith ever held in Vava'u.

'On 7 April 1974 the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir spent a few days in Tonga. During his visit he participated in deepening classes and various teaching activities. An important highlight of Dr. Muhájir's visit was his half-hour radio interview which was broadcast over the nation's only radio station.

'Formalized teaching activities have included national, area and local programmes. National activities were organized by the National Teaching Committees of Tonga or the Cook Islands or one of the other national committees; area activities were planned and implemented primarily by the Area Teaching Committee of Tongatapu, Ha'apai or Vava'u, as appropriate; and local programmes were carried out by Local Spiritual Assemblies or their committees.

'In Tonga, beginning with Riḍván 1973, the national teaching activities held included one

teaching conference, two teaching institutes and one summer school programme, representing twelve days of activities. In the same year, six area teaching institutes and two area deepening institutes were held in Tonga, representing ten days of activities, and one two-week teaching trip in the Cook Islands was completed. There were two local one-day institutes reported to the national office.

During the year 1974, one teaching conference and one summer school were held in Tonga and one seminar was held in the Cook Islands, collectively representing ten days of activities. In Tonga, area activities included twenty teaching institutes and two youth institutes resulting in thirty-seven days of teaching activities. Local and inter-community programmes reported numbered seven events requiring eight days.

'The year 1975 witnessed three national events encompassing two teaching conferences, one summer school and one youth camp which represented a total of seven days of activities. On the area level there were eight teaching institutes, two deepening institutes and one women's conference held, requiring a total of fourteen days. Nine local and inter-community events requiring fifteen days were reported during the year in Tonga. In Takitumu in the Cook Islands, the highly successful weekly "Bahá'í Family Days" were held where the friends came together for talks, study, films, slides, games, and fellowship.

'A number of public meetings were held on area and local levels. On two occasions in Tonga there were showings of the Bahá'í Film *Step by Step* and the United Nations film *One and a Half Dreams*.

'In September of each year a national Agricultural Show is held in each of the three major island groups of Tonga. The Agricultural Show is always attended by the King of Tonga and by Government, religious and school leaders, as well as the general public. In 1973 the Bahá'í youth assisted in preparing and manning the attractive Bahá'í booth at the Agricultural Show. In the following two years the National Youth Committee undertook complete responsibility for the planning, preparation and manning of the handsome Bahá'í booth which each year drew more enquiries about the Bahá'í Faith from passers-by including foreign visitors to Tonga.

'United Nations Day observances have been

held in each of the three years being reviewed. These have been very successful in bringing recognition to the Bahá'í Faith. In 1973, fifty prominent persons including Government, religious and school leaders attended a formal observance of United Nations Day, the programme of which included talks by students of a local high school, a panel of United Nations specialists answering questions, a slide presentation on the United Nations buildings in New York, and refreshments. Seventy prominent leaders and dignitaries attended the impressive programme held at the International Dateline Hotel in 1974.

'In 1975 high school students were invited to participate in an essay contest on the theme "Equality between Men and Women". The prizes were presented to the three winners at a public meeting held in the major theatre in the capital city after an introductory talk by a local educator on the purpose of United Nations Day. The United Nations film *Workshop for Peace* was also shown as part of the programme.

'Each year paid and free announcements concerning United Nations observances were published in the newspaper or broadcast on the radio. Correspondence, invitations, and Bahá'í and United Nations literature were sent to leading citizens. Paid full-page statements on United Nations topics, in English and Tongan, were also employed in 1973 and 1974. In observance of Human Rights Day in December 1973 the full text of the Bahá'í brochure *A Bahá'í Declaration of Human Obligations and Rights*, in Tongan and English, was placed in our sole newspaper, *The Tonga Chronicle*. Generally there appears to be an increase each year in the interest shown in the activities of the United Nations. In 1973 only the National Spiritual Assembly sponsored the observance of United Nations Day, but in 1974 there were two co-sponsors and in 1975 there were five co-sponsors.

'Mr. and Mrs. Sione Taufalele and their three children departed from Tonga on 31 January 1976 for their pioneering post in Tuvalu, in fulfillment of a goal of the Five Year Plan. This is the first time that Tonga has provided pioneers to other countries.

'In the year 1975-1976 there was a great increase in the number of Bahá'í travelling teachers and visitors to Tonga, Niue Island and the Cook Islands. The record shows that during

the past year nine visitors and seventeen travelling teachers came to these islands.

'In 1973 a study guide entitled *Heroic Age of the Bahá'í Faith* was published in English. Also in 1973 publication was initiated in English and Tongan of the local Bahá'í newsletter called *The New Dawn* and later a bulletin called *The Children's New Dawn*, although regular publication ceased after the first year. The *Administrative Handbook for Local Spiritual Assemblies* was published in English in 1974 and in Tongan in 1976. During the past Bahá'í year two Bahá'í pamphlets were translated into Tongan and published; one guidebook for pioneers, travelling teachers and visitors was published in English; and one compilation by the Universal House of Justice was translated into Tongan.'

E. EUROPE

Seventeen National Spiritual Assemblies existed in Europe at the end of the Nine Year Plan (Riḍván 1973) and none came into being in the period under review. In its letter to all National Spiritual Assemblies at Naw-Rúz 1976, the Universal House of Justice called for the formation, at Riḍván 1977, of the National Spiritual Assembly of Greece with its seat in Athens. The responsibility for the establishment of this body rests with the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany.

Set out below are excerpts from the reports received from the national communities within the zone of the Continental Board of Counselors in Europe. For the purposes of administering the work of the Board, the territory of Europe has not been subdivided.

AUSTRIA

'The period from Riḍván 1973 to Riḍván 1976 witnessed a great expansion of Bahá'í activities in Austria. Through the increased activity and the growing universal participation of the friends the goals of the Nine Year Plan were not only won but were consolidated as well and the number of Bahá'ís at Riḍván 1973 was approximately double that of two years before.

'The proclamation and teaching work spearheaded by the youth and also aimed particularly at younger people, concentrated in this

period, as before, around *The Dawn-Breakers* music group and featured a new portable exhibition, assembled after a Swiss model. In all major and in many smaller towns of the country this exhibition was shown for about a week. The exhibition in addition to showing pictures illustrating the history of the Faith also explained the basic teachings through many quotations. The climax of the week-long exhibition was usually a performance by *The Dawn-Breakers*. After a few introductory words the troupe began in turn to sing songs with Bahá'í themes and to explain the fundamental principles in suitably simple words. Generally a slide presentation with music and commentary was also given half-way through the programme, which outlined the fantastic possibilities open to man in today's world through technological developments (space travel, atomic energy, medicine, etc.) and contrasted the potentiality for disaster. Thus it became clear how much humanity today is in need of further spiritual development. Additional songs and texts led to a fruitful exchange of thoughts with the public in a stimulating and sympathetic atmosphere.

'In the midst of the teaching activity of *The Dawn-Breakers* on 4 April 1976, a young friend, Mehrdad Poostchi, ascended to the Abhá kingdom. His passing deeply touched the believers and his service and dedication were a special example for our community.

'In 1975 the Bahá'í youth of Austria developed a further and very impressive teaching instrument, the theatre group *Comet*. With their play *Fire in the Sky* the friends portrayed, in an enormously effective way, through song, pantomime, lighting effects and slides, the principle of progressive revelation. *Comet* made numerous tours throughout Austria, accompanied by many friends. With the help of *The Dawn-Breakers* and *Comet* it was possible to carry out a great number of teaching projects in Italy, Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Germany. Through conscientiously striving to raise the quality of their music *The Dawn-Breakers* even succeeded in having produced a long-playing record which was introduced and played several times on the Austrian National Radio and won a favourable reaction. *The Dawn-Breakers* were invited to appear several times on television and radio and during their interviews the aims and purposes of the group were always emphasized;



nor did they miss any opportunity to perform at schools and major meetings.

'In these three years the Austrian Bahá'í community met on many occasions in order to derive new enthusiasm for teaching the Faith from deepening and social contact. It began with a teaching conference in Altenberg/Linz in 1973 in which the Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan participated and where he spoke on the education of children. Meetings in spring and autumn, and regular winter schools, in turn followed. It emerged clearly on these occasions that the contributions of the Austrian Bahá'ís themselves improved continually and transmitted powerful impulses. A particularly strong impression was made also by the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir who prepared our community for the Five Year Plan. In May 1974 at a teaching conference, more than a hundred friends were able to listen to the Hand of the Cause Dr. Adelbert Mühlshlegel, and soon afterwards, in 1975, the friends were twice blessed with the presence of the Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizi who eventually travelled throughout Austria and also held a week-long enthusiastically received seminar on the Qur'án in Vienna. On this occasion we were

advised that each Bahá'í should deepen his knowledge of the Faith and perhaps even specialize in a particular aspect of the teachings in order to prepare ourselves for the eventual entry of the masses.

'What then are the changes and developments effected from 1973 to 1976? Considered only statistically, not many, for the number of Bahá'ís remained about double that of 1970. There were some losses in membership and new believers were found through teaching methods that represented an improvement over those employed towards the end of the Nine Year Plan. Native Bahá'ís were in the majority with over sixty per cent; the proportion of youth, unfortunately, slightly declined, but in western Austria our community succeeded in making a lasting impression upon youth in the labouring class, a group with whom we had not previously succeeded in establishing contact.

'The first contact with Gipsy families was made and maintained. Regular children's classes took place and the children had their own programmes at schools and conferences. Our youngest ones have themselves contributed to Feasts through song and dance. The friends' knowledge of the Faith has increased con-



The Dawn-Breakers of Austria, a group of Bahá'í musicians whose performances proclaimed the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh on radio and television and in live concerts.

siderably and within the community the believers have come to know each other better. Contributing to this process have been the regular flow of Bahá'í communications, a well-staffed secretariat of the National Spiritual Assembly and mutual visits between the institutions of the Faith. It should be mentioned here that the members of the Continental Board of Counsellors and Auxiliary Board members—and, since June 1975, also the assistants to the Auxiliary Board—have contributed immeasurably to the deepening of the friends. In this period the administrative order developed within Austria: there were more national committees than ever before with an increased number of younger friends serving on them. The number of committee meetings, and their duration, increased considerably. The resultant activities including lecture series, travelling teaching trips, public meetings, etc. embraced the whole country; and the Local Spiritual Assemblies and groups contributed, which in turn helped in their development. In fulfilment of the goals of the Five Year Plan, Local Spiritual Assemblies made efforts to enrich the life of the community through their own Feasts and morning devotions.

'We are happy to be able to record the successful development of mutual co-operation with the Swiss community in inter-community teaching projects.

'Some special events during the period under review should be mentioned. In November 1974 a delegation from the National Spiritual Assembly was accorded a gracious interview by Dr. Rudolf Kirchschräger, President of Austria. The book *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh* was presented to him and there was a conversation in a cordial atmosphere of mutual appreciation.

'During the United Nations International Women's Year, 1975, Mrs. Shirin Fozdar, a distinguished Bahá'í from Singapore who represented the Bahá'í International Community at the International Women's Year Conference in Mexico City, visited Austria, which provided a welcome opportunity for a press conference, radio interview and several public presentations in which other women also appeared as speakers to a greater extent.

'From the end of 1975 until Riqdván 1976 a project was undertaken the aim of which was, as a first step, to present to all chief editors and editors throughout Austria a comprehensive

and attractive press kit. As the Bahá'í Faith becomes increasingly well known and publicized, accurate and objective information will thus be available in newspaper files throughout Austria. Further steps are planned in implementation of this project.

'In the next few years it will be important to utilize even more effectively the potential, strength and capabilities which the Austrian Bahá'í community has built up for winning all the goals of the Five Year Plan.'

BELGIUM

Forming part of the area administered by the Regional National Spiritual Assembly of the Benelux countries, which had its seat in Brussels, from 1957 until 1962, the Bahá'í community of Belgium became an independent entity in the last year of that period. Belgium has a particular opportunity of promoting the oneness of the human race since its own population is divided linguistically and historically into three separate communities—Dutch, Flemish and French.

The period under review, Riqdván 1973–1976, was essentially one of consolidation rather than dramatic growth. The Belgian community was called upon in the Five Year Plan to adopt, in consultation with the Continental Board of Counsellors in Europe, a teaching plan designed to lay firm foundations of the Faith in every Province of the country with a view to restoring all lapsed Local Spiritual Assemblies and strengthening all existing communities. The number of Local Spiritual Assemblies is to be raised to twenty, including one in each Province, and the number of localities where Bahá'ís reside is to be increased to one hundred. Assistance in these tasks is being given by pioneers and travelling teachers from a number of communities including Alaska, Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom and the United States and believers from the Netherlands are assisting in establishing one Local Spiritual Assembly in each Flemish-speaking Province. Progress was made toward the accomplishment of these goals in the period being surveyed.

The goal of utilizing to the fullest measure the services of Bahá'í youth was vigorously promoted through the holding of summer schools attended by large numbers of youthful Bahá'ís and the holding of an international youth conference in Oteppe in March 1975. The Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery, four European

Counsellors and nine members of the Auxiliary Board were present together with Bahá'í youth representing eighteen countries. Attention is being paid to teaching among students and visitors from former Belgian colonies in Africa.

A vital contribution to the spread and establishment of the Faith in all French-speaking countries of the world is made by Maison d'Éditions Bahá'ies, the French-language Bahá'í Publishing Trust for whose operation and development the National Spiritual Assembly of Belgium is responsible. An ever-increasing variety of Bahá'í literature, including the Sacred Text, is made available to the French-speaking communities around the world, a task in which Maison d'Éditions Bahá'ies is greatly assisted by the National Spiritual Assemblies of France, Luxembourg and Canada.

(Based on various reports received by the World Centre)

DENMARK

'The Five Year Plan was received with some feeling of ease by the Danish Bahá'í community. The goals for our country, we felt, were within our capacity and we had a good will to accomplish them at the soonest possible date. Yet the previous year had proved to us beyond doubt that victories cannot be achieved without effort

and cannot be maintained and consolidated without constant hard work and attention. Dark moments were experienced when pioneers, dear to our hearts, had to leave the country because the possibilities of finding jobs here sharply decreased. The newly-established Local Spiritual Assemblies were endangered, and even losses in membership were experienced as never before: in short, growing pains were felt and, with them, a certain fatigue.

'Inspiration came to us through the Hands of the Cause of God who passed through Denmark on their way to other countries or who came as regular visitors. Dr. Ugo Giachery and Dr. Adelbert Mühlischlegel, accompanied by their wives, and Mr. Abu'l-Qásim Faizí, have visited Denmark several times during the period in question. Each of these dearly loved Hands of the Cause supported and stimulated the community; each of them called upon us to renew our efforts. Particularly poignant was the plea voiced by Dr. Giachery in 1974 that we should wish "to do something spectacular for the Faith."

'We felt the need and looked about for new means. One result was that the community of Nakskov established contact with the local board of adult education and the Bahá'ís were given an opportunity to participate in their teaching programme. This project was later



Participants in the Scandinavian Youth Conference, Vissinge, Fuen, Denmark; 12-14 April 1974. The Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery is seen seated in the centre, with Mrs. Giachery.

initiated in other localities where the Bahá'ís are giving lectures of general interest and in this way getting to know new people.

'A series of teaching conferences was held and here new plans were made for proclamation. Teaching teams were established and the youth, in particular, went out as groups on their bicycles staying at youth hostels and in camping areas where they met new people and sought to determine where new efforts could be made. The youth also took a very active part in developing children's classes. The need for suitable material for this purpose resulted in the production of two children's books. These were developed and beautifully illustrated by a Bahá'í artist who is a member of the National Spiritual Assembly and herself the grandmother of two Bahá'í children. The youth also introduced a new teaching medium by creating a puppet theatre. This has been a great success and the possibilities for its use have not as yet been exhausted. The first song with a Bahá'í theme by a local believer came a few years ago. It is a charming tune that is easily learned but on the whole we are still a little shy about singing and feel that our community

would require more trained musicians before music could serve as an effective means of teaching the Faith.

'Travelling teaching has gained momentum during recent years. We are fortunate in being located at one of the crossroads of Europe and many friends from afar visit us. Now the Danish believers have started serving as travelling teachers too. Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Finland have been visited and thus closer bonds have been knit with the friends there. It would not be possible to establish closer bonds of affection between the Danish Bahá'í community and the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh Eskil Ljungberg, pioneer since 1953 to the Faroe Islands, and yet the special fund bearing his name which was developed by the National Assembly of Denmark for the dual purpose of assisting the teaching work in the Faroes and marking the ninetieth birthday of this valiant friend, made us all realize our deep respect for his devoted work. If possible, our love and admiration for Mr. Ljungberg deepened as a result of the glowing reports received from Anne Mulvad, the first child born of Bahá'í parents in Denmark, who



The acquisition of the Ḥazīratu'l-Quds of Godthåb, Greenland, in 1974, through the joint efforts of the National Spiritual Assemblies of Denmark and Canada, fulfilled a goal of the Five Year Plan.

immediately after her twenty-first birthday pioneered to the Faroes where she remained until her education plans required her to return to Denmark.

'Connections with the mass communications media have been established in these years. The beginning of the institution of the Regional Radios in the country has provided new possibilities for having the Cause mentioned. One of the first opportunities occurred on the Isle of Bornholm in the summer of 1975 and since that time short messages have been presented at a growing rate.

'Dispersal of the friends from the capital of the country has been a very slow process here, and for years the only physical Bahá'í Centre was at the national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds. Now Centres have been established in rented premises in Odense and in Nakskov. In 1974 the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds of Godthåb, Greenland, was procured as a joint effort of the Danish and Canadian communities, thus fulfilling one of the goals of the Five Year Plan.

'The translation and publication of Bahá'í books and other literature is a steady and constant process in Denmark. Well aware that there is a need for publications of improved quality, our national policy is to provide for neat but inexpensive editions, often bound in heavy paper and reproduced very simply by rota print or offset, so that new and better editions can be made available to the friends without too great expenditure. Publications in the period include Danish editions of *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* (Part I), *Some Answered Questions* (a new, revised edition), a prayer book (a new and enlarged edition), *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh*, *Principles of Bahá'í Administration*, *Living the Life*, the children's books already mentioned, and a few introductory brochures.

'The support of the Continental Board of Counsellors of Europe and the members of the Auxiliary Board and their assistants is highly valued and has been a constant help to us all.

'When asked about their views on the trends observed in the Danish community in the period under review the National Spiritual Assembly stated that the beginning of the period 1973-1976 was marked by a storm that shook fruit from the tree but the impression is that the storm has now calmed leaving a more consolidated community which appears to be developing the maturity and strength that will

help it to accomplish the cherished goals of the Five Year Plan.'

FINLAND

'At Ridván 1974 the National Spiritual Assembly adopted a number of goals which resulted, at the end of the year, in the establishment of Bahá'í groups in Oulu, northern Finland; Naantali, western Finland; and Kemi, Lappland. Six goal towns were adopted two of which, Lappeenranta and Mikkeli, were opened to the Faith.

'In April 1974 Mrs. Dorothy Ferraby of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Europe consulted with the National Spiritual Assembly about the launching of the Five Year Plan and made a teaching trip to Helsinki, Turku and Mariehamn. In May of that year the meeting of the European Counsellors was held in Helsinki which provided an opportunity for consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly. Mrs. Betty Reed of the European Board visited Finland in January 1975, spoke in a number of centres in the country and participated in the national seminar in Naantali. Mr. Hadi Afsahi of Sweden, a member of the Auxiliary Board, visited Finland several times in 1974 during the course of his teaching trips. Travelling teachers during the year included Mr. Harper Pettypiece, chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of Iceland, and Mr. Hans Öhman of Sweden who twice visited the west coast of Finland.

'At the beginning of the Bahá'í year (Naw-Rúz 1974) a special committee was appointed to make preparations for the International Teaching Conference to be held in Helsinki in July 1976.

'Proclamation and teaching activities in 1974 included a one-week teaching project in Mikkeli under the auspices of the National Youth Committee to work amongst the people there and especially amongst the local Gipsies; a one-week teaching project in Lappland under the auspices of the National Youth Committee, with particular attention being paid to Vuotso; a deepening conference in Naantali on the subject of the Nineteen Day Feast, with consultation on inter-Assembly co-operation and a special event, a meeting with twenty-five non-Bahá'í children; a national teaching seminar in Vantaa on "The Family and the Mother's Importance" with a public meeting, firesides, children's classes and deepening courses; a proclamation project

in Mariehamn in collaboration with some Swedish friends, involving a book exhibition, the use of a music group, visits to youth clubs, courtesy calls on local dignitaries, the display of posters and literature in cafes, hotels, stores, schools and industrial plants, devotional gatherings and deepening classes for the Bahá'ís; a public meeting for children relating to UNICEF and in observance of United Nations Day, sponsored by the Bahá'ís of Savonlinna, with an attendance of about 480 children and adults, and similar meetings in other centres including Vantaa and Salo, with proclamation being achieved at the meetings and through press articles; a National Youth Conference with consultation concerning the role of youth in the teaching and administrative fields; and various seminars to deepen our knowledge of the teachings and to proclaim the Faith in goal towns.

'Early in 1975 a special plan based on the message from the Universal House of Justice dated Naw-Rúz 1974 and designed to phase the goals of the Five Year Plan, was made by the National Spiritual Assembly for all local communities. The Hand of the Cause Dr. Adelbert Mühlischlegel, accompanied by Mrs. Mühlischlegel, visited Finland in June 1975. Dr. Mühlischlegel held valued consultations with the National Spiritual Assembly and participated in the teaching programme at the summer school in Jyväskylä. Other distinguished visitors to Finland in 1975 included Mrs. Betty Reed and Miss Anneliese Bopp of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Europe, Auxiliary Board members Hadi Afsahi and Åke Johansson of Sweden, and Dr. Peter Khan of Australia.

'A wide variety of proclamation activities took place in 1975. A special Bahá'í booth was established at the Northern Finland Trade Fair in Oulu. The booth featured a continuous slide show, an exhibition of Bahá'í literature in many languages, and maps showing the expansion of the Faith. Approximately one thousand introductory pamphlets in Finnish, many in Swedish and some in English were distributed to visitors. More than two hundred people requested additional information. Many firesides were held while the Trade Fair was on, and during the first week there were public meetings held every night.

'A "River of Life" summer project was held during July and August 1975 in the Turku area of

southern Finland, in Oulu and Kemi in northern Finland, and in the Varkaus area of eastern Finland. Friends from Sweden, the United Kingdom and Germany assisted in the northern project. Public meetings, films and an exhibition were part of the southern and northern projects; in the eastern project, in which twenty-three believers participated, singing groups visited a hospital, a retirement home, held an exhibition in a park, a public meeting, firesides and deepening classes.

'The first teaching conference of the Five Year Plan was held in Helsinki in October 1975 under the direction of Counsellor Betty Reed. At least one member from each Finnish community attended the conference with a view to conducting "mini conferences" in their home communities.

'A number of communities held observances of United Nations International Women's Year in October 1975. There was a public meeting in Savonlinna attended by members of parliament, civic officials and other dignitaries.

'Early morning prayer meetings were arranged in 1975 in Helsinki, Kangasala, Mariehamn and Savonlinna.

'A special committee prepared guidelines entitled "Requirements in Teaching the Bahá'í Faith to Bahá'í Children". The outline was published and sent to communities and Bahá'í parents. Regular children's classes were held in Espoo, Kangasala and Savonlinna.

'The National Youth Committee arranged for lectures on the Faith in many schools throughout the country including Helsinki, Kangasala, Mariehamn, Savonlinna and Tampere. The committee was assisted in this project by the institutions of the Cause and some adult believers.

'The winter school held in Mariehamn in December 1975 was attended by Counsellor Anneliese Bopp and many other believers from Finland and Sweden. A special meeting was arranged which provided an opportunity for consultation between the National Spiritual Assemblies of Finland and Sweden.

'Bahá'í literature in Finnish was further enriched in 1975 through the publication in mimeographed form of excerpts from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, a children's prayer book, and a number of brochures and compilations.

'Preparations for the International Teaching

Conference to be held in Helsinki occupied the time of many of the Finnish friends in the early months of 1976 and somewhat influenced all other activities. Some of the highlights of teaching activities in this period were the participation by the Bahá'ís in the Spring Fair in Savonlinna where several thousand people saw the Bahá'í booth and a considerable number accepted literature or asked for additional information; the three-week effort of a travelling teacher from Finland who assisted with the teaching work in Alaska; and the project under which the Local Spiritual Assembly of Espoo presented copies of *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* to leading citizens of that community, the acknowledgement received from one such person being especially favourable and friendly.

'In January 1976 there appeared the first issue of a Finnish-language Bahá'í magazine *Maailmankansalainen* (World Citizen) which will appear three times a year. The publication is designed for Bahá'ís and the general public and consists of editorial material on Bahá'í themes, originals and translations into Finnish of articles by Bahá'í authors, photographs and original artwork. The magazine is produced under the auspices of the National Assembly by Mr. Harri Peltola, a Bahá'í of Helsinki.

'Translations into Finnish have now been made of *God and His Messengers* and *Thief in the Night*.'

FRANCE

'The French Bahá'í community has been very active and dynamic since the beginning of the Five Year Plan. Activities have been many and varied and an increasing number of the friends have participated in them. The summer proclamation in 1974 was held in Nantes and Corsica. Fifty people participated including four from the United States, one from Canada and one from Luxembourg. Six people became Bahá'ís in Nantes which meant that a new Local Spiritual Assembly could be formed immediately.

'Two three-day institutes for Bahá'í teachers were held in the north and in the south of France. More than eighty believers attended these institutes, thus helping to form a solid base of informed people who can be used as either local or travelling teachers.

'United Nations Day and Human Rights Day were commemorated by the Local Spiritual

Assemblies of Lyon, Toulouse, Montrouge, Tours, Grenoble, Metz, Marseille and Monaco.

'Exhibitions were held in several cities. In Lyon there was a fifteen-day exhibition at the University Law School and in Grenoble there was a four-day one at the University Library. Also in Grenoble there was a month-long exhibition in the front windows of the city's youth information bureau. Monaco and Marseille also had exhibitions. These exhibitions were most helpful in realizing our objective of bringing the Faith to the attention of greater numbers of people. Also in 1974, the national Centre in Paris was completely renovated making it a more agreeable place to receive visitors and facilitating the holding of meetings.

'The year 1975 was chosen by the United Nations as International Women's Year. Two Bahá'í representatives attended a three-day symposium at UNESCO in Paris to inaugurate the year's special events. Two Bahá'í representatives were also present at a four-day congress sponsored by Françoise Giroud, Minister for Women's Affairs. President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing attended the opening sessions and presented the inaugural address.

'A special committee reviewed two manuscripts of books in which the authors wrote extensively about the Faith, corrected some notes written by Professor Desroches of the C.N.R.S. (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) destined to be incorporated into a future book, and reviewed references about the Faith in *Quidencyclopedia* and in a *Dictionary of Religions*.

'In January 1976, Editions Robert Laffont of Paris published *La terre n'est qu'un seul pays* (The Earth is But One Country) written by Mr. André Brugiroux, a French Bahá'í. In his book the author describes his six-year tour round the world, during which he became a Bahá'í. The volume has enjoyed a great deal of success and is now in its second edition. The author has also made a film of his journey in the narration of which he speaks at length about the Faith. Mr. Brugiroux is now making a lecture tour throughout France with his film. Audiences have been quite enthusiastic and have asked many questions about the Faith. Several people have become Bahá'ís as a result of reading the book.

'On 21 and 28 March 1976, a member of the Public Information Bureau was interviewed on Radio France. The first broadcast dealt with



*Mr. André Brugiroux, a Bahá'í of France, autographing copies of his book *La terre n'est qu'un seul pays* at the Bahá'í booth, International Book Festival, Nice; May 1976.*

progressive revelation, the principles and laws of the Bahá'í Faith, who are the Bahá'ís and what they believe; the second dealt with incidents from the lives of Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Táhírih, and an explanation of the *Mashriq'u'l-Adhkár*. The broadcasts were heard all over France, in Switzerland, and even in Morocco. The accompanying music was chosen from recordings of Seals and Crofts and other recordings of songs with Bahá'í themes. There was also a television interview which it is expected will be broadcast sometime in the autumn. A small segment of a fireside was filmed, and then several believers were interviewed. The results of the efforts of the Bahá'í Information Bureau were most heartening. In collaboration with the National Teaching Committee the Information Bureau distributed to all Local Spiritual Assemblies a brief set of guidelines concerning contact with press, radio and television and the preparation of material for use in mass media. Press releases prepared for Bahá'í Holy Days, special events and observances such

as United Nations Day were sent to Local Assemblies for use in regional newspapers; copies were also sent to national newspapers which are based in Paris. Good results were obtained in many local papers. As a result of presenting a news release to a radio station, members of the Spiritual Assembly of Toulouse were interviewed in a broadcast that lasted twenty minutes. A full length feature article on the Faith appeared in *Le Monde* in May 1976. It was an excellent article and it spoke quite positively about the Faith. Unsuccessful efforts have been made for several years to have the Faith mentioned in this prestigious newspaper and the appearance of this article represented an important breakthrough. Contact with mass media is most difficult in France so we were most pleased with this year's fine results.

'The passing of Mme. Laura Clifford Dreyfus-Barney¹ on 18 August 1974 deprived the French community of one of its earliest and most

¹ See 'In Memoriam', p. 535.

distinguished believers. Obituary notices appeared in *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro*.

'The French community was greatly honoured to have in attendance at the historic first National Teaching Conference of the Five Year Plan the Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery, and Madame Giachery, Miss Anneliese Bopp of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Europe, various members of the Auxiliary Board and approximately one hundred and fifty other believers. The Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizí also visited France in 1975, addressing the friends in Paris and then participating in the Bahá'í summer school in Normandy. The friends were delighted with his wisdom and great spiritual force.

'Two special institutes for children were held in Grenoble and in St. Louis during the school holidays. The young people spent several enriching days together studying the teachings and taking part in recreational activities. These institutes were successful and much enjoyed by the children who participated in them.

'In conclusion, one can observe that Bahá'í activity in France has greatly increased in the past three years, especially at the local level. In addition, there has been an enormous increase in

articles published in the French press and an increase in opportunities to speak about the Faith on radio and television. Doubtless the International Teaching Conference which will be held in Paris in August 1976 will serve to augment this welcome trend.'

GERMANY

'In the years 1973-1976 the German Bahá'í community had the privilege of welcoming the Hands of the Cause of God 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, *Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í*, H. Collis Featherstone and *Rahmatu'lláh Muhájir*. They contributed to the deepening of the community and enriched our summer schools. In addition, the National Spiritual Assembly gained through consultation with the Hands of the Cause whose experience and wealth of wisdom aided in the proclamation work and in contact with the universities. In January 1974 the Hand of the Cause Dr. Adelbert Mühlischlegel and Mrs. Mühlischlegel, who is an Auxiliary Board member, took up residence in the immediate vicinity of the House of Worship. Their presence has been of inestimable value in the deepening and spiritual growth of the community and has benefited the Bahá'í friends from all over the world who visited the



Public proclamation of the Bahá'í Faith during 'Proclamation Week', Darmstadt, Germany; 1975.



The Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery, Mrs. Giachery, Counsellor Erik Blumenthal (centre) and other Bahá'í friends who attended the first Bahá'í Summer School of Greece held in Evia; 26-27 July 1975.

House of Worship and met them. Conferences of the European Board of Counsellors were also held in Langenhain, in the shadow of the House of Worship, as were meetings with representatives of all European National Spiritual Assemblies.

'Among the essential teaching activities carried out during the period of this report were the following:

'Upon the invitation of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Adelbert Mühlischlegel consultation was held on the topic "Opposition against the Bahá'í Faith". Participants included Counsellor Anneliese Bopp, members of the German National Spiritual Assembly, members of the Auxiliary Board and some invited friends. The result of this session will be made available to the entire community within the framework of deepening classes and appropriate publications.

'The summer and winter schools have constantly improved in their quality, in their quantity, and in the number of their participants.

'Considerable emphasis was laid upon the question of deepening the knowledge of the friends about the Bahá'í administrative order in special teaching sessions; the need to develop characteristic attributes of Bahá'í life—one of the themes of the Five Year Plan—resulted in the holding of weekend sessions and seminars on the topic of spiritual growth. This subject has been given close attention, as well, by many local communities.

'The National Spiritual Assembly has named a National Co-ordinating Committee for Greece

in order to assist this country so that she may soon form her own National Spiritual Assembly.

'Immediately after the announcement of the Five Year Plan it was carefully studied and the National Spiritual Assembly, in consultation with the Local Spiritual Assemblies, developed programmes for every Local Assembly. These programmes which are to be accomplished in phases, were designed to assure the successful completion of the entire plan and are constantly being followed by the European Board of Counsellors which strongly reinforces the efforts of the communities. Other activities in the period included pioneer conventions, seminars of the European Teaching Committee, a seminar for the teaching of minorities, and a meeting of the Continental Board of Counsellors and National Spiritual Assembly with all American Bahá'ís living in Germany.

'During International Women's Year (1975) special programmes were conducted in various communities. The brochure on this theme, published by the International Bahá'í Community, was translated into German and made available to the public.

'The youth have worked actively in teaching projects and initiated their own programmes. A Bahá'í newsletter for youth has been published and a youth conference was held at Langenhain in February 1976 with two hundred and fifty participants. Especially noteworthy has been the teaching work at universities and schools where the Bahá'í Faith has been discussed within the framework of the religious instruction courses.

At one student conference in which friends from other German-speaking countries participated the question of co-ordination and intensification of work at the schools, colleges and universities was discussed. As a result of the above-mentioned activities, successful summer and winter schools were conducted the programmes for which were in part prepared and carried through by the Bahá'í youth.

'In order to emphasize the special meaning of children's education, national and regional children's conferences were held and, in parallel sessions, seminars for adults were held on the subject of child education. Some time ago a "children's week" was established in the summer at Lake Constance and this programme has now been expanded and extended to include a programme in northern Germany. In addition, special programmes for children were held at all summer and winter schools as well as at various national activities. Literature for Bahá'í children was enriched, an attractive children's calendar was published, and a forum for the children was created within the framework of *Bahá'í Nachrichten* (German Bahá'í News).

'At the local, regional and national levels efforts were continued to publicize the Faith

through the press, radio and television. News releases were sent to all the media and the Faith was referred to on various occasions, frequently in relation to the European House of Worship. It was also possible to show on television the film *The New Day* which deals with Bahá'í conferences in Padua and Plön. Special attention was devoted to school newspapers some of which printed articles on various aspects of the Faith.

'Because many *Gastarbeiter* or guest workers from various European and other countries are living in Germany a special committee was created for teaching work among minority groups. An effort has been made to translate and publish, in various languages, appropriate introductory material.

'The dedication of the new national *Házíratu'l-Quds*, located in close proximity to the House of Worship, took place within the period of this report. The national secretariat, the Bahá'í Publishing Trust (*Bahá'í Verlag*), the national archives and the library are housed in the new Centre.

'The Publishing Trust has increased its activities and brought out a variety of new materials, among the most important of which is



Participants in the Bahá'í children's conference held in Langenhain, Germany; 14 June 1975.

the German translation of the first part of *Nabil's Narrative*.

'Increased efforts were made to expand and complete various community libraries which previously had no or relatively small holdings. Also, a few seminars for Oriental studies at universities, and teaching chairs for comparative religion studies, were provided with Bahá'í literature. A committee of the National Spiritual Assembly is working on the translation and publication of literature in eastern languages.

'In order to overcome the obstacles hindering the incorporation of Local Spiritual Assemblies an attempt is being made to prepare Articles of Incorporation which are in harmony with the laws of the country as well as with the spirit of Bahá'í administration. In various Federal States the Ministry of Education has exempted children from attending school on Bahá'í Holy Days.

'Also, in the public sector, it is increasingly being noted that the Bahá'í Faith is an independent religion with the aim of establishing the oneness of mankind; this is especially to be observed in the reports and commentaries on the various media.

'In the period of this report the German community successfully completed its Five Year Plan property goals abroad including the purchase of a Ḥaziratu'l-Quds in Lomé, in Windhoek, and in Athens, and a Temple site in Barbados.

'Characteristic trends in the time being surveyed include an increased awareness on the part of the friends of the power of prayer; heightened attempts at developing the distinguishing features of Bahá'í life, and a marked maturing of Local Spiritual Assemblies which was reflected in increased contributions to the national fund. The National Spiritual Assembly has sought to improve the effectiveness of the organization and co-ordination of Bahá'í activities through restructuring its administrative facilities, appointing key committees and delegating responsibilities.'

ICELAND

'During the past three years, 1973–1976, the Bahá'ís of Iceland have had the bounty of the visits of two Hands of the Cause of God—Raḥmatu'lláh Muḥájir who encouraged us in the undertaking of a two-year youth campaign, and

William Sears who attended a youth conference held at the end of that campaign. Three of the five Counsellors for Europe have visited Iceland—Mrs. Betty Reed, Mr. Eric Blumenthal, and Miss Anneliese Bopp. Miss Bopp assisted the National Assembly in planning a filing system for use in the national office. Auxiliary Board member Hadi Afsahi also visited Iceland and helped to strengthen the bond between our community and the Auxiliary Board for Protection by explaining various aspects of protection of the Faith. He also assisted with a proclamation effort aimed at introducing the Faith to leaders of the Icelandic Government and local religious leaders. These visits greatly assisted and encouraged the fledgling Icelandic community and helped to prepare us for the tasks which face us at the present time.

'The membership of the Icelandic community is very youthful and as a result almost all activities could be called youth activities. A few highlights that deserve special attention could be mentioned. The newly-formed Njardvik Local Spiritual Assembly held a deepening weekend in 1974 based on the study course "The Dynamic Force of Example". Many youth attended and were spurred on to greater endeavour in their effort to live the Bahá'í life. A youth committee was formed and a two-year youth project launched in 1973, the aims of the latter being to enrol new believers, increase contributions to the fund, establish Bahá'í clubs in schools, send travelling teachers and pioneers to the Faroe Islands and host an international youth conference. All these goals were met to some degree.

'Also during this time the word "Bahá'í", the Bahá'í ring symbol and the symbol of "The Greatest Name" were officially registered with the Icelandic Government.¹ Total possession of our endowment land (Skogar) was gained in March 1975.

'In the field of child education, a committee was formed to guide parents in educating children. This committee has translated into Icelandic a great deal of material and has published a bulletin *The Bahá'í Garden*, in both English and Icelandic.

'The Keflavik community experimented with a new form of proclamation called an eve of joy: "Dost Thou Know Yet, or What?" The programme comprised the reading of old

¹ See p. 372.



Participants in the first International Bahá'í Youth Conference of Iceland; 9-12 July 1975. The Hand of the Cause William Sears and Mrs. Sears are seen on the extreme left, standing. Youth representing 9 countries were in attendance.

Icelandic sagas and excerpts from the Bahá'í Writings which conformed to the theme. Poems were read by a famous Icelandic actor and two well-known Icelandic opera singers performed. To follow up this event invitations were sent to all women's societies and schools, offering speakers on the Bahá'í Faith.

'With respect to mass media, a half hour of prime radio time was devoted to the reading of an article about the Bahá'í Faith. This was the second occasion on which the Bahá'ís received prime time on radio, the first being the occasion on which a section of *Release the Sun* was broadcast. A play about the life of ʿĀhirih was presented at the International Youth Conference held in Njardvik and there is some hope that it may be presented on radio and television.

'One compilation, two pamphlets, and one booklet were published in Icelandic during this time. The compilation "Bahá'í Stornskipan" (Bahá'í Administration) was produced with the assistance of the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly. The two pamphlets "Bahá'í Trúin og

boðskapur hennar" (The Bahá'í Faith and its Teachings) and "Andleg lausn efnahagsmála" (The Spiritual Solution to the Economic Problem) were produced by the Bahá'í Information Service, a committee of the National Assembly. The booklet "Your experience as a Bahá'í" was translated into Icelandic and is now presented to each new declarant by the National Spiritual Assembly.

'This has been a very productive period for the Bahá'í community in Iceland and the future holds even more hope.'

IRELAND

'During the past three years the Bahá'ís of the Republic of Ireland have been blessed by visits from the beloved Hands of the Cause—Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í, Paul E. Haney, H. Collis Featherstone, Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir and Abu'l-Qásim Faizí—who have shed their love and inspiration on the community at summer schools and especially arranged weekends. Dr.



The Hand of the Cause Paul Haney, Counsellor Betty Reed (centre, first seated row) and other Bahá'í friends who attended the Irish Bahá'í Summer School; August 1975.

Muhájir visited Ireland twice. In addition to visiting us, Mr. Faizi has greatly assisted the work of our Committee for Child Education through his booklet which has been widely used as a guideline for Bahá'í parents. The need for more comprehensive guidance for Bahá'í parents has been underlined during this period by the large number of children born into the community.

“The work of the Five Year Plan was approached in a spirit of great enthusiasm and eagerness as the community rode on the crest of a wave of success, having achieved in the year 1973–1974 the formation of two Local Spiritual Assemblies, bringing the total to eight, four more than called for at the outset of the Nine Year Plan. Whereas before the period under consideration most co-ordinated teaching activities were centered in two or three areas of the country, the past three years have seen an increasing number of local events being organized and individuals embracing the Faith in all areas of the country where there are Bahá'ís. It is felt that the Local Assemblies are strengthening and developing steadily and in most cases

extension teaching goals have been responsibly and enthusiastically pursued. Two factors in particular have given the Local Assemblies the opportunity of maturing: opposition from the parents of Bahá'í youth and problems connected with those who have broken the laws of Bahá'u'lláh. Of the eight additional Local Spiritual Assemblies called for in the Five Year Plan, three have now been formed.

“The development of the use of music in teaching has been a significant trend of this period. The emphasis in presentations and concerts has gradually moved from a music programme, with a cursory introduction to the Faith, to a more direct presentation of the Cause with music interspersed.

“After a falling off in the amount of “street teaching” and a decline in the enthusiasm with which this was approached, the National Spiritual Assembly held a training weekend for a number of believers who were taught how to co-ordinate teaching weekends with the emphasis on introducing, rather than teaching, the Faith in the street. The results of this are still being assessed but there has been a definite renewal of

enthusiasm for this type of teaching and a new realization in the local communities of the urgency of spreading the Cause. Considerable work has been done in a provincial university where a large percentage of the student body has developed a respectful awareness of the Faith.

'The goal of carrying the Faith to the Gipsies, or itinerant people, is being pursued by a few individuals appointed by the National Assembly. It is felt that their dedicated work will bring results in the future and already one or two migrant people have been told of the Faith.

'During this period a pattern of two national conferences per year has emerged; a teaching conference is held in the autumn followed by a conference in the spring underlining the urgent needs for Riḍván.

'During each of the years in question the percentage of pioneer moves on the homefront has been extremely high. At Riḍván 1976 there were very few adult Bahá'ís not residing in a strategic position in relation to the goals. The crowning achievement of these years has been the fulfilment of our overseas goal in Belgium by a radiant young believer. At the time of writing, final plans are being made for our two remaining overseas pioneers to move to their posts. The most important aspect of these pioneer moves, both internal and overseas, has been the spirit in which they have been made and the high degree of sacrifice which they have often entailed, especially in the past two years as opportunities for employment have decreased.

'The international travelling teaching plan has been received with delight by the community and many believers have offered to serve in this way. At present plans are being made to send four teachers to West Africa and another young believer will travel in America and Canada this summer.

'The National Assembly has itself consulted with approximately twenty Bahá'í youth about their expressed desire to plan their lives in such a way that they can serve the Faith to the utmost of their ability. A number of these youth have combined homefront pioneering and study, with a view to equipping themselves to pioneer abroad in the future.

'The growth in membership has proceeded more slowly in the period under review than in earlier years and there has been some loss in our numerical strength through tests of faith

but the overall pattern has been a strengthening and maturing of the community, one indication of this being a greater awareness of the Bahá'í fund and a much more universal participation in its support. The believers also have gradually become more and more aware of the necessity of turning to the Universal House of Justice and have been greatly uplifted and inspired by its letters.

'Our joyous summer schools with their characteristic spontaneous flavour have remained the highlight of the Bahá'í year, especially as each has been graced with the presence of a Hand of the Cause. These schools, and an increase in the number of believers making pilgrimages to the Holy Shrines and returning radiant and filled with enthusiasm to serve Bahá'u'lláh, have diffused inspiration and love throughout the community.'

ITALY

'In the period under review the Italian community welcomed visits by three Hands of the Cause—Dr. Ugo Giachery, who was present at the 1975 summer school at Vieste, Gargano and who participated in the inter-regional institute at San Zeno in April 1976; Mr. 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, who attended our summer school in 1974, and Mr. Abu'l-Qásim Faizí, who was present with Dr. Giachery at our 1975 summer school.

'The National Teaching Conference has been held annually for the past thirteen years. The National Teaching Institute has also become a regular annual event. In 1975, for the first time, two institutes were held simultaneously in November, the one for northern Italy being held in Rimini, and the one for the south and the islands being held in Messina, Sicily.

'In its annual report to the convention at Riḍván 1976 the National Spiritual Assembly observed that most of the activities planned have tended towards proclamation rather than teaching. Some examples are the various concerts given by concert pianist Maestro Alfredo Speranza and soprano Miss Minu Falahi, public performances by the Italian *Dawn-Breakers* and *New Era* music groups, and stands displaying Bahá'í books at the Rimini Book Fair and at Trade Fairs in Cagliari and Lecce.

'Due to recent reforms in the education system and the initiative taken by local Bahá'ís, it has



Participants in the Bahá'í teaching conference held in San Zeno, Italy; 16-19 April 1976. The Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery and Mrs. Giachery are seen in the centre.

been possible to present the Faith in two schools in Cagliari and one in Alessandria during the Religious Education classes.

'Assigned the goal of collaborating with the Ticino Canton of Switzerland in the Five Year Plan, five meetings were organized jointly with the relevant committee to proclaim the Faith. The Italian *Dawn-Breakers* gave three concerts in Ticino and a conference was organized for World Religion Day. These activities were accompanied by announcements in the newspaper and on the radio.

'Mrs. Agnese Boerio was appointed an official prison visitor by the authorities of the prison at Port Azzuro, Island of Elba. In addition to general counselling, Mrs. Boerio has been able to teach the Faith to many of the inmates one of whom has become a Bahá'í.

'The Local Spiritual Assembly of Rimini organized a conference for United Nations International Women's Year (1975). A panel of Bahá'í speakers gave talks on the role of women in the home, at work and in society. A report of this event was broadcast on the national noon-hour television news and on the local station, Telerimini.

'The National Youth Committee launched a

two-year youth campaign at an important youth symposium and adopted significant goals. The project has been instrumental in fulfilling pioneering goals, stimulating travelling teaching activities, inspiring the holding of regional conferences, the raising of contributions and encouraging youth to make their pilgrimages. A record number of eighty such requests was made last year.

'A combination of several activities—correspondence courses for parents, study classes, special programmes for children during summer schools and various national gatherings, publication of the children's journal *La Sveglio*—contributed to creating a basis for the fulfilment of the very important goal relating to the education of Bahá'í children.

'Excellent progress has been made toward the fulfilment of the goal of extending the use of mass media. The most outstanding programmes were "Ore Venti", a thirty-minute "talk" programme at peak viewing time on the national television network and the reference made to the Rimini conference on the noon-hour news. The programme shown on "Ore Venti" was initiated by the compiler of the broadcast who approached the National Spiritual Assembly about the

possibility of broadcasting a programme entirely devoted to the Faith. The interviewer opened the programme with a reading from *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*. Professor Alessandro Bausani, a member of the National Assembly, was asked to speak about the history of the Faith and the administrative order. Miss Manuela Fanti was asked to explain how and why she had become a Bahá'í. The programme ended with the interviewer reading an extract from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Undoubtedly this was the widest proclamation of the Faith yet achieved in Italy. *Telepiombino*, which transmits in the area of Leghorn and the Island of Elba, broadcast a news feature about Riḍván on 20 April and followed this up with a half-hour interview with Bahá'ís on 30 April. *Teleumbria* also presented an interview in conjunction with the youth symposium held in Perugia in May 1976. Radio interviews have been obtained on many local stations on the mainland and the Island of Sardinia. Some of these have lasted for an hour while others were a series of programmes on the same station.

'The newspaper articles at national and local level are too numerous to mention. An important fact to note here is that in most cases the journalists approached the Bahá'í institutions for information with the result that many of the articles are of a high standard.

'In the period being surveyed publication was initiated by the National Spiritual Assembly of an attractive magazine, *Opinioni Bahá'í*, published periodically, which it is hoped will evolve into an increasingly effective instrument for reaching the public, taking its place with its sister publications *World Order*, *La Pensée Bahá'íe*, *Bahá'í Briefe*, *Herald of the South* and *Maailmankansalainen*.

'The translation of *The Dawn-Breakers* has been completed and is being revised in preparation for publication. The compilations "Living the Life" and "Pattern of Bahá'í Life" have been translated and are being published under a single cover under the title *Guida Per Una Vita Bahá'í*. Some prayers, including the Short Obligatory Prayer, have been translated by a Gipsy friend of the Faith into Sinto, a Gipsy language.

'Bahá'í marriage has been recognized by Italian law¹ with minor stipulations that are easily met. Through the munificence of a Bahá'í

family the city of Perugia has acquired its own Ḥazíratu'l-Quds, an achievement supplementary to the Five Year Plan. Perugia is an important centre because many newcomers to Italy including pioneers attend introductory courses in Italian at the university there.

'More Italian believers than ever before have arisen to pioneer during the Five Year Plan. An added stimulus has also been given to the Italian community by believers who have been forced through circumstances beyond their control to return to Italy from Eritrea.

'In conclusion thirty Local Spiritual Assemblies have been established, with ten remaining to be formed in order to meet the goal, and one hundred and fifty-six localities have been opened to the Faith out of a total of two hundred called for in the Five Year Plan.'

LUXEMBOURG

'Riḍván 1973 saw the victorious conclusion of the Nine Year Plan during which the required eight local Spiritual Assemblies were established, twenty-five localities were opened to the Faith thus surpassing by five the goal assigned, and the number of believers increased five-fold, mainly through the acceptance of the Faith by native Luxembourgers and foreign migrant workers. The year 1974 was devoted to strengthening the foundations of these achievements and continuing to expand the Luxembourg Bahá'í community which now had larger resources of spiritual and material strength.

'During the period from Riḍván 1973 to the anniversary of the declaration of the Báb, an intensive proclamation project was launched involving the holding of a press conference and three "International Peace Concerts" with young Bahá'í musicians from seven countries participating, which resulted in large articles in the press, the appearance of some of the musicians on television and the first radio interview of fifteen minutes' duration with three representatives of the Bahá'í community.

'Consolidation activities during this year were extensive. A number of one-day institutes were held, classes for children and youth were conducted on a regular basis, a summer school was held in Wiltz and the second winter school was held in the seventeenth century castle of Ansembourg where, henceforth, all the yearly summer and winter schools would be held. The

¹ See p. 375.

visits of the Hands of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan and Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir were sources of inspiration and greatly aided in reinforcing our efforts to consolidate our gains.

'Teaching activities were directed to securing the existing Local Spiritual Assemblies and were principally carried out through the teaching projects of the National Youth Committee.

'Human Rights Day was observed as well as World Religion Day, the programme for the latter observance involving a panel of speakers of various religious backgrounds. A Naw-Rúz dinner was held with one hundred and twenty-five participants.

'Among the major accomplishments of this year were the revision of the Articles of Incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly;¹ the transfer of title of the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds, endowment land and Temple site to the name of the National Assembly; and the incorporation with new by-laws of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Luxembourg,² followed the next year by the incorporation of the Local Assemblies of Esch-sur-Alzette and Ettelbruck.

'Also in the period under review a new and permanent format was adopted for *Bulletin Bahá'í du Luxembourg*, the newsletter of the National Spiritual Assembly.

'The ties linking the National Spiritual Assembly with the Continental Board of Counsellors were strengthened through the meeting held by the latter body in Luxembourg, the presence of individual Counsellors at the winter school and for special consultation on the Five Year Plan launched at Riḍván 1974.

'The Five Year Plan was enthusiastically received by the members of the Luxembourg Bahá'í community who eagerly arose for the preparation of a national teaching project to be implemented in all four new goal towns where a Bahá'í exhibition was shown, proclamation meetings and firesides took place, and courtesy calls were paid to local authorities. Bahá'í youth from the United States, Canada and various European countries assisted in this project.

'An important element of the teaching activity during the first two years of the Five Year Plan was the constant flow of travelling teachers to Luxembourg, among them an enthusiastic group of youth from Belgium; teachers from Portugal who shared their knowledge with the

Portuguese friends living in Luxembourg; the entire Bahá'í community of Bonn, Germany who made regular weekend visits; and an individual believer from Germany whose visit resulted in the declaration of five Yugoslav families (in total some twenty-five people) living in Diekirch.

'Another important aspect of these two years was the constant development of courteous relations with governmental authorities and non-governmental organizations. In September 1974, Dr. Victor de Araujo, accredited representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations, paid a short visit to Luxembourg and, following a press conference, a luncheon was held, the guests including representatives of the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of the Interior. As a result of this, the chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly and his wife were invited to a reception organized by the Government in honour of Mr. Kurt Waldheim, Secretary-General of the United Nations. On 18 November 1975 a copy of *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, was presented to His Excellency Gaston Thorn, Prime Minister of Luxembourg, who was then serving as chairman of the thirtieth plenary session of the United Nations. During December an especially successful programme was arranged for United Nations International Women's Year as a result of which contact was established with representatives of many government ministries, cultural organizations and press organs, including the church-owned *Luxemburger Wort*. Arising from these activities the Bahá'ís were invited to send representatives to congresses, meetings or general assemblies of various organizations including the Esperanto movement and the World Union for the Protection of Life.

'The 6 September 1975 issue of *Luxemburger Wort* carried a remarkable, lengthy, favourable and informative article on the Bahá'í Faith written by two non-Bahá'í journalists.

'During the first two years of the Five Year Plan regular classes for children and youth were held at the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds and special events were organized for children in observance of Naw-Rúz and the birth of Bahá'u'lláh. Youth seminars organized totally by youth themselves in the spring of 1974 and 1975 contributed much to unifying the efforts and deepening the knowledge of the young believers.

¹ See p. 354.

² See p. 364.

'In the period under discussion Luxembourg was twice blessed by visits of the Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizí, who first came to give a four-day seminar on "The Qur'án and Islám" and then to participate in the summer school of 1975. The winter school of 1974 was graced by the presence of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Adelbert Mühlischlegel. During a short visit to Luxembourg in April 1975 the Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery participated in a deepening seminar for the delegates to the fourteenth national convention and spoke on the life of the beloved Guardian at a general meeting of the friends.

'The members of the European Board of Counsellors, during their numerous visits, shared their inspiring thoughts with the friends, at summer or winter schools, at the annual teaching conferences held in January and at meetings of the National Spiritual Assembly during consultation between the two bodies.

'In the international teaching field, the Luxembourg Bahá'í community assisted the friends in Alsace-Lorraine by participating in their activities, and in April 1976 Luxembourg sent its first pioneer in the Five Year Plan to the French Antilles, thus fulfilling one of its international goals in this plan.

'The foundations for the successful accomplishment of the goals of the Five Year Plan have thus been laid during the three years under consideration and the entire Luxembourg community is confident that through the concerted efforts of all the friends the goals set by the Universal House of Justice will be met.'

THE NETHERLANDS

'The Dutch Bahá'í community was greatly privileged to have the Hands of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem, H. Collis Featherstone, Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir and Abu'l-Qásim Faizí visit their country during the period 1973-1976. They travelled throughout the country visiting communities, groups and isolated friends, inspiring them and gladdening their hearts, speaking about the beloved Guardian, heightening their love and understanding of the greatness of Shoghi Effendi, bringing a keener awareness of the role of the western believers and thrilling the friends by describing the wonders that have taken place in the Bahá'í world community. In addition, the Hand of the Cause Paul E. Haney and representatives of the European Board of Counsellors participated in the Bahá'í Youth Conference held in Steevensbeek in August 1975.



Some Dutch Bahá'ís who participated in the summer teaching project in southern Holland; 1975.



A coloured poster produced by the Bahá'ís of the Netherlands and posted in public transport centres throughout the country during the period 1973 to 1976.

'At Riqván 1973 the community comprised eighteen Local Spiritual Assemblies, thirty-two groups and thirty-two isolated centres. Many young people had been attracted in recent years and with one-eighth of the believers being under twenty-one years of age, the mainstay of the corps of active believers and teachers was youth.

'Holland witnessed remarkable teaching activities when carefully organized summer teaching projects brought Bahá'ís together in areas in the north and south which had to be opened to the Faith.

'A notable event of the period was the considerable enrichment of Bahá'í literature in Dutch, an accomplishment which reinforced the believers in their individual efforts to deepen their knowledge of the Faith, to make singular efforts to serve the Cause and to develop strong Local Spiritual Assemblies. Dutch translations of the following English titles were published: *God Passes By*, by Shoghi Effendi; *The Bahá'í Faith—An Introduction*, by Gloria Faizi; *Christ and Bahá'u'lláh*, by George Townshend; *Rose of Love* (a small gift-booklet of selected prayers); *The Greatest Gift* (originally published in Canada); and *A.B.C. of the Bahá'í Faith*, an outline of basic facts about the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. In addition, a series of new introductory pamphlets was developed, as well as a "Bahá'í Newspaper" for proclamation purposes, issued at regular intervals and widely used for publicity throughout the country.

'In the period covered by this survey Bahá'í students at Nijmegen University started the first Bahá'í Student Club of the community. In Delft, another university city, students were invited by the Bahá'ís to a series of lectures on various subjects related to the Faith.

'A noteworthy event took place when, during United Nations International Women's Year in 1975, the women of the Bahá'í community were represented at an exhibition on the theme of equality of men and women. Articles were published in the newsletter about the role of women in Bahá'í history. Active programmes for the education of Bahá'í children were pursued, approximately half the communities holding regular classes for Bahá'í children.'

NORWAY

'Our numerically small and scattered Bahá'í community has been blessed with the visits of

several Hands of the Cause during this short period. In their different and very personal ways the beloved Hands Ugo Giachery, 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, Adelbert Mühlischlegel, Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir and Abu'l-Qásim Faizi have all favoured us with a unique combination of practical advice and spiritual inspiration. Likewise, the Continental Board of Counsellors in Europe, through the visits of its members Mrs. Dorothy Ferraby, Mrs. Betty Reed and Miss Anneliese Bopp, has provided the community with great assistance.

'At the outset of the Five Year Plan, local and travelling teaching was reinforced through a series of teaching conferences throughout the country, followed by a number of "Bahá'í Week" projects aimed at reaching the public. These projects, averaging in length five days each, were arranged in Lillehammer, Svolvær (Lofoten), Trondheim, and Bergen, and culminated in Oslo with the most comprehensive proclamation programme in the history of that Local Spiritual Assembly.

'In the northernmost part of the country, teaching among the Lapps has been expanded, the conference held in Jöckmokk, Sweden in the summer of 1974 providing an important impetus. Some few Bahá'ís are living in Samisk-speaking regions at present.

'Winter and summer schools have concentrated on the third general objective of the Five Year Plan, "The distinctive character of Bahá'í life", including the application of the laws of Bahá'u'lláh to our daily lives.

'Among the many travelling teachers who have visited Norway the song group *Windflower* has been universally commended for its beautiful musical presentation of the message of Bahá'u'lláh.

'As a final point relating to significant general teaching activities we should record the happiness of the Norwegian Bahá'í community in being able to assist the Bahá'ís of the Faroe Islands by sending two travelling teachers and one pioneer. The pioneer subsequently returned to Norway.

'The United Nations International Women's Year has been observed in several local communities. Two major events took place in Oslo with female Bahá'í speakers and artists.

'A slight increase in the number of young Bahá'ís at the outset of the period provided new possibilities for teaching students in high schools

and institutions of higher learning. The National Youth Committee arranged a successful national youth conference which has born visible fruits. At the end of the period the committee concentrated on establishing radio contacts and preparing a Bahá'í journal for youth.

'At the Scandanavian summer school which was held in Norway in 1975, a summer school entirely for children was arranged for the first time, with a complete and separate programme of its own, in addition to the regular school. Further efforts to facilitate the spiritual training of children resulted in the production of much needed teaching materials in Norwegian including *God and His Messengers* and a small prayer book.

'Our use of mass media has been restricted thus far mainly to the press which has, for the greater part, given varied and liberal coverage to the Faith. At the end of the period, however, efforts to approach a specific radio programme resulted in a short interview and selections from recordings of Seals and Crofts were broadcast. The possibility of publicizing the Faith through local radio stations seems increasingly promising. Television is still difficult, although we had a breakthrough in 1972, and the Bahá'í Information Office (Proclamation Committee) is devoting much effort to increasing opportunities for its use.

'In this period one book has been published, the Norwegian translation of *Paris Talks*; also a translation of selected texts has been produced to be sold with the prayer book for children. The National Spiritual Assembly has published a stencilled compendium of excerpts from the Writings relating to living the Bahá'í life. Finally, the first of a series of new pamphlets has been produced by the Bahá'í Information Office.

'A characteristic trend of the period was the increase in opposition and challenges to confrontation from people of Christian background. A number of attacks against the Faith have been launched through newspapers, Christian periodicals, in lectures, and by individuals at public meetings and Bahá'í booths or exhibits. These have served to underline the need for us to reflect in our lives the principles of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh and to demonstrate by deeds more than words the spiritual truths enshrined in His Revelation.

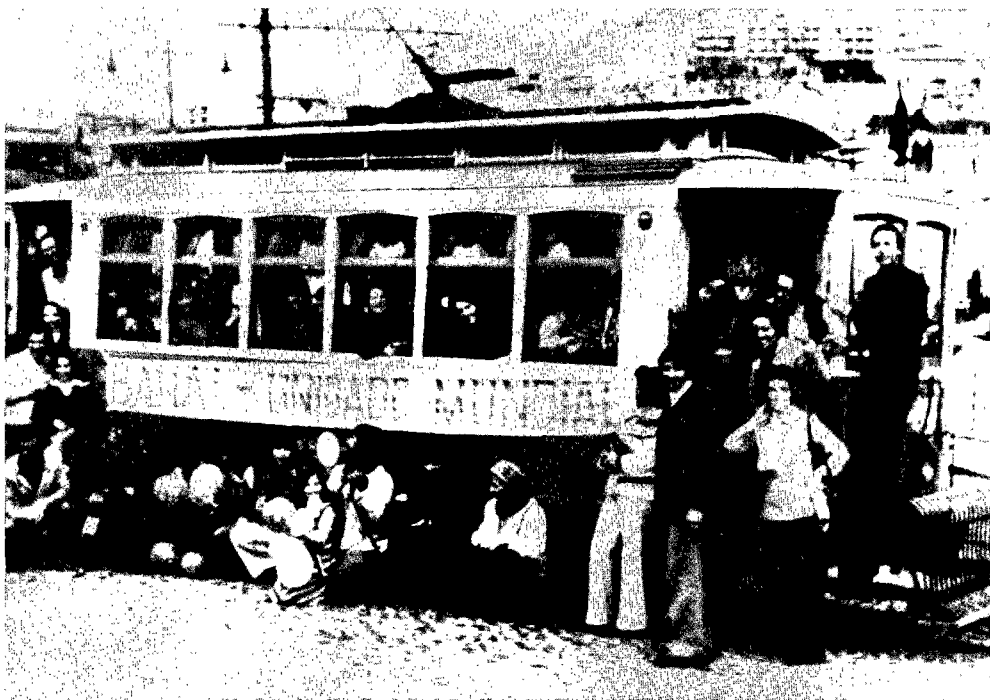
'By Riqván 1976 eight of the required twelve Local Spiritual Assemblies had been formed and

thirty-three out of a total of forty-five localities had been opened to the Faith. At intervals there has been a Bahá'í in Spitsbergen where the goal is to establish a permanent group. A supplementary achievement of the Five Year Plan was accomplished toward the end of the period under review through the establishment of our Bahá'í Publishing Trust.'

PORTUGAL

'Riqván 1973–1974. The Nine Year Plan came to a triumphant conclusion in Portugal. Under a victory campaign organized and launched by the National Spiritual Assembly in consultation with the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga, the message of Bahá'u'lláh was taken far and wide throughout Portugal, a task in which the Portuguese community was aided by numerous pioneers and travelling teachers from all over the world. The following year was one of consolidation and assessment which allowed a clear picture of the growth of the Faith in the past years to emerge. The task was enormous since this small community had increased six-fold in such a short time, practically overnight, and a time of reorganization and consolidation was necessary for the health of the whole community.

'Riqván 1974–1975. The Five Year Plan was greeted with enthusiasm and excitement in Portugal. The Bahá'í community which for many years had operated under circumstances which stifled its capacity for growth was suddenly freed from those restrictions as a result of dramatic political changes which occurred on 25 April 1974. Although unable to hold its national convention due to the temporary turmoil that followed, the community elected its new National Spiritual Assembly by correspondence and later a National Teaching Conference was held attended by Mrs. Betty Reed of the Continental Board of Counsellors. In a new atmosphere of freedom the National Spiritual Assembly, through the National Teaching Committee, immediately launched plans to proclaim the Faith to the Portuguese public. These proclamation efforts culminated in a large teaching project in the town of Setubal where a Local Spiritual Assembly had been established. A local newspaper and poster campaign were used to attract people and, for the first time, a banner was hung across the main street of Setubal proclaiming the Bahá'í Faith and inviting the public to a meeting. More than



Some Bahá'ís of Lisbon, Portugal, with one of the rented streetcars on which they toured the city during their observance of Naw-Rúz; 1976. Members of the public were attracted to the happy group and some joined the tour seeking information about the Bahá'í Faith.

two hundred interested people attended the meeting, the programme for which consisted of a slide presentation and an address by Behrouz Masreur who was, at that time, a member of the Auxiliary Board.

'The National School Committee organized two national schools which were both attended by fifty or more friends. These were held, together with other events, to impress upon the friends the importance of the Five Year Plan, its goals, and Portugal's part in it. Classes were also held dedicated to Bahá'í youth, the education of children, and Bahá'í administration. Both schools were honoured by the presence of Counsellor Anneliese Bopp who, as always, was the source of much inspiration and illumination.

'During that same year Portugal was blessed with the presence of two Hands of the Cause—Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir, on 20 July, and later, Abu'l-Qásim Faizí.

'As 1975 was proclaimed International Women's Year by the United Nations, the National Assembly developed a comprehensive pamphlet especially for women, containing an outline of the Bahá'í teachings on the role of

women. This pamphlet, *Ano Internacional da Mulher*, was compiled and distributed to the women of Portugal through an organized teaching plan.

'In addition to publishing the above-mentioned pamphlet, a new pamphlet for teaching was produced as well as the first Portuguese prayer book (adapted from the Brazilian) and an "Open Letter" which was used for teaching. Steps were also taken to make available for sale in book stores throughout the country a translation of *The New Garden*. That same year, articles about the Faith appeared in four newspapers throughout Portugal.

'The task of achieving recognition of the Bahá'í Faith as an official religion in Portugal, a process which had begun many years before, was again taken up with new determination. As it was a goal given top priority in the Five Year Plan the National Assembly believed that its achievement was within our grasp and efforts to accomplish it were intensified.

'In summary, this was a year of new hope and gathering strength for the Portuguese Bahá'í community. As the National Spiritual Assembly

led the way forward into the Five Year Plan there was a new feeling of expectation and confirmation and a new faith that the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh had, once and for all, taken firm root in Portuguese soil.

'Riḍván 1975-1976. This year was blessed with victory no sooner than it had begun. Through the divine confirmations and the determined efforts of the National Assembly the greatest goal of all was achieved on 22 December 1975, the incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly, by a Dispatch of the Ministry of Justice.¹ That this event has attracted further divine confirmations and lent a new spiritual strength and determination to the Portuguese community, there can be no doubt. As a result, many new doors have been opened. Through the joint efforts of the National Assembly and local communities four new Local Spiritual Assemblies were raised up during the year, thus bringing the total to eleven and completing the national goals for that year. Invaluable assistance was received from international travelling teachers from a number of countries including Canada, the United Kingdom, Luxembourg and Mozambique.

'Summer, winter and spring schools were held this year. The largest of these was the summer school which took place in a small mining town in the mountainous region of the country. The school was graced by the presence of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery and his dear wife. Other regional schools were held during the year in the north, centre and south of Portugal. Not only was much valuable information shared and studied at these gatherings, but they served to foster a better sense of Bahá'í unity throughout Portugal.

'The largest part of the Portuguese population lives along the coastal region of the country where the majority of Bahá'ís also reside, leaving the interior a bit isolated. The National Youth Committee developed and carried out a plan under which they visited isolated parts of Portugal to assist the isolated believers who are geographically separated from the mainstream of Bahá'í activities. The youth arose and leading the way travelled to visit these isolated friends thus setting a praiseworthy example for the rest of the Bahá'í community.

'New translations were completed thus en-

abling us to share with the friends a wider range of Bahá'í material. Some of the works translated dealt with Bahá'í marriage and individual goals. There was a wider distribution of the pamphlet *Ano Internacional da Mulher*.

'A mid-year National Teaching Conference was held during which the National Teaching Committee presented the progress on the goals to that date.

'In conclusion, the past year witnessed a slow but sure growth of the Portuguese Bahá'í community and a strengthening of the administrative order, the crowning point of which was the legalization of the National Spiritual Assembly. The national committees functioned better than ever and were a great asset to the National Assembly. Four new Local Assemblies were formed, thus completing the goal of that year, and a number of people became followers of Bahá'u'lláh through contact on a personal level. It was a year of hard-won victories for a community which through all the years of its existence and until only recently had many obstacles placed in its way. Although still required to observe discretion in large-scale teaching programmes, the external situation is now stabilizing and thus our hopes are raised that the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh will surely fulfil its destiny in Portugal as it has already begun to do.'

SPAIN

'The Spanish Bahá'í community was grateful to receive visits from a number of Hands of the Cause in the period under review. Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir was with us early in 1973 and 'Alí-Akbar Furútan in September of that year. Abu'l-Qásim Faizí visited in May 1974 and Dr. Adelbert Mühlshlegel in July. Dr. Ugo Giachery attended the summer school in July 1975.

'Some of the most important teaching activities are as follows. In the summer of 1974 an intensive teaching project was launched in the localities of Sevilla, Málaga and Guadalajara. This entailed the holding of public lectures, expositions of the Faith, the publication of announcements in the press and on radio. In the cities of Santander, Granada, Badajoz, La Palma and Villamarchante (Valencia) direct teaching among the people took place.

'During Easter week of 1975 a group of youth made a teaching trip to the cities of León,

¹ See p. 361.



Some participants in the first Bahá'í Youth Conference of the Canary Islands held in Santa Cruz; 29 March 1975.

Ponferrada, La Coruña, Santiago de Compostela, Luarca, Oviedo and Inca.

'In the summer of 1975 another teaching campaign was held in the localities of La Coruña, Oviedo, Jaén, Sevilla and Badajoz and, in December, in Oviedo and Inca. The following April another project was launched in Castellón.

'In addition to their important participation in the above-mentioned teaching activities, the Bahá'í youth organized and took the leading role in other national events including eight schools held in the summer, winter or spring, and in seven teaching institutes.

'Under the direction of the national committee concerned with child education, seven contests have been held on aspects or teachings of the Faith, with the participation of the children. Special Classes for children were held during summer, winter or spring schools. In September 1975 a four-day national children's school was held.

'Televisión Española included a reference to the Faith in a documentary film which was the first in a series of films about non-Catholic confessions in Spain. The four-minute segment about the Faith was filmed at the national Bahá'í

Centre during a meeting of the Madrid community which was called for this purpose. The interior and outer garden of the Centre were filmed and there were interviews with some of the believers. The programme was broadcast on 26 July 1974.

'On 23 March 1975 Televisión Española broadcast a thirty-minute film of the Bahá'í musicians Pancho and Kamel who perform under the name *Día Prometido* (Promised Day). The greater part of the programme was devoted to a comprehensive outline of the Faith and the reading of prayers and Writings of Bahá'u'lláh with appropriate musical interludes. On another occasion the same friends, Kamel and Pancho, participated in a second programme on Televisión Española and spoke about the Faith; this programme was of shorter duration.

'Our National Audio-Visual Committee has prepared five texts for publicity in press and on radio in connection with the teaching campaigns; sixty dossiers with Bahá'í material for presentation to officials and the press; and sufficient material for two expositions. New publications in Spanish were *The Dawn of the Promised Day*, *The Splendour of the Promised*

Day, The Great Day of God and The Administrative Order and Bahá'í Teachings; and, in Basque, *Bahá'í Fedea. Thief in the Night* was translated into Spanish and published.

'Considerable progress was made in relation to our property goals. A number of improvements were made to the Liria school including the construction of a dormitory building thus raising the sleeping capacity to eighty, an enlargement to the dining room and construction of a larger kitchen, the beautification of the gardens and the addition of 2,500 square metres of land at the school site. An endowment in Andorra was acquired and Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds were donated to the communities of Santa Cruz de Tenerife and Fuengirola.'

SWEDEN

'The Swedish Bahá'í community was blessed by the visits of the Hands of the Cause of God Dr. Ugo Giachery, Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir and Dr. Adelbert Mühlshlegel in the summers of 1973, 1974 and 1975 respectively. They took part in various activities planned by the National Spiritual Assembly and by Local Assemblies and brought much inspiration and kindled the enthusiasm of the friends.

'The significant teaching activities of the period from Riḍván 1973 to Riḍván 1976 may be summarized as follows:

'Bahá'í literature displays were arranged in various parts of the country in connection with conferences, public meetings and the commemoration of United Nations Day, World Religion Day, Human Rights Day and the like. Altogether, more than fifty such exhibits were arranged, a few of which were of two weeks' duration.

'Approximately 1,600 religious science teachers and 175 school headmasters received Bahá'í information folders containing introductory material about the Faith. The students of more than one hundred schools throughout the country heard Bahá'í speakers who addressed them on the history and teachings of the Bahá'í Faith.

'Some thirty-four publishers of school text books on religion received a circular letter accompanied by an informative brochure inviting them to amend the incorrect information contained in the texts they published.

'As a result of efforts on the part of the

National Spiritual Assembly the Bahá'í literature placed in public and reference libraries will be classified as that of an independent religion.

'With regard to spreading the message of Bahá'u'lláh among the Samish people of northern Sweden, the teaching conference held in the summer of 1974 in Jokkmokk, blessed by the presence of the Hand of the Cause Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir and attended by more than one hundred friends from ten countries, released tremendous inspiration for sustained teaching work in that vast arctic region. Various teaching teams undertook teaching trips of varying lengths of time among the gentle and loving Same people. The continuous efforts of our dear pioneers, Gail Ross and Ola Okfors, should always be brought to mind in connection with carrying the glad tidings of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation to these people. All these efforts brought fruitful result in that some of them have developed much interest in and respect for the universal teachings of the Bahá'í Faith.

'The Swedish Bahá'í youth exerted strenuous and sincere endeavour during this period to teach and proclaim the Cause of God. A number of youth conferences were held throughout the country which made it possible for them to deepen their knowledge of the Faith and inspired them to undertake teaching trips to various parts of the country where they contacted different strata of society and presented the message of Bahá'u'lláh. Teaching activities in schools and the success of the Jokkmokk "Midnight Sun Youth Conference" were the result, in large part, of the efforts of these young and energetic followers of Bahá'u'lláh. A group of young Bahá'í musicians calling themselves *Unity* performed at many meetings with inspiring songs.

'On a number of occasions the Faith was mentioned on radio and television. However, the foremost activity in this regard took place on 12 February 1975 when a Bahá'í representative participated in a popular household programme called "The Open Evening", by invitation of the television authorities who contacted the National Spiritual Assembly. A brief outline of the history of the Faith and its central teachings was presented on the programme which is normally viewed by a few million people.

'Another significant aspect of efforts to increase the use of mass media was the resultant increase in articles on the Faith carried in the

press. During this period more than a dozen newspapers published articles about the Faith amounting in total to more than 2,700 column centimetres.

'Our new publications produced in the period under survey were translations of *The Covenant*, *Paris Talks* and *Children's Stories from the Dawn-Breakers*, and *The Sources of Inspiration*, an original work by Mr. Sverre Holmsen of Sweden, all in 1973; a revised second edition of *The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh*, a compilation of quotations from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, a second compilation comprising excerpts from the Writings of the Master, and a brochure *Equality Between Men and Women*, all in 1974.

'It should be stated that the constant love and care of our dear Counsellors Mrs. Betty Reed and Mrs. Dorothy Ferraby, as well as the unstinting assistance and constant collaboration of Auxiliary Board members Hadi Afsahi and Åke Johansson have been and are a source of inspiration and enthusiasm for the Swedish Bahá'í community.

'As this report shows, the characteristic trends of the period have been the deepening and consolidation of the Bahá'í community with simultaneous efforts to bring the Faith to every strata of society. This course of activities has assisted us to progress towards our goals of the Five Year Plan. We supplicate divine assistance for the realization of our unaccomplished goals.'

SWITZERLAND

'Within three years, from 1973–1976, the face of the Swiss community has changed completely. The results have been the growth of a large nucleus of active and deepened believers, most of them youth, constituting the bedrock of three important and increasingly independent national committees, for teaching, youth and deepening; and the formation, at Ridván 1976, of sixteen Local Spiritual Assemblies. Faced in 1974 with violation of the Covenant within the community, and with seeming indifference to the Faith on the part of the Swiss public, the believers doubled their efforts during 1975. A warm and unified national community has emerged, these characteristics being remarked upon by visitors to our summer schools in Vernamiège (1973), Arcegno (1974 and 1975) and the outstanding winter schools organized by youth such as the one in Sierre; and by guests at

the numerous institutes and national teaching conferences including the one held at the beginning of the Five Year Plan.

'Bahá'u'lláh's strengthening grace has flowed to our community through numerous channels: first of all through the vision and insight communicated by the indefatigable Hands of the Cause, some of whom, like Dr. Ugo Giachery, Dr. Adelbert Mühschlegel and Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir, we saw and consulted with several times. Also much appreciated by the Swiss community were the welcome visits of the Hands of the Cause Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í and Abu'l-Qásim Faizí in 1974, and 'Alí-Akbar Furútan in 1975. The International Youth Conference held in the summer of 1975 was highlighted by the presence of the Hand of the Cause Paul E. Haney.

'The constant support and advice of all members of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Europe, their help with institutes on teaching, administration and Bahá'í life, as well as the education of children, Local Spiritual Assemblies, and the Covenant, were most important for the growth and deepening of our community.

'For the first time the movement of Bahá'ís in and out of the country has taken place to a significant degree. From 1974, a constant stream of pilgrims from Switzerland to the Holy Land brought back and conveyed the heightened awareness of our responsibility to carry the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh to a world in dire spiritual need. Switzerland sent out four pioneers to the African continent in 1975, Danielle and Jacques Pochon to Togo, and Charles and Martha Peyron to the Cameroon Republic. Twelve travelling teachers went to Italy, Belgium and Austria, and six to Africa, thus establishing strong spiritual and emotional bonds between our country and the host countries. There has been successful and encouraging inter-Assembly collaboration with France in relation to Franche-Comté and Annecy (which could establish its Spiritual Assembly), and with Austria in relation to Vorarlberg. Staunch support has been received from our friends from Italy for teaching in Ticino. This, together with the impetus generated by two summer schools and an International Youth Conference held in Ticino, has enriched our resources in this part of the country through the emergence of an Italian-

speaking community capable of organizing proclamation on a broad scale and conscious of its responsibility. A new maturity can be seen in the Swiss community: for the first time in the history of the Faith in this country the trend toward giving outweighs the expectation of receiving. One clear manifestation of this was the generosity of contributions to the construction of the seat of the Universal House of Justice; another, a fifty per cent increase in contributions on the national level in 1975. After the departure of more than forty pioneers from Switzerland in 1973 and 1974, a number of friends—mostly youth—began to pioneer within the country. The trend toward homefront pioneering grew in momentum in 1975 with a resultant growth of new communities and a strengthening of failing Local Assemblies.

'Special mention should be made of some aspects of the Five Year Plan that have proved to be a special blessing to our country. The coming into being these last few years of many young Bahá'í families has created the need for strong children's education committees. They are now tackling their tasks with vigour. A national institute on child education took place as well as several regional ones, children's classes have been initiated in several additional communities, and the newly-created children's magazine *Les Gouttelettes* is being ever more widely circulated within Switzerland and abroad. *La Pensée Bahá'ie*, a quarterly periodical edited in French-speaking Switzerland, is a valuable means of teaching and deepening not only for Switzerland but perhaps even more for French-speaking countries abroad. Several communities have instituted a regular weekly morning devotional programme and have had the satisfaction of finding unity and warmth growing firm roots in the community by this means.

'Youth, stimulated by their strong National Youth Committee, have played a preponderant role in shouldering administrative duties and in teaching. They have mastered, with ease and joy, the organization of successful institutes. Their faces are radiant. They are now ready to go out to meet other youth. They have already held very successful public meetings at the university clubs in Zürich and Lausanne where well-known Bahá'í speakers have been listened to by attentive audiences. Voluntary extension teaching is taking place in ten goal towns; there is an unusually high degree of co-operation.

'Since 1973 the National Spiritual Assembly has issued Nineteen Day Feast letters on various subjects of interest. Their impact has been considerable. They have strengthened the bond between the National Assembly and the communities and enlivened consultation during the Feast.

'A proclamation kit designed for distribution to officials, personalities in public life and journalists has been useful in Switzerland and immediately aroused the interest of other national Bahá'í communities. A series of pamphlets for youth is being produced, the first of which bears the beautiful title taken from the Words of Bahá'u'lláh: *Versenkt euch in das Meer Meiner Worte (Immerse Yourselves in the Ocean of My Words)*.'

THE UNITED KINGDOM

'During the period under review, Riḍván 1973 to Riḍván 1976, the United Kingdom has had the great privilege of welcoming no fewer than eleven Hands of the Cause, two Counsellor members of the International Teaching Centre, all the European Counsellors, and Counsellors from Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

'There has been significant development in nine broad areas of activity:

'1. Increase in number of Assemblies. At Riḍván 1973 ninety-nine Local Spiritual Assemblies were recognized in the United Kingdom and three had lapsed. Twenty-six new Assemblies were formed in three years, giving an average annual growth of nine per cent. Unfortunately, during this period, the three Assemblies in the Mediterranean (two in Cyprus and one in Malta) have lapsed due to adverse conditions in the islands.

'2. Pioneers and travelling teachers. The significant growth in the number of Assemblies has been largely due to the movement of pioneers within the community, even while offers for overseas pioneering posts have been gradually building up to substantial numbers. Forty-nine pioneers have gone to twenty-three countries (not all within our Five Year Plan goals) and thirteen have been obliged to leave after short projects. Some thirty or more travelling teachers have carried out projects in ten countries in Europe and seventeen in Africa.

'3. Teaching projects. A wide variety of teaching projects—local, national and



'Day-Star'—a group of United Kingdom Bahá'í youth who proclaimed the Faith through music and song.

international—have been planned and carried out. Two projects were given thematic names, "Islands '73" and "Icebreaker". Teaching was done among the Gipsies. There were projects implemented by local communities in co-operation with other Assemblies and groups in "clusters", or implemented in association with other religions and organizations including the World Congress of Faiths, the United Nations, World Federalists, Esperantists, etc. There was a vast amount of teaching and activity with, as yet, little apparent result in the way of new enrolments. The community has, however, grown in experience and fellowship. A teaching pamphlet in Faroese was published. Successful teaching conferences, national and local, including one in the Faroes, were staged.

4. Youth activities. A three-year youth campaign was launched in anticipation of the Five Year Plan, which helped to galvanize the youth to play their role in the plan. Winter and Easter schools, arts festivals, a "Serendipity" Camp, junior youth activities and the formation of Bahá'í Societies in universities have been carried out; individual youth have been helped

in their studies for deepening in the knowledge of the Faith; involvement in all the teaching plans has been encouraged, and teams of youth have carried out projects in the islands and in various places in Europe including a much-appreciated work activity at the House of Worship at Langenhain. Youth have made outstanding contributions to overseas travelling teaching, in the many music groups which have given great service to the Faith and in raising funds to achieve the financial goals.

5. Evolution of the national committee structure. In preparation for the "Programme for Victory" which was launched in February 1976, the committee structure was streamlined; instead of thirty-four committees involving the services of more than two hundred believers, there are now twenty-one committees with fewer than one hundred believers composing their total membership. Under the "Programme for Victory" the Local Assembly extension goals were phased and all existing Assemblies and groups were gradually brought into "clusters" with specific but temporary objectives to establish new Assemblies. This nation-wide

involvement in focused teaching and shared responsibility for achieving the expansion goals set by the National Assembly had an immediate invigorating effect on the whole community.

'6. Emerging from obscurity. A wider use of local radio and area television stations with interviews for visiting speakers, leading to half-hour and even one-hour programmes on the Faith and to the use of Bahá'í Scripture in religious programmes; the giving of press luncheons to selected representatives of the media; local publicity in the press of Bahá'í events such as summer schools and weddings; active involvement by representatives of the National Assembly in the World Congress of Faiths, the Religious Education Council, the Inter-Faith Dialogue on Religious Education, the United Nations Association Religious Advisory Committee, the SHAP working party on "World Religions: Aids for Teachers";¹ the invitations extended to officers of the National Assembly to attend official functions such as those in Westminster Abbey for the annual "One People" service, the Commonwealth Day ceremony, the installation of the new Dean of Westminster, and the invitation for a Bahá'í speaker to participate in a symposium on the theme "Spiritual Paths to World Government" sponsored by the Association of World Federalists and held in a committee room of the House of Commons—are all evidences of the growing recognition of the Faith as an independent world religion and as a force for good to

be taken into account by the citizens of the United Kingdom.

'7. Bahá'í Publishing Trust. In pursuing its part of the Five Year Plan the Publishing Trust has reprinted some twelve items of basic Bahá'í literature and released four new books, two new pamphlets and four compilations prepared by the Universal House of Justice. Significant steps have also been taken in the establishment of a huge book warehouse at Ketton, near Oakham, the headquarters of the Trust.

'8. Capital projects. Considerable success has been achieved in the purchase of capital goals but contributions for these have yet to flow in. The Barbados Temple site (in conjunction with the National Assembly of Germany); the New Hebrides Temple site; the Cyprus Temple site; the Ḥazíratu'l-Quds in the Faroes (in co-operation with Iceland) and in Malta (with Persia assisting); and the new warehouse for the Trust at Ketton, have all been purchased. One believer gave a beautiful two-acre Temple site in Edinburgh, and a pioneer couple to one goal town bought their house in the name of the National Assembly.

'9. Communications. The *Bahá'í Journal* continues to be well received in many parts of the world and seventeen issues appeared during this three year period. The National Assembly sends to every Local Spiritual Assembly, group and isolated believer, as well as to some overseas residents, a compact inspirational newsletter for every Nineteen Day Feast. In November 1975 a magazine *Intercom-Bahá'í* was launched; it is published monthly and is available by subscription. It was very well received.'

¹ See p. 319.

WORLD RELIGIONS: A HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS

Edited by W. Owen Cole

Published by:
The Community Relations Commission
15 16 Parkway Street
London WC2E 9HX

The author has given a number of answers, some of which a Sikh is all of them, in a more than theoretical or purely a Sikh way and in his own special way.

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4. QWY/097 E

THE BAHAI FAITH

OF THE BAI OF THE FAITH

The Bahai Faith is an independent world religion which began in Persia in the mid-nineteenth century. It upholds the unity of God and of His Creation, and is based on the principles of the oneness and unity of the human race. The founder of the Bahai Faith was Baha'u'llah, whose highest title is 'King of Glory'. A 'House of Baha'u'llah' is a 'Maid' of Baha'u'llah, who, after a long period of persecution, was appointed Baha'u'llah's successor in Persia in 1852. The Bahai Faith is a monotheistic world religion, which is not a sect of any other religion.

Since Baha'u'llah was exiled to Akko, the Holy Land, he had the assistance of the Baha'is of the Holy Land, who were his disciples and a 'house' of Baha'u'llah's presence.

BAHAI TEACHINGS

The Bahai Faith teaches that religion is a progressive revelation from God to humanity. It teaches that the divine light has been revealed through the prophets and messengers of God, who have appeared in the world at various times and places, and have brought forth the same essential message. The Bahai Faith is a monotheistic world religion, which is not a sect of any other religion.

The Bahai Faith teaches that the unity of God, the unity of His Creation, and the unity of the human race are the three essential principles of the Bahai Faith. It teaches that the unity of God, the unity of His Creation, and the unity of the human race are the three essential principles of the Bahai Faith.

IV. THE HISTORY OF NEW ERA HIGH SCHOOL

JAMES P. WEST

Bend your minds and wills to the education of the peoples and kindreds of the earth . . . Bahá'u'lláh

NEW Era High School is a Bahá'í institution. Located high in the hill town of Panchgani, Maharashtra State, India, the school was founded as a Bahá'í children's hostel in 1945, following the decision of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of India, Burma and Ceylon. Since that time the courageous and persevering efforts of numerous pioneers and local friends have fostered the growth of this small seed into a blossoming flower in the fields of Bahá'í education. The school is a prominent and accredited part of the Indian educational system and has become a source of pride and inspiration not only to its local community but also to the world community of Bahá'ís. New Era constantly received special encouragement from the beloved Guardian and is one of the first schools to be recognized by the Universal House of Justice as a Bahá'í school. In an early letter to the Local Spiritual Assembly of Panchgani, Shoghi Effendi said he would 'specially pray for the growth and progress of the Bahá'í children's hostel so that it may become perfect and distinguished in every respect.'

Through unselfish international support and great individual sacrifice the school has indeed witnessed great growth and progress throughout these thirty years. From the early days, with a staff of three and a class of sixteen children taking moral lessons, the school has expanded its facilities to the point where it now enrolls more than 370 children from twenty-two countries studying from the kindergarten through the higher secondary level. The staff has increased to more than sixty. Both Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í, local villager and the children of pioneers, all have left richer for the spiritual and material education received there.

As you enter the charming New Era School grounds today, you would not notice the well hidden signs of struggle and sacrifice which occurred there. Hundreds of running and laughing children, spacious buildings and

natural gardens, as well as the eternally serene hills which surround the mountain-top school, seem to say these things have always been. As you linger on, however, and pass through the wooden doors to the main office, you are sure to meet many people who could, but probably wouldn't, tell you differently. The bustling atmosphere created by these devoted workers will soon give you an understanding of the energy necessary to solve the many daily problems of running a boarding school.

One of the most unforgettable people you will meet is Mrs. Rezwán Mobedzadeh who thirty years ago accepted the task of beginning the school. Today she serves as the school superintendent and is ever present in all its activities. Mrs. Mobedzadeh, together with her husband, Mr. Shah-Behram Mobedzadeh, were pioneers in the Maharashtra city of Poona when the call for her to head the school first came from the National Spiritual Assembly. After prayer and with the encouragement of her husband, Mrs. Mobedzadeh, overlooking her own youth and inexperience, decided to accept her challenging destiny at New Era. Abandoning her comfortable home and accepting long periods of separation from her husband, she left to begin the work which has since filled every moment of her life.

It was on 1 August 1945 that Mrs. Mobedzadeh, with Mrs. Salisa Kermání and Mrs. Manavi, left their homes in Poona and came to the mountain wilderness regions of Panchgani to begin the Bahá'í hostel, then known as Parvereshgah. Along with them came sixteen children between the ages of four and eight, distinguished members of the National Spiritual Assembly, and local friends and parents. Opening ceremonies were conducted and a 'new era' was begun. The first school committee, appointed by the National Spiritual Assembly, consisted of three pioneers, Mr. Asfandiar Yaganagi, Mr. Rustom Sohaili and Mr. Rustom Mihrshahi, all



Front view of the New Era High School showing the main classroom building.

of whom provided innumerable services which were as unselfish as they were essential. The idea of beginning the school came first from their Local Spiritual Assembly, and it was their persevering faith and actions which kept the school alive through those difficult first years. Mrs. Kermani, like Mrs. Mobedzadeh, was young and inexperienced. Mrs. Manavi was older but equally new to the task. Nevertheless the three ladies, with the unfailing help of the school committee, began classes and simultaneously made plans for expansion. By October of that year, the school enrolment had increased to forty and a regular schedule of moral classes was begun. A large bungalow named 'Manivilla' was rented and served as both classroom and dormitory for the years 1945 to 1953. The name was changed to Bahá'í Boarding School in 1946, and then again to New Era in 1948 after Indian Independence forbade the use of religious names for schools.

Problems facing the new school were numerous and seemed to come from all sides. Mrs. Kermani was called back to her home in Poona and Mrs. Mobedzadeh was left to shoulder many of the responsibilities alone. Prayer and selfless determination were the keys to survival in these

years. The late Mr. Rustom Sohaili generously provided much of the financial support required. In 1947 Mr. Kaikhosrove Akhtarkhaveri came to Panchgani as a pioneer and lent his hand to the development of the school. He served for many years as secretary to the school committee and presently is a trustee.

Miss Shera Irani joined the school staff in 1947. A Zoroastrian, she accepted the Bahá'í Faith after coming to New Era and continued to serve energetically for fourteen years. It was she who, visiting the Holy Land in 1953, returned with messages from the Guardian concerning plans for the school.

In 1953 the present school site, 'Woodland', was purchased. The land was uneven and covered with trees. It contained four old and shabby bungalows and four out-buildings. Plans for development and expansion began immediately with the clearing of land, renovation and construction of buildings, extension of the school curriculum and increases in staff members. 'Haddon House', a teachers' dormitory, was added in 1959. In this same year Mr. Habib Behi, the brother of Mrs. Mobedzadeh, joined the school as language master. At the request of the National Spiritual Assembly he left his

business in Poona and came, with his family, to meet the expanding need for teachers. The Behis presently reside at the school and have served greatly throughout the years in both the school and in building the Bahá'í community in Panchgani.

As the school developed it was continually under the supervision of Government inspectors whose approval was necessary not only for accreditation but also so that the next grade could be added each year as the children progressed. Mrs. Mobedzadeh relates stories of how the various inspectors would be so impressed with the spirit of service of both the staff and students that they would give glowing reports despite the great material deprivation that the school was under. Every day there was a change. As a result of the prayers and energetic efforts of those responsible for New Era the school assumed greater proportions.

Mrs. Mobedzadeh attributes all these successes and seeming miracles to the confirming powers of Bahá'u'lláh. For example, she tells how the beloved Guardian encouraged the admission of non-Bahá'í Indian students in 1953. This development, once impossible in a country where different castes and religions did not mix, had been suddenly made possible after India achieved independence in 1948, but attracting non-Bahá'í students to the Bahá'í school proved to be difficult. Many prayers were said but for months nothing could be done. Then one day a man appeared in the office wishing to enrol seven refugee children of Hindu background. They were admitted and the way was open for many more such enrolments in the future. Over one half of the school is now comprised of non-Bahá'í Indian students.

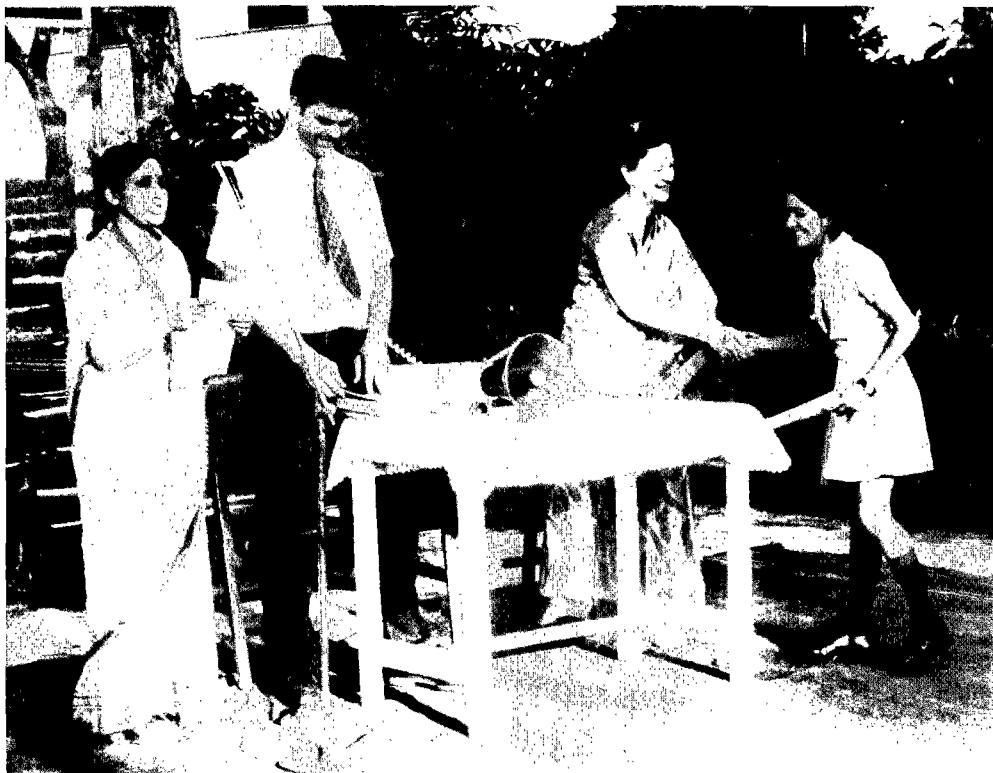
Another answered prayer in the growth of the school was the arrival of Mr. George Menezes. George, as he is affectionately known by the majority of Panchgani residents, has served the school in almost every way imaginable. Originally a non-Bahá'í, he came to Panchgani to work in Mr. Rustom Mihrshahi's restaurant. His voluntary and selfless work for the school in these early years has not only brought him into the Faith but has also made him the supervisor and most sought after man at New Era. He has been at the school for fifteen years and presently resides with his wife and three daughters in the central house in the school compound. George is a human dynamo. He is full of exciting stories,

though he seldom has time to sit down to tell them. He recently has been given a key role in the development of New Era's sister school, the Rabbani School in Gwalior. Being extremely practical and full of love, George has provided an education to all through his active and working example.

Throughout the years from 1953 onward, spiritual and material support began to pour into the struggling institution. The Guardian encouraged the expansion of the school at the beginning of the Ten Year Crusade, and a number of the Hands of the Cause, including Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, took a special interest in New Era's development. Mrs. Gloria Faizi came to the school in 1959 to serve as director. During this six-month period she began to recruit much needed financial support for the growing institution. In 1967, after the generous contribution of Mr. and Mrs. Misaq-ieyh, construction of the large present-day school building was begun. The cornerstone was laid by the late Hand of the Cause ʿArázu'lláh Samandari. The building was designed to contain twenty-four classrooms, offices, science laboratories and a spacious library. Work was finally completed in 1975.

Over these years of development many teachers, matrons and other staff have given their services to the school. All deserve special gratitude for their contributions of talent and energy dedicated to the betterment of the school. Among the headmistresses were Miss P. Sumption, Miss Basaviah and Miss S. G. Mansukhani. Miss Raji Samuels, who served the school devotedly as a teacher for seven years, accepted the post of headmistress in 1963. The first principal was the late Dr. Sidney I. Dean who was appointed in 1964. Both he and his wife served the school well and it was during his time that the school gate was placed. Mr. Azizullah Ghalili came to assist Dr. Dean in 1965 at the request of the National Spiritual Assembly. Mr. and Mrs. Graham Waterman, pioneers to Calcutta, served the school as supervisors from 1966 to 1971. Professor Premnath Rai, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly, gave wonderful service as principal from 1966 to 1969. He left to fill a pioneering post in Nepal.

Others who gave great service to the school include Mrs. Shirin Furudi who for years served under difficult conditions in the school kitchen. Mr. J. P. Karanjkar came in 1955 to take charge



Miss 'Átifih Maḥbúbí, a student of the ninth standard, New Era High School, is seen receiving from the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánúm a social service award during the presentation ceremony held on 30 May 1974. In the centre is Dr. Ray Johnson, principal; on the left, Mrs. Rúḥíyyih West, secretary to Dr. Johnson.

of the accounts. With great ability and loyalty he has balanced the books for more than twenty years and can be found today patiently calculating at his desk in the main office. Mrs. Mehrbanoo Gustaspi has served the school since 1964. She has worked as a teacher, as matron, and presently serves in the office.

In 1971 an American educator, Dr. Ray Johnson, was invited by the National Spiritual Assembly to assume the task of principal of New Era. He accepted and with his family moved to India where both he and his wife are now actively serving the school. In the five years he has been there Dr. Johnson has introduced many new changes and new programmes which have greatly improved the school. Any description would be slow to capture his style of leadership. Striking a balance between his Western heritage and his adopted Eastern culture, he can be found at one moment in blue jeans leading his students in a game of basketball; and an hour later may be

seen dressed in traditional Indian dress, sitting cross-legged at a village council meeting. His optimistic vision and calm manner are inspiring to those who work with and for him. His heart and office are always open.

Of Mrs. Johnson's many contributions to the school, her reconstruction of the library deserves special mention. When she arrived at New Era the library was locked and in disuse, its contents damaged by mildew and neglect. Although she knew nothing of library science she began to work, and today the library ranks as one of the best in the State. Attractive pictures on the walls, a fish tank and a parrot cage in one corner, neat shelves of books and magazines—properly catalogued—chairs and tables, including some made especially for little children, all make the library the pride of the school.

Another American family arrived in 1972 to assist at the school. Mr. Richard Grover is presently vice-principal of the secondary school.

He humbly accepts recognition for maintaining a Bahá'í atmosphere for discipline of the students and offers whatever services he can in counselling the students and staff members in their day-to-day problems. Mrs. Grover serves as vice-principal of the primary school. She also supervises the feeder class programme, in which children who do not know English attend special classes until they learn sufficient English to gain admission to the school as regular students.

Another outstanding feature of the school is the social service programme which was organized by Mrs. Grover. The Indian Government requires every school to have a social service programme, but few do as much as New Era. Under the New Era programme the older students help to clean the school compound, assist at school functions, make greeting cards for hospitals, visit orphanages, assist local doctors, descend on foot 1,500 feet into Chikli Valley to assist the villagers there to plant trees, build roads, clear playgrounds, perform first aid and engage in many other similar activities in a spirit of service.

The present day functioning of New Era is the result of many changes. The school grounds now cover more than thirty-two acres and contain six dormitories, kitchen and dining facilities, an art and music building, medical dispensary, the large classroom building, workshop and staff quarters. There is also a large recreation area with facilities for various sports programmes, and beautiful flower gardens. Surrounding the academic centre are agricultural areas where wheat and various fruits and vegetables are grown for school use.

The school curriculum has expanded to include a full range of academic subjects including mathematics, science, social studies, commerce and six languages, all taught by a qualified staff. Music and art instruction are also offered and have developed many outstanding talents. Cooking and sewing classes for the girls, and manual workshop for the boys, are also a part of the curriculum. Physical education is required of all the students, and individual and team sports are encouraged. Inter-school competitions as well as an annual Sports Day Tournament are held. The importance of spiritual training as an essential part of a balanced education has been recognized from the beginning. Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í moral

classes are included in the programme for all students.

One of the most outstanding aspects of education at New Era is the international character of the school life. Staff and students of many different national, religious and social backgrounds are all working harmoniously as proof that the unity of mankind is a goal which can be achieved in this day.

The school is accredited by the Maharashtra State Government, the primary section being recognized in 1954 and the secondary section in 1956. Future plans for the school are succinctly stated by Dr. Johnson: 'the beloved Guardian hoped that it would be possible for the New Era High School to eventually progress to the status of a university.'

The National Spiritual Assembly of India is hopeful that by the end of the Five Year Plan (Riḍván 1979) there will have been laid the foundation for a junior college which will begin with a two-year diploma course for training teachers and with a two-year diploma course for training students in agriculture as rural developers. In India the educational system is based on the 10-2-3 programme, where the high school diploma is granted at the completion of ten years of education and success in passing a Government-administered examination. The two years before university are called the higher secondary programme. It was begun in Maharashtra in July 1975. New Era school offers this programme in Arts and Commerce.

One of the most recent and exciting programmes at New Era was initiated on 20 October 1975, a programme in rural development under the direction of the school with financial assistance from the Mottahedeh Foundation of New York. Much Government and public support has been given to this programme and it is drawing considerable attention and publicity. This programme is designed to use the staff and students of the New Era school to assist several neighbouring villages in raising their social and economic levels of existence. A team of Bahá'ís who work in the fields of agriculture, animal husbandry, public health and hygiene, economics and engineering has come to assist this programme. The members of the team are from Australia, England, the Gilbert Islands and Tuvalu, Írán, New Zealand and the United States, and the school has high hopes that their efforts will be a practical demonstration of

Bahá'í concern for the development of those sections of humanity who are presently in a disadvantaged situation.

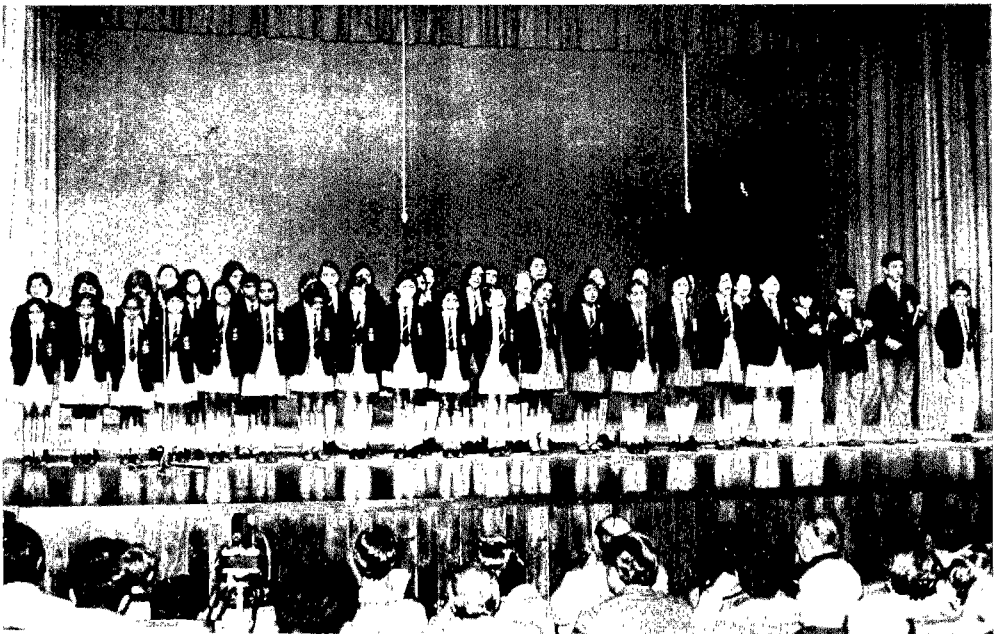
During 1976 it is planned to start the construction of a new kitchen and dining hall with seating capacity for 300 students, and also a gymnasium-cum-auditorium with a seating capacity for 500 students. The school hopes that with the support of the Bahá'ís around the world new dormitories can soon be constructed so that the school can raise its enrolment and educate many more children in this spiritual environment which is fostered by so many dedicated teachers and staff members.

Panchgani, which means 'five plateaus' in Hindi, is located about 125 miles south-east of Bombay. The school grounds, poised among the five flat mountain tops, overlook the Krishna River flowing through Chikli Valley. Beautiful banyan and mango trees cover the grounds and reach high into the clear blue sky. Squirrels, colourful wild birds and mischievous monkeys are found in their natural setting.

Due to the presence of the school and the efforts of its early pioneers, Panchgani has become a centre of Bahá'í activities for India. An annual Bahá'í Winter School and many conferences are held both at New Era and at the

newly purchased Hazíratu'l-Quds. Active village teaching and consolidation work are undertaken continuously by the Local Spiritual Assembly. Many visitors have been attracted to the school over the years including a number of Hands of the Cause, distinguished Government officials and Bahá'í friends from around the world. The school is directly under the sponsorship of the National Spiritual Assembly which is its Board of Trustees.

The New Era High School is no doubt the first of many Bahá'í schools to be developed as the new world order unfolds. The struggles, shortcomings and successes that have marked its growth provide a powerful example and inspiration for our efforts in the future. Throughout its first thirty years New Era has nurtured many young world citizens who have become pioneers in various lands and has extended service to both its local and the world community. Most important of all, however, it has provided a genuine example of the unity of mankind and the beauty of the diverse races, religions and nations working together. New Era, as a pioneer in the field of Bahá'í education, has brought acclaim and prestige to the glorious Name of Bahá'u'lláh during these dramatic years of the growth of the Faith in India.



Junior student choir performing during the programme marking the thirtieth anniversary of the New Era School; 20 October 1975.

On 20 October 1975 the New Era High School celebrated its thirtieth anniversary. On that occasion the Universal House of Justice sent the following letter to Mrs. Rezwan Mobedzadeh:

‘At this time when the New Era school is celebrating its thirtieth anniversary we wish to express our profound gratitude for your untiring services rendered to that blessed institution from the time of its inception. Your devotion, steadfastness, love and wisdom have always been a source of strength to the

school. Hundreds of students who have been under your motherly care in the course of all these years, and now mostly serving the Cause of God, are living tributes to your success in serving in the field of education which is considered in our Faith as one of the best ways to worship God.

‘We offer prayers of thanksgiving at the Holy Shrines on your behalf and supplicate Bahá'u'lláh to confer upon you His choicest favours.’

V

THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH AND THE UNITED NATIONS

1. THE BEGINNINGS OF BAHÁ'Í RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

IN the spring of 1947 the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada was accredited to the United Nations Office of Public Information as a national non-governmental organization qualified to be represented through an observer. A year later the eight National Spiritual Assemblies then existing were recognized collectively as an international non-governmental organization under the title 'Bahá'í International Community'. These eight Assemblies were those of the United States and Canada; the British Isles; Germany and Austria; Egypt and Sudan; 'Iráq; Írán (Persia); India, Pakistan and Burma; and Australia and New Zealand. Each National Spiritual Assembly in its application established the National Assembly of the United States as its representative in relation to the United Nations.

A significant action was taken in July 1947 when the United Nations Special Palestine Committee addressed a letter to Shoghi Effendi Rabbání, Head of the Bahá'í Faith, resident at the Bahá'í World Centre in Haifa, requesting an expression of the Bahá'í attitude to the future of Palestine. In his reply, Shoghi Effendi made it clear that 'Our aim is the establishment of universal peace in the world and our desire to see justice prevail in every domain of human society, including the domain of politics.' The Guardian also pointed out his concern that 'the fact be recognized by whoever exercises sovereignty over Haifa and 'Akká, that within this area exists the spiritual and administrative centre of a world Faith, and that the independence of that Faith, its right to manage its international affairs from this source, the rights of Bahá'ís from any and every country of the

globe to visit it as pilgrims (enjoying the same privilege in this respect as Jews, Muslims and Christians do in regard to visiting Jerusalem) be acknowledged and permanently safeguarded.'

With this communication the Guardian enclosed a summary of the history and teachings of the Bahá'í Faith which the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada reprinted and distributed widely.

In addition to participation in a number of international and United States regional conferences, four Bahá'í documents were formally submitted: 'A Bahá'í Declaration of Human Obligations and Rights', 1947; 'A Bahá'í Statement on the Rights of Women', 1947; and 'The Work of Bahá'ís in Promotion of Human Rights', 1948; on 9 November 1949, a letter was addressed to the United Nations to formulate a method of worship acceptable for use in its future prayer building.

The period 1954 to 1963 was a highly eventful one, marking an increase of strength through the participation of the newly elected National and Regional Assemblies. These years witnessed, as well, the desperate appeal to the United Nations to save the lives of the Persian Bahá'ís. As in previous years, the Bahá'í International Community sent delegates to many international, regional and state conferences.

In 1956 Shoghi Effendi appointed a special committee to be called into action for matters of international importance.

During the period of the Ten Year Crusade the Bahá'í observers accredited to the United Nations were the Hand of the Cause Ugo R. Giachery, Europe; Mrs. O. H. Blackwell, United States; and Mrs. Mildred R. Mottahedeh, International.

When the United Nations wrote its Charter in 1945 in San Francisco, the member nations realized that changing world conditions might necessitate changes in its Charter. It therefore arranged for a Charter Revision Conference to be convened in 1955. In anticipation of this significant event each Bahá'í National Spiritual Assembly was solicited for suggestions which might be incorporated in Bahá'í proposals for Charter revision.¹ Bearing these suggestions in mind, a carefully conceived pamphlet representing the first united effort of all the National Spiritual Assemblies in a non-Bahá'í field was prepared. Entitled 'Proposals for Charter Revision Submitted to the United Nations by the Bahá'í International Community', a copy of this pamphlet, together with a covering letter written by the executive secretary, Mr. Horace Holley, was sent to each of the delegates at the Conference. In addition, copies were presented to officials of many universities, to librarians, and newspaper men.

Preceding the opening of the Charter Revision Conference, a 'Festival of Faith' was held in San Francisco. Mr. Arthur L. Dahl, Jr.,

¹ The full text of the Bahá'í International Community proposals for charter revision appears in *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, pp. 376-377 and in other earlier volumes.

representing the Bahá'í Faith, read a prayer taken from the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Fifteen thousand people were present at the Festival and the programme was both televised and broadcast by several nations, as well as being widely covered by the press.

The Bahá'í International Community was represented in many international, regional and local conferences of United Nations non-governmental organizations. Bahá'í delegations attended international conferences held in the New York and the Geneva headquarters of the United Nations.

In May 1959, at the New York headquarters, a United Nations Conference for non-governmental organizations was held on the problems of technical aid given by the United Nations and its specialized agencies in the social and economic fields. In connection with those in the social field, a delegation representing the Bahá'í International Community and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States presented a resolution recommending that non-governmental organizations endeavour to obtain endorsements of the Genocide Convention from their respective organizations.



2. THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND THE UNITED NATIONS 1954-1963

IN May 1955 there broke loose a sudden, violent storm of persecutions against the Bahá'í community in Írán, threatening its very existence. Cables to the Sháh and the Prime Minister from Bahá'ís all over the world brought no cessation of the hostility and the widespread massacre of the Persian Bahá'ís, threatened in the press and in public meetings, became a real danger.

In July 1955 Shoghi Effendi cabled the Bahá'í International Community to lodge with the United Nations an appeal for immediate assistance. A committee consisting of five Bahá'ís, each from a different country, proceeded within thirty-six hours to Geneva where the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations was then meeting and engaged in ceaseless efforts to have their case presented. A competent lawyer was retained to frame the appeal.

The appeal, together with the evidence of the persecutions, was presented to the Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjöld, to all members of the Economic and Social Council who had been interviewed, to the Human Rights Commission, to the specialized agencies, and to the international non-governmental organizations. A press conference was held and the news of the appeal circulated. Unable to do more, the members of the committee returned to their homes to launch a publicity campaign to arouse the public conscience.

Only a few days before the scheduled massacre the intervention of the Secretary-General, the efforts of prominent Bahá'ís in Írán, the appeals of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States to the American State Department, and the publicity campaign that had been launched, brought an immediate end to the physical persecutions and lifted the danger that threatened to engulf the Bahá'í community in the cradle of the Faith.

Economic reprisals against the Persian Bahá'ís continued. They were still denied the fundamental religious right of assembly for

worship, their centres were still being held by the government and Bahá'ís who had been summarily dismissed from civil service or from teaching posts had not been reinstated. After months of attempts by individual Bahá'ís in Tíhrán and many appeals by American Bahá'ís to their State Department, Shoghi Effendi instructed the Bahá'ís to launch another appeal to the United Nations.

Dr. Amin Banání and Mrs. Mildred Motahedeh who were members of the original committee again went to Geneva in July 1956 and after speaking individually with the delegates of the Economic and Social Council aroused the sympathy of Dr. José Vicente Trujillo, the delegate from Ecuador and Chairman of the Social Commission, who opened the session of that commission with the following words:

' . . . In regard to prevention of discrimination against religious minorities, we have received many complaints. One of these, which, in my estimate, is of great importance, regards the curtailment of rights of a religious group in a country which is an honored member of the United Nations and which has a good record in human rights matters—I am referring to the complaints of a new religious group called the Bahá'ís which have been distributed to the Secretary-General and other delegates. I believe this matter should receive the close attention of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and should receive equal attention with other instances of religious discrimination. This new religion should be respected like all other religions in the world.'

Although the Persian National Bahá'í Convention could not be held in 1957 as restrictions on assemblage were still continuing, nevertheless the appeal was successful and the Government of Írán responded favourably. All but a few administrative headquarters were eventually recovered including the national Háziratu'l-Quds. The most joyful news was of

the restoration of the House of the Báb in Shíráz and of His shop in Búshíhr.¹

On 10 April 1959 representatives of the Bahá'í International Community presented to the president of the Human Rights Commission, Ambassador Ratnakirti Gunewardene of Ceylon (Sri Lanka), a statement endorsing the Genocide Convention.

Mr. H. Borrah Kavelin, chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, read on behalf of the Bahá'í International Community a statement embodying the following resolution:

'Since the teaching and practice of the oneness of mankind is the cornerstone of the religion revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, His followers throughout our jurisdiction recognize the vital importance of the Genocide Convention for assuring the protection of small and helpless races and peoples.'

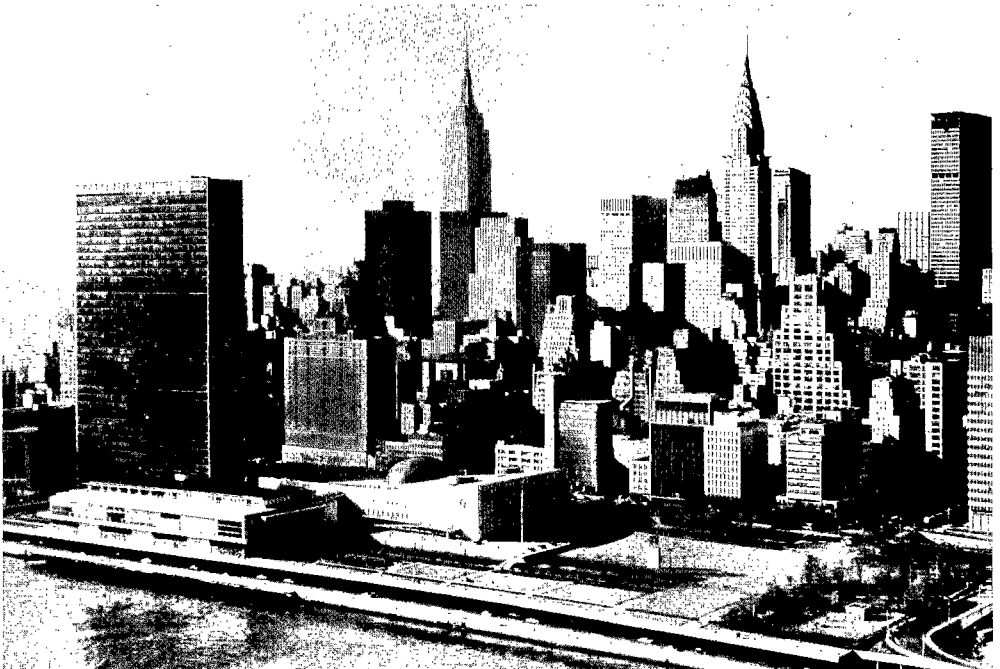
Ambassador Gunewardene, in his reply, stated in part: 'I am greatly impressed by the endorsement of the Genocide Convention by

eighty National and Regional Assemblies of the Bahá'ís, coming as they do from countries and territories all over the globe. This is a most powerful expression of world opinion. It makes us feel that our work here in the United Nations is supported indeed not only by the Governments, but by the people themselves . . .'

Approximately one hundred non-governmental organizations of India were represented at the second Indian National Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations on United Nations Information held at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi, from 3 to 5 April 1959. The Bahá'í International Community was represented by Mrs. Shirin Fozdar, Dr. K. K. Bhargava, Mr. R. R. Williams and Mr. P. C. Auplish. Among the most important resolutions passed by the conference were those on peace, universality, universal education for peace and a world language. Several resolutions sponsored by the Bahá'í delegates were also passed.

The United Nations Office of Public Information, in co-operation with the executive committee of the non-governmental organizations, called a meeting at United Nations headquarters in May 1960 to discuss problems of co-

¹ Further details of these appeals and the successful outcome appear in *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, pp. 292-296, 789-791.



Partial view of skyline of New York. In the left foreground is seen the United Nations complex. Offices of the Bahá'í International Community are located in the adjacent Carnegie Foundation building at 345 East 46th Street.

operation 'with the United Nations family in so far as its programme affects the new nations'. Mr. Eugene Moye and Mrs. Mildred Motahedeh were nominated as delegates and Mrs. Harriett Wolcott attended as observer. Mr. Charles Wolcott participated as secretary of the Bahá'í International Community.

During the final plenary session the non-governmental organizations were invited to submit statements regarding their work in the 'new nations'. Excerpts from the statement submitted on behalf of the Bahá'í International Community are set out below:

'Community centres have been established both in rural and urban areas. In the urban areas, vigorous assistance has been provided to the primitive peoples enabling them to integrate successfully into these more highly developed societies.

'Since a fundamental principle of the Bahá'í Faith is education for all, schools at various scholastic levels form an important part of a continuously expanding educational programme for adults as well as children.

'Each Bahá'í community endeavours to develop in its members a world point of view leading to a broader understanding of the fundamental oneness of the human race. This serves to eliminate the traditional prejudices between nations, races and religions.

'Since so many of our aims and those of the United Nations are identical, Bahá'í communities all over the world support a vigorous programme explaining the structure and purposes of the United Nations, an important part of which is the annual observance of United Nations and Human Rights Days.

'In the field of Human Rights, the equality of men and women has been firmly established in every Bahá'í community. In many of these communities situated in primitive areas where the status of women has been very low, women are now increasingly being elected to serve on governing bodies. Bahá'ís are active in the promotion of all fundamental Human Rights, even to the extent of the sacrifice of their own lives to preserve and uphold these principles on which the ultimate peace and security of all peoples depend.'

In 1962, for the second time in the nine-year period covered by this report, persecution of Bahá'ís made it necessary to appeal to the United Nations for redress. On 12 April 1962 a number of the Bahá'ís of Morocco were arrested and imprisoned and were not finally arraigned before the Regional Court of Nador until 31 October. On 10 December they were tried in the Criminal Court of Nador. Death sentences were imposed upon three, five were sentenced to life imprisonment, and one was sentenced to imprisonment for fifteen years.

As the session of the General Assembly of the United Nations was to close on the evening of 21 December, telegrams were sent to thirty-five delegations appealing for help under the Genocide Convention, which is a part of International Law. The Bahá'í International Community wrote to U Thant, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and the British United Nations Association, quite independently, cabled U Thant requesting his intervention.¹

¹ Further details concerning the Moroccan affair are reported in *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, pp. 288-289.



United Nations Conference on 'New Perspectives on World Population' held in New York; 16 May 1973. At the presiding table are seen (from the left): Mr. F. Bradford Morse, Under-secretary for Political and General Assembly Affairs; Dr. Kurt Waldheim, Secretary-General of the United Nations, addressing the meeting; Dr. Victor de Araujo, Chairman of the meeting; Mr. Genichi Akatani, Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information; Mr. Vladimir P. Pavlichenko, Director of the External Relations Division; and the Rev. Melvin Hawthorne, Rapporteur.



Mr. Genichi Akatani (left), Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information, is seen conferring with Dr. Victor de Araujo, accredited representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations, during the two-day United Nations Conference on 'New Perspectives on World Population' held in New York; 16 May 1973.

3. THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND THE UNITED NATIONS 1963-1973

VICTOR DE ARAUJO

AN important step occurred in the development of the Bahá'í relationship to the United Nations in the period 1963-1973, when, under the guidance of the Universal House of Justice, the Bahá'í International Community sought and obtained, on 27 May 1970, consultative status, category II,¹ with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

In 1967, the Universal House of Justice had assumed the direction of the work of the Bahá'í International Community with the United Nations, a responsibility shouldered for so many years, with great distinction, by the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States; and, in view of the volume and scope of these activities, decided to appoint a full-time representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations. Mrs. Mildred Mottahedeh, who had performed devoted and distinguished part-time service in that office for nearly twenty years, asked to be relieved of the heavy responsibility, and Dr. Victor de Araujo was appointed in her place.

Accreditation with the Economic and Social Council, a relationship established by Article 71 of the Charter of the United Nations, marked a new stage in the relationship of the Bahá'í International Community with the United Nations. The Bahá'í International Community could now participate in all sessions of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies, and could attend United Nations global and regional conferences and seminars organized under the jurisdiction of ECOSOC. Here, Bahá'í representatives would be able to present pertinent written and oral statements. The Bahá'í International Community would also now be 'consulted' on studies being undertaken

by the United Nations or on the substance of those United Nations resolutions which asked for the views of non-governmental organizations in consultative status.

The first official participation of the Bahá'í International Community in attending sessions of the ECOSOC or its functional commissions or committees came about in the late summer of 1970 at the twenty-third session of the Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. Later, the Bahá'í International Community attended, in New York or in Geneva, the annual sessions of the Economic and Social Council (the spring session in New York and the summer one in Geneva), of the Commission on Human Rights and its Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, and the biennial sessions of the Commission for Social Development and the Commission on the Status of Women.

As a result of its consultative status and its known concern for human rights, the Bahá'í International Community was invited to send representatives to two special United Nations seminars for member-states in observance of International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, 1971. At the first one, held in Yaoundé, from 16 to 29 June, the Bahá'í International Community presented two statements explaining the Bahá'í point of view towards race and emphasizing the general principles concerning the oneness of mankind. The second special seminar was held in Nice, from 24 August to 6 September, 1971. The Bahá'í participants were twice given the opportunity to present the Bahá'í viewpoint on specific subjects being discussed, drawing a great deal of attention and favourable comments from many government delegates. Again, as an outcome of its consultative status, the Bahá'í

¹ Consultative status, category II, is given to 'organizations which have a special competence in, and are concerned specifically with, only a few of the fields of activity covered by the Council, and which are known internationally within the fields for which they have or seek consultative status'.

International Community was invited to participate in the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm, during the first two weeks of June 1972. A Bahá'í statement presented before one conference session resulted in the improvement of some conference recommendations. The Bahá'í delegation also contributed to a joint statement submitted to the conference by the representatives of many non-governmental organizations. A special pamphlet, *The Environment and Human Values—A Bahá'í View*, was prepared for the occasion and distributed to the 1,500 government delegates and 600 observers in attendance. The Bahá'í International Community was also actively represented at the Environmental Forum held in conjunction with that United Nations conference, where many non-governmental groups came together to present their views and discuss environmental issues.

Since the sessions of the Economic and Social Council and its commissions and committees take place both at UN headquarters in New York and at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Mrs. Janet Lindstrom and Dr. Marco G. Kappenberger were appointed respectively representative and alternate representative for the Bahá'í International Community in Geneva. In addition, Dr. 'Azíz Navídí was named Bahá'í International Community representative for the continent of Africa.

In July 1972 Mrs. Mary Sawicki was appointed full-time executive assistant to Dr. de Araujo. A larger headquarters was also sought and found, across from the United Nations, at 345 East 46th Street.

Soon after obtaining consultative status, the Bahá'í International Community became a member of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council, and participated actively, both in New York and in Geneva, in the work of committees organized by that conference in the areas of human rights, status of women and development.

One new area of Bahá'í-United Nations co-operation concerned youth. In 1970, the Bahá'í International Community participated in the World Youth Assembly, a conference convened under United Nations auspices, at UN headquarters, as part of the observance of the

twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, to explore issues of common concern to youth and the UN. Later, the Bahá'í International Community worked closely with the UN headquarters Youth Caucus, a group of representatives and observers designated by a number of international non-governmental youth and youth-related organizations and co-sponsored a statement submitted to the Economic and Social Council recommending the establishment of an international university.

The relationship of the Bahá'í world to the United Nations Office of Public Information (OPI), begun in 1948, continued to expand during this period. The Bahá'í International Community and many of its member-affiliates—national Bahá'í communities—participated in two important regional conferences of non-governmental organizations sponsored by OPI in 1970 and 1972, the first, for the continent of Africa, in Addis Ababa, in February 1970; and the second, for South and Central America, and the Caribbean, in Buenos Aires, in August 1972.

The participation of the Bahá'í world in United Nations Day and Human Rights Day programmes continued to grow in this period, assisted each year by new National Spiritual Assemblies and their communities. The Bahá'í International Community, through suggestions in circular letters, and mailings of United Nations information and materials, constantly encouraged National Spiritual Assemblies to make use of these two occasions to demonstrate close co-operation with the aims and activities of the United Nations, thereby helping to fulfill the goal of the Nine Year Plan of strengthening the ties of the Bahá'í world with the UN. Accordingly, Bahá'í communities throughout the world supported the UN in its observances of International Year for Human Rights (1968), International Education Year (1970) and International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (1971). The UN Office of Public Information continued to warmly recognize and welcome the close co-operation of the Bahá'í world in educating the public regarding the aims of the United Nations and its activities directed towards global peace and unity.

The Bahá'í International Community continued to participate fully in the annual conferences organized for non-governmental orga-

nizations at UN headquarters by the United Nations Office of Public Information. The Bahá'í International Community representative also attended regularly the weekly September-through-May briefings organized by the Office of Public Information on current developments in the full range of United Nations programmes.

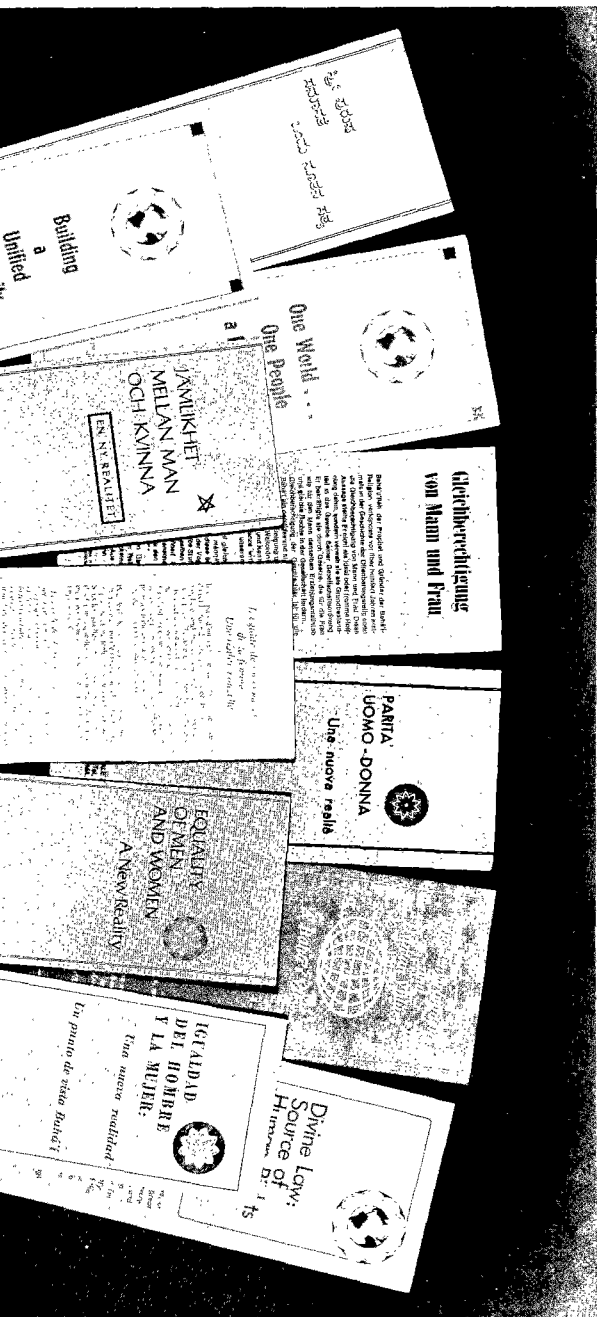
In this period closer ties were forged between national Bahá'í communities and the United Nations Information Centres (UNIC), overseas branches of the Office of Public Information. Many National Spiritual Assemblies became listed with the appropriate UNIC, an informal type of accreditation comparable to the more formal relationship of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States with the United Nations Office of Public Information in New York.

Bahá'í International Community co-operation with the Office of Public Information was further recognized through the election of Dr. Victor de Araujo to membership on the Executive Committee of Non-Governmental Organizations with OPI. He served as vice-chairman during 1969 and as chairman during 1971 and 1972.

As in the past, the Bahá'í International Community office in New York assisted with matters of protection and recognition of the Bahá'í world community. One of the important assignments given by the Universal House of Justice to its representative was the presentation on behalf of the Universal House of Justice of *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh* to fifty-six Heads of State via their ambassadors to the United Nations. With but few exceptions, for reasons beyond control, all the fifty-six ambassadors received this historic document. In addition, under the direction and guidance of the Universal House of Justice, contacts were made on many occasions with the United Nations Missions and Secretariat. Here again a growing understanding of the non-political and constructive nature of the Bahá'í International Community in the work of the UN, aided by its consultative status, made access to key United Nations officials easier when a clear presentation of the Bahá'í position was called for to foster the official recognition of the Faith or to prevent discrimination against a Bahá'í community.



The National Bahá'í Women's Committee of Mauritius sponsored a forum on 'The Status of Women in Today's Society', at Quatre-Bornes, as part of the Mauritian Bahá'ís' observance of International Women's Year. Guest speakers on this occasion were Mrs. Lea Nys (right) of Belgium, an international Bahá'í travelling teacher; Mr. H. Tirvendadam, Chairman of the Administrative Commission of the Municipality of Quatre-Bornes; and the Hon. Mrs. R. Poonosamy, Minister for Women's Affairs; 6 September 1975.



THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND THE UNITED NATIONS 1973–1976

VICTOR DE ARAUJO

STRENGTHENING of the relationship between the Bahá'í International Community and the United Nations continued during 1973–1976 with a noticeable increase in the range and depth of Bahá'í co-operation. The Bahá'í International Community explored new avenues of participation in United Nations areas of social and economic development, as it worked closely with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), its functional commissions, committees and associated bodies. Not only was it represented at sessions of UN bodies concerned with issues of human rights, social development, status of women, environment, human settlements, world food, science and technology, population, law of the sea, crime prevention, narcotic drugs, youth, the family and the United Nations University, but it also furnished information, submitted statements and published brochures on most of these subjects. In addition, the Bahá'í International Community participated in United Nations Years, in world conferences and congresses, in regional conferences and in seminars concerned with the socio-economic problems of our planet, as well as in preparatory and follow-up meetings and activities.

Throughout this period the Bahá'í International Community continued to encourage National Spiritual Assemblies to observe, through their communities, special UN events, such as World Population Year (1974) and International Women's Year (1975), as well as to plan United Nations Day and Human Rights Day programmes to educate the public about the aims and activities of the UN and the role of the Bahá'í world community in achieving global unity and peace. The number of National Spiritual Assemblies reporting such participation increased during the period to 38 in 1973, to 42 in 1974 and to 63 in 1975, as Bahá'í communities discovered compatible ways of fostering both

their own goals and those of the United Nations in areas of common concern. Besides working closely with the Bahá'í International Community and its representatives in United Nations Conferences and seminars taking place in their country or area, National Spiritual Assemblies were also of great assistance in providing, through their Publishing Trusts, for the publication of Bahá'í International Community brochures issued for special UN Years, conferences or observances. In addition, national Bahá'í communities themselves prepared for such occasions pamphlets and other materials, and published articles in their journals or newsletters, sometimes devoting whole issues to these events, as in the case of International Women's Year.

The Bahá'í International Community found, during these years, many opportunities to explain to UN delegates, representing by 1976 more than 140 independent countries and over ninety per cent of the peoples of the planet, as well as to members of the UN Secretariat, how its interest in the goals of the United Nations Charter—world peace, universal human rights, and the full social and economic development of the peoples of the planet—was rooted in the Bahá'í teachings, principles and laws, and how these Bahá'í guidelines were relevant to a lasting solution of the world's problems. In addition, the Bahá'í International Community was able to point to the way of life evolving in Bahá'í communities around the world as an embodiment of the Bahá'í teachings.

During this period, the Bahá'í International Community added to its existing consultative status with ECOSOC and its affiliation with the UN Office of Public Information, two new relationships: an affiliation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), headquartered in Nairobi; and consultative status with the United Nations Children's Fund



United Nations Seminar on 'The Promotion and Protection of the Human Rights of National, Ethnic, and Other Minorities', held in Ohrid, Yugoslavia; 25 June-8 July, 1974. Seen in the centre, left to right, are the representatives of the Bahá'í International Community, Dr. Marco G. Kappenberger and Mr. Foad Katirai.

(UNICEF). The association with UNEP, begun in 1974, marks a continuation of the Bahá'í concern for the environment, expressed earlier through participation of the Bahá'í International Community in the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment (1972). To act as liaison with UNEP in Nairobi, the Bahá'í International Community appointed as its representative Mr. Bonaventure Wafula, and as alternate representatives Mrs. Ruth Vuyiya and Dr. H. Tim Rost.

The Bahá'í International Community received consultative status with UNICEF, a member of the UN family concerned for over thirty years with the well-being of the world's children, on 8 March 1976. This accreditation was most welcome, and promises to offer many opportunities for closer ties of the Bahá'í world with the United Nations.

In the autumn of 1975, Mr. Will. C. van den Hoonard, a member of the Bahá'í community of Canada, joined the Bahá'í International Community United Nations Office serving as alternate representative to Dr. Victor de

Araujo. This addition brought the staff of the Bahá'í International Community in New York, by Riqvân of 1976, to six persons, four serving full-time and two part-time. When Mrs. Janet Lindstrom found it necessary to resign as representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations in Geneva, Dr. Marco G. Kappenberger was appointed to replace her. Mrs. Mahshid Fatio was then named alternate representative.

Human Rights

The Bahá'í International Community throughout the lifetime of the United Nations has co-operated extensively with the UN in the field of human rights through world-wide annual observances of Human Rights Day, human rights conferences, seminars, awards, programmes and publications. As a dimension of its consultative status, during 1973-1976, it was able to expand its substantive contributions to the human rights work of the UN. Besides participating in yearly sessions of the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-

Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities, the Bahá'í International Community took part in UN governmental seminars on the rights of minorities and of youth, submitted information on three human rights studies, issued a special publication for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (10 December 1973), and began its co-operation with the UN Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (1973–1983), launched on that anniversary.

In addition to offering constructive suggestions on human rights issues discussed at the meetings of the commission and its sub-commission, the Bahá'í International Community shared the Bahá'í understanding of human rights and obligations in the information it submitted to the UN Division of Human Rights (at the request of that department of the UN Secretariat) for three studies conducted by the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities: on discrimination against indigenous populations, on the rights of persons belonging to religious and linguistic minorities, and on the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide. At all times, the Bahá'í position of non-interference in political affairs was made clear.

During this period, the Bahá'í International Community was also invited to take part in two United Nations seminars concerned with human rights. The first one, on 'Youth and Human Rights', was held in San Remo, Italy, August/September 1973; the second, on the 'Promotion and Protection of Human Rights of National, Ethnic, and other Minorities', took place in Ohrid, Yugoslavia, June/July 1974. On both occasions, the Bahá'í International Community contributed statements stressing the aims and values that must underlie the rights and responsibilities of youth and of minorities, if those segments of society are to fulfil their destinies in helping bring into being a united and peaceful world society.

As a contribution to an increased awareness of the nature of human rights, the Bahá'í International Community prepared and distributed widely in UN circles on the occasion of the twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—Human Rights Day, 1973—a brochure entitled *Divine*

Law: Source of Human Rights—A Bahá'í View. This pamphlet, drawing on significant passages from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, focussed on an element neglected in that important UN Declaration: the source of human rights and responsibilities in divine law. The pamphlet set forth the Bahá'í understanding that justice is the cornerstone of human rights, that its standard for our age and the source of divine law is Bahá'u'lláh, and that 'the establishment of universal human rights is directly dependent on mankind's response to this divine gift for human transformation'.

The Bahá'í International Community also joined with other non-governmental organizations on that anniversary in presenting to the United Nations Secretary-General and to other UN bodies and officials concerned with human rights a statement assuring them of their deep interest and co-operation in UN human rights programmes. In addition, the Bahá'í International Community participated on that occasion in a three-day Human Rights Conference held at UN headquarters in New York on the initiative of non-governmental organizations.

The Bahá'í International Community showed steady interest in the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the UN body created by the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to oversee implementation by governments of the provisions of that Convention. It also began its participation in the UN Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (1973–1983), a natural outcome of the Bahá'í conviction that the elimination of all prejudice is essential for world peace. Already the action of Bahá'ís and Bahá'í communities in eradicating from the hearts of human beings the seeds of prejudice and discrimination, whether racial or otherwise, represents in the most fundamental sense, support of the goals of this programme. In addition, the Bahá'í International Community began to inform its member communities about this UN programme, and to encourage them to observe occasions such as Human Rights Day with activities focussing on the need to eliminate the divisive force of racism and racial discrimination in order to achieve the unity of mankind. Plans have been made for participation by the Bahá'í International Community in the World Conference to Combat

Racism and Racial Discrimination, scheduled for 1978, the mid-point of the programme of the UN Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination.

The range of Bahá'í co-operation with the human rights work of the United Nations can be seen in a compilation prepared by the Bahá'í International Community during this period, entitled 'A Pattern for Justice'. Comprising excerpts from pamphlets, statements and information presented by the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations during 1973 and 1974, this compilation outlines the Bahá'í view on a new standard of justice; on social and economic justice for all peoples; on the elimination of the crime of genocide; and on the rights of minorities, of indigenous populations, of the family, of women and of youth.

Status of Women

During this three-year span, the Bahá'í International Community co-operated closely

with the United Nations to improve the status of women. This involvement began with the participation of the Bahá'í International Community in the twenty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York, early in 1974, and intensified throughout International Women's Year (1975) and beyond. Three statements, one presenting Bahá'í views on the education necessary to achieve the equality of the sexes, another describing the worldwide Bahá'í efforts to make better known the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and the third suggesting goals and programmes for International Women's Year (IWY), were submitted to the commission at this session. In addition, the Bahá'í International Community co-sponsored with other non-governmental organizations two statements bearing on items included in the agenda of the commission. From extensive conversations with delegates—in the conference room, and at luncheons and



Regional Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations, organized by the Office of Public Information of the United Nations in co-operation with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, held in Bangkok, Thailand; 27-29 May 1975. Seen above are the representatives of the Bahá'í International Community, (left to right): Mr. Firaydún Mitháqiyán (Laos), Mr. Vicente Samaniego (Philippines), and Mrs. Shanta Sundram (Malaysia).



Seminar on 'The Participation of Women in Economic, Social and Political Development: Obstacles that Hinder their Integration', held in Buenos Aires, Argentina; 22-30 March 1976. The representatives of the Bahá'í International Community, Mrs. Nylza Taetz and Mrs. Dolores Caballero, are seen on the left and right, respectively; in the centre, Ana Richter of the United Nations Secretariat.

receptions—the Bahá'í representatives were able to glean a most favourable response to the Bahá'í contributions and views.

Earlier, in June 1973, the Bahá'í International Community had taken part in a seminar in London on an issue related to the condition of women: that of 'The Family in a Changing Society'. A Bahá'í statement, circulated to all participants, emphasized the importance of the family as the nucleus of an evolving single world society, and stressed the importance of the mother in the family and the equality of rights, status and opportunities for men and women.

In preparation for International Women's Year, the United Nations organized a series of meetings in which the Bahá'í International Community took part. The Bahá'í world community was represented at three regional seminars on the 'Integration of Women in Development with Special Reference to Population Factors', one for Asia and the Far East, in Bangkok in May 1974; one for Africa, in Addis Ababa in June 1974; and one for Latin America, in Caracas in April/May 1975. In all cases, the Bahá'í view on the importance of equality of opportunities, rights and responsibilities for both sexes was made clear. The Bahá'í In-

ternational Community also participated in the first of a series of seminars planned to keep the momentum of International Women's Year alive throughout the UN Decade for Women (1976-1985), a meeting held in Buenos Aires early in 1976 to discuss the obstacles that hinder the participation of women in economic, social and political development.

The Bahá'í International Community was most ably represented at the International Women's Year Conference in Mexico City, June/July 1975, and a large delegation of Bahá'í women participated in a Non-Governmental Organizations Tribune which took place concurrently. An official statement presented to the Conference pointed to the need of education for men and women that goes 'beyond intellectual development or the acquisition of skills', and which has as an essential characteristic 'a wider and deeper understanding of the purpose and value of human life', and referred to the high priority that the education of women has in the Bahá'í world community. The document further referred to a study submitted to the twenty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women by the Bahá'í International Community, entitled 'Preliminary Enquiry into the

Status of Women in the Bahá'í World Community'. This survey, attempting to establish how well Bahá'í communities were implementing the principle of the equality of the sexes, was based on replies from eighty-one of the 113 National Spiritual Assemblies canvassed, and indicated 'that all Bahá'í communities teach equality of the sexes and act to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against women; and that within the Bahá'í International Community "great advances have already been made towards equality of the sexes".'

The enquiry further suggested that 'women already participate actively in voting for local and national Bahá'í administrative bodies—an easy process for them since there is no electioneering or nominations, and the ballot is secret; and they are elected to serve on such bodies. Women take part also in consultation—the process by which decisions are arrived at in Bahá'í community affairs—since they are able to rid themselves of feelings of inferiority and lack of worth brought about by an over-emphasis on material values, through their understanding of the spiritual nature of human life.'

A pamphlet, *Equality of Men and Women—A New Reality*, conveying the scope of this Bahá'í principle promulgated by Bahá'u'lláh over one hundred years ago, was prepared for International Women's Year and distributed in English, French and Spanish, at the conference and at the tribune. A Bahá'í exhibit was arranged at the tribune with a background display of three panels in black with a spread-winged white bird of peace in the centre. Beneath the wing on each panel were quotations from the Bahá'í Writings on the themes of IWY—equality, development and peace.

Preceding International Women's Year, the Bahá'í International Community sent circular letters to National Spiritual Assemblies explaining the goals of IWY, encouraging participation in the programme, and enclosing pertinent UN and Bahá'í materials. Further circulars and mailings were made in 1975, urging Bahá'í communities to observe IWY through United Nations Day and Human Rights Day activities. More important, the co-operation of the Bahá'í world community in activities to promote the goals of International Women's Year was the subject of specific guidance by the Universal House of Justice, which in its message of 25 May

1975 to National Spiritual Assemblies mentioned the Five-Year Plan goal, given to eighty of these national institutions, 'to organize Bahá'í activities for women'. It also stressed that 'the entire Bahá'í world is committed to encouraging and stimulating the vital role of women in the Bahá'í community as well as in society at large'.

In that message, the Universal House of Justice also instructed Bahá'ís during International Women's Year to 'initiate and implement programmes which will stimulate and promote the full and equal participation of women in all aspects of Bahá'í community life, so that through their accomplishments the friends will demonstrate the distinction of the Cause of God in this field of human endeavour'.

The world-wide results of Bahá'í-UN co-operation during International Women's Year were most gratifying. Over sixty National Spiritual Assemblies reported activities during that year, and already the Bahá'í world community is engaged in continuing the impetus of this contribution of Bahá'í men and women to the equality of the sexes in a variety of activities during United Nations Decade for Women. This Decade was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly at its 30th session (1975).

In preparation for International Women's Year and for the World Conference in Mexico City, and during IWY, Bahá'í International Community representatives worked closely with special Non-Governmental Organizations committees, both in New York and in Geneva, and co-signed three statements in co-operation with other non-governmental organizations for presentation to the IWY World Conference. In addition, the Bahá'í International Community took part in a workshop sponsored by the New York committee, for which it submitted a statement on 'Programmes to Improve the Status of Women'. This paper was included in a folder of contributions by non-governmental organizations to the goals of IWY, and was presented to Mrs. Helvi Sipilä, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Director of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs.

Population

When the United Nations, concerned with the rapid increase in the population of the planet, predicted to reach eight billion by the



An informal photograph of some of the Bahá'í delegates who participated in the United Nations International Women's Year Conference and the related Tribune in Mexico City; 19 June-2 July 1975. Back row, left to right: Dorothy Nelson, Jane Faily, Sheila Banání, Edris Rice-Wray, Carmen de Burafato. Front row: Catherine M'boya, Shirin Fozdar, Jyoti Munsiff. Missing from the photograph are Shomais Afrán and Dr. Elsie Austin.

year 2,000, proclaimed 1974 World Population Year, the Bahá'í International Community office with the United Nations approached the Universal House of Justice for guidance as to whether, or to what degree, the Bahá'í world should co-operate with the United Nations in this field of activity. The Universal House of Justice approved of the participation of the Bahá'í International Community in World Population Year and its related activities, warning however, in its reply, that 'in our approach we must always remember that increase of population and a deliberate limiting of the size of families for the purpose of solving problems arising therefrom is not dealt with in the Writings'.

As further guidance, the House of Justice quoted the following passage from a letter written to an individual: 'We have not discovered any specific reference in the texts to the problem of population explosion in its relationship to birth control. . . . A study of our teachings, however, indicates that in the future

there will no doubt be a general improvement of standards of life and of health, but there will also be the full exploitation of unused and as yet unsuspected resources of the planet along with the control and tapping of its sources of raw material, with a great increase in productivity.' The House of Justice added, as further assistance in formulating the Bahá'í approach to the population issue, that 'other principles found in our teachings indicate probable means to be employed in the future for the solution of these problems such as, the spiritual solution of the economic problem, the abolition of extremes of poverty and wealth, promoting the realization of the oneness of mankind, and universal education'.

Accordingly, the Bahá'í International Community took part in the World Population Conference held in Bucharest in August 1974, and in the Population Tribune sponsored by non-governmental organizations and held in the same city concurrently. It also participated in an International Youth Population Conference

held in Bucharest a few days earlier. For the conference and the tribune, the Bahá'í International Community prepared a pamphlet entitled *One World, One People—A Bahá'í View*, circulating it to participants. The brochure stressed the need for world unity as a prerequisite to the solution of the world's economic and social problems, including that of population, and cited Bahá'í Writings illustrating the characteristics needed by the individual and by society to resolve the complex problems now afflicting the planet.

The Bahá'í world community expressed its support for World Population Year through United Nations and Human Rights Day activities which presented the problem of an increasing world population within the broad Bahá'í view. The Bahá'í International Community not only conveyed to National Spiritual Assemblies the guidance it had received from the Universal House of Justice, but in addition supplied those institutions with Bahá'í and UN materials for programmes they might wish to plan.

The Bahá'í International Community continued to express its concern for the population issue, viewed by the United Nations after the World Conference within the total pattern of economic and social development, beyond World Population Year. Consequently, it took part in the eighteenth session of the Population Commission, which met in New York early in 1975 to follow up on actions taken at the World Conference, including the World Plan of Action approved in Bucharest, and intended to continue to follow closely UN activities in this field.

World Food

In 1974, the United Nations recognized the seriousness of the inadequate food supplies of millions of persons not only by rushing emergency supplies to the afflicted areas, but by calling for a world conference to develop a plan of action that would prevent future disasters. This conference met in November 1974 in Rome. The Bahá'í International Community, which had already shown its concern for world food problems by co-sponsoring a statement with other non-governmental organizations to the preparatory committee for the conference, sent representatives to the conference. It not only distributed widely to delegates at the conference the Bahá'í brochure, *One World, One*



Representatives of the Bahá'í International Community attending the United Nations World Population Conference held in Bucharest, Romania; 19-30 August 1974. Left to right: Dr. Victor de Araujo, Miss Anneliese Bopp, Dr. Marco G. Kappenberger, Mr. André McLaughlin.

People—A Bahá'í View, prepared earlier for the World Population Conference, but circulated a statement offering appropriate Bahá'í recommendations. The paper emphasized that 'effective medium and long-range plans for solving the world food problem must rest on a conviction, by the individual and society, of the organic oneness of humanity, and a commitment to education and work that will be of service not only to one's fellow citizens, but to mankind as a whole', and suggested, among other considerations, that 'agriculture must be acknowledged as a vital human occupation and given a position of prestige in society'.

Bahá'í International Community co-operation in this area of important UN work has continued through participation in the sessions of the World Food Council, the executive organ created by the conference to co-ordinate UN activities in the field of food and to oversee the implementation of the decisions reached at the Rome conference. The World Food Council met for the first time in Rome in 1975 and will continue to meet yearly.

Narcotic Drugs

In November 1974 the Bahá'í International Community replied to an enquiry from the United Nations Division of Narcotic Drugs as to whether the Bahá'í world community was interested in its United Nations activities in the fight against drug abuse, by presenting to that division a statement on the 'Co-operation of the Bahá'í International Community in the Fight Against Drug Abuse'. This paper brought together pertinent Bahá'í Writings explaining the law of Bahá'u'lláh on 'total abstinence from all alcoholic drinks, from opium, and from similar habit-forming drugs', and included recent statements by the Universal House of Justice and the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States on hallucinogenic drugs. In pointing out that 'today Bahá'ís in over 70,000 world-wide centres are committed to the law of their Faith that forbids the use of alcoholic beverages, opium, and other habit-forming drugs', the reply stressed that 'Bahá'í communities are already making an important contribution to the work of the United Nations in its fight against drug abuse, through the lives of their own members', and concluded by mentioning that '... Bahá'ís also actively participate, whenever they find opportunity, in drug education programmes. Further, since Bahá'ís believe that religion and science must be in harmony, as facets of one reality, it is now possible to add to the logical explanations found in the Bahá'í Writings for the prohibition of alcohol and drugs, scientific evidence, mounting every year in quantity and depth, establishing persuasively the damage done to the human body, and consequently to the human consciousness, by the use of such substances.'

Since then the Bahá'í International Community has participated in two sessions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs—a body entrusted by the Economic and Social Council

(ECOSOC) with the task of assisting and advising it on the control of narcotic drugs and on the problems of alcoholism—in 1975 and early 1976 in Geneva.

Crime Prevention

For some time the Bahá'í International Community has been observing with interest the United Nations activities in the field of crime prevention. The time seemed appropriate therefore to seek an invitation to the fifth United Nations Congress on Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders, taking place in September 1975 in Geneva. Again, Bahá'í consultative status with the Economic and Social Council made participation possible. The Bahá'í International Community representatives to the congress were able to express to many delegates—prominent lawyers, judges and law professors—the Bahá'í view on the kind of education needed to prevent crime and to protect society.

This new area of Bahá'í involvement in the activities of the United Nations is most important in the light of the moral and spiritual dimensions of world criminality, and the Bahá'í contribution will continue through Bahá'í International Community participation in biennial sessions of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control—the functional branch of ECOSOC charged with this area of its work—and in future UN Congresses on Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders.

Environment

The Bahá'í International Community continued its interest in world environment problems through its participation in the sessions of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The first session of the Council took place in Geneva, in 1973 (a Bahá'í statement was presented at that time), with the next two in 1974 and 1975 in Nairobi. In addition, the Bahá'í International Community participated in environment meetings of non-governmental organizations—a World Assembly was held in Geneva in 1973, and later sessions took place yearly in Nairobi before the meeting of the Governing Council of UNEP. A Bahá'í statement on 'Goals for a Global Education', circulated at the 1975 NGO meeting, acknowledged the need for 'co-ordinated and comprehensive education on a



United Nations Seminar on 'Youth and Human Rights', held in San Remo, Italy; 28 August–10 September 1973. Representing the Bahá'í International Community were Mr. Foad Katirai and Mr. Sohrab Youssefian.

global basis, including global environment education', to meet effectively the critical environment problems; but pointed out that environmental education and issues 'must be treated within the wider context of global education and global unity'. Using quotations from the Bahá'í Writings to illustrate its points, the paper stressed that truly effective environmental education must rest on 'the development of individual and group virtues and qualities', since 'the reform of man's inner life must be accompanied by a reform of man's social institutions'. The result will be a higher global civilization in the framework of a new world order.

Human Settlements: Habitat

The Bahá'í International Community was invited to take part in three regional conferences—for Asia and the Far East, for Africa and for Latin America—on the problem of human settlements, organized by the United Nations to prepare the way, through consultation at regional levels, for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements: Habitat, scheduled for Vancouver, May/June 1976. The preparatory conference for Asia was held

June 1975, in Tíhrán; the conference for Asia and the Far East took place in Cairo, the same month; and the conference for Latin America was held in Caracas, June/July 1975. Concern for human settlements (or 'Habitat', its new name), an offshoot of deliberations at the Stockholm Environment Conference, offered the Bahá'í International Community further opportunity to share the view that the underlying moral and spiritual needs of human beings must be nourished by a human settlement or community for full happiness.

During this period, the Bahá'í International Community also attended sessions of the preparatory committee for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, held in New York in 1975 and 1976, and began preparations for participation in that conference.

Economic and Social Development

The co-operation of the Bahá'í International Community with the United Nations for economic and social development continued to be evident during the period 1973–1976. Bahá'í representatives attended the yearly sessions of the Economic and Social Council (in the spring

in New York, and in the summer in Geneva), as well as the sessions of the Committee on Review and Appraisal, a committee of ECOSOC established to consider how well the International Strategy for the Second Development Decade (1970s) was being implemented. To express further its interest in the Decade, the Bahá'í International Community co-sponsored with other non-governmental organizations, three statements to the second session of the Committee on Review and Appraisal: one on the integration and participation of women in development, another on the general policy of the International Development Strategy and a third on environment considerations.

During this period, the Bahá'í International Community continued to work closely with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), both at the New York headquarters and in the field. The Bahá'í International Community also followed closely the seventh Special Session of the General Assembly on Development and International Co-operation, held in the autumn of 1975 to discuss the implementation of the New International Economic Order, as well as taking part in a Non-Governmental Organizations Forum held concurrently.

In the specific area of social development, the Bahá'í International Community took part in the biennial sessions of the Commission for Social Development, in 1973 and 1975 in New York. At the 1975 session, the Bahá'í views were offered in a statement on the practical implications of popular participation for development. The Bahá'í paper stressed the need for 'a basic change of values and attitudes on the part of each individual and his social group, rooted in a deeply-held conviction of the organic oneness of humanity', and mentioned in addition some of the elements necessary to achieve this popular participation: the development of moral and spiritual values, the harmony of science and religion, the eradication of prejudice, the training of all peoples in the arts and sciences, and the adoption by everyone of a trade or profession or other form of gainful employment. The statement cited also the importance of the development of the mind through an unfettered search for knowledge and the welcome expression of each person's understanding and views through the process of consultation at local and national levels.

Science and Technology

The interest of the United Nations in the role of science and technology in the social and economic development of the planet had seemed at an appropriate time, in light of the Bahá'í principle of the harmony between science and religion, a natural avenue of involvement and co-operation for the Bahá'í International Community. When, in 1975, the Bahá'í International Community was invited by the Division of Human Rights to submit its observations for a UN study on 'The Balance Which Should Be Established Between Scientific and Technological Progress and the Intellectual, Spiritual, Cultural and Moral Advancement of Humanity', it complied by explaining the Bahá'í view that 'spiritual and cultural values not only determine the use of scientific discovery; they also help create the milieu and social atmosphere which foster one kind of development and research as opposed to another'. The statement further elucidated that 'imbalance between material progress and spiritual progress can be seen to exist in every society in the world, regardless of its political philosophy or type of social organization', and that 'many economic and social scientists now realize that intangibles, in the form of value-judgements, attitudes, and behaviour patterns on the part of groups and individuals, can and do profoundly affect human progress'.

As a result of this initial step, the Bahá'í International Community subsequently attended in Geneva, still in 1975, the twenty-first session of the Advisory Committee on Science and Technology in Development, a body of the Economic and Social Council composed of experts serving in their professional capacity. Later, in New York early in 1976, the Bahá'í International Community attended the third session of the Committee on Science and Technology in Development, ECOSOC's governmental policy-making body on these matters. A subject of high priority at both meetings was the planning of a World Conference on Science and Technology for Development, to take place in 1979.

Law of the Sea

When, late in 1973, the United Nations convened the first session of the third Conference on the Law of the Sea, the Bahá'í International



Dr. 'Azíz Navidí represented the Bahá'í International Community at the United Nations 'World Congress on World Peace through Law', held in Abidjan, Ivory Coast; 26-31 August 1973. Dr. Navidí is seen above reading a statement presenting the Bahá'í view of world peace. Present at the Congress were 2,000 leading figures from more than 100 countries. The Bahá'í statement was reproduced in the Abidjan daily newspaper and Dr. Navidí was interviewed on radio about the Bahá'í teachings.

Community attended several of these preparatory meetings. Since this conference had as its objective the establishment of world order and world law to govern the seas and oceans, the Bahá'í International Community expressed interest in taking part in subsequent sessions. It did take part in the later sessions in Geneva and in New York, and will continue to follow developments closely.

While to date no Bahá'í statements have been presented on the complex set of issues to be resolved before a law of the sea can become a reality, through conversations with delegates the Bahá'í representatives have found occasion to convey the basic Bahá'í interest in the regulation of human affairs through global solutions and international bodies responsive to the concerns of all humanity.

Youth

The Bahá'í International Community continued to show its concern for the contribution

of youth to world peace, human rights, and economic and social development, by strengthening its relationship with the Social Development Division of the UN Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs; by participating in a seminar on 'Youth and Human Rights' (already referred to); and by continuing to take part in the work of the UN Headquarters Youth Caucus and its task forces on environment, the UN University and youth employment opportunities at the UN. In addition, through the Caucus, it co-ordinated a display at an annual OPI/NGO Conference, replied to a questionnaire on youth and the environment, and joined with other non-governmental organizations in sponsoring annually an International Directory for Youth Internships.

United Nations University

The Bahá'í International Community has established contact with the United Nations

University (UNU), and fostered this relationship in part through the UN Youth Caucus. It joined members of the Caucus in submitting to the sixth session of the UNU in Caracas, in January 1976, a report on the 'Association of Young People with the Work of the UN University'. Further, it co-sponsored with other non-governmental organizations several statements to the UNU and to ECOSOC offering suggestions on the full utilization of the potential of youth by that UN institution.

On the occasion of the first meeting of UNU experts to discuss the problem of world hunger, the Bahá'í International Community wrote to the Rector of that University, in September 1975, expressing full support for the work of the UNU and offering the Bahá'í views on the world food problem, as well as on the solution to social and economic problems.

Co-operation with Non-Governmental Organizations

The Bahá'í International Community continued its co-operation with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) quite extensively during this period. Several joint activities and co-sponsored statements have been cited in the context of Bahá'í involvement in specific economic and social areas of UN activity. In addition, it should be mentioned that the Bahá'í International Community continued to take active part in the annual conference of non-governmental organizations sponsored yearly by the United Nations Office of Public Information (OPI) in New York. Dr. Victor de Araujo, representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations, concluded his term as chairman of the Executive Committee of the Non-Governmental Organizations with OPI in May 1973, and, as past-chairman, served on that body, *ex officio*, for one more year.

In May 1975, the United Nations Office of Public Information sponsored a conference for non-governmental organizations in Asia, the Far East and the Pacific in Bangkok. The Bahá'í communities of Thailand, Laos, the Philippines and Malaysia were represented. The Bahá'í delegates took active part in various workshops, made several statements, and established warm ties with representatives of other non-governmental organizations and members of the UN Secretariat.

The Bahá'í International Community also worked closely with the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with ECOSOC, taking part in the thirteenth General Assembly of NGOs, the triennial session of that Conference, held in Geneva, in March 1976. It also co-operated with other NGOs in committees organized by that Conference in New York and Geneva, on the following areas of United Nations activity: economic and social development, human rights, status of women, population, world food, environment and human settlements. The Bahá'í representatives were often praised for their constructive contributions to the work of those committees.

The Bahá'í International Community was represented at two conferences sponsored by the World Peace Through Law Center, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, and attended by prominent world lawyers, judges and professors of law: the first in Abidjan, in August 1973, on 'World Peace through Law', and the second in Washington, D.C., in October 1975, on 'Law of the World'. At these events, the Bahá'í participants shared extensively, in meetings and through informal conversations, the Bahá'í view on world unity and world law.

Annex I

**SPECIAL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCES, CONGRESSES AND SEMINARS IN
WHICH THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATED
1973-1976**

1. World Population Conference; Bucharest, Romania; 19-30 August 1974.
Reps.: Victor de Araujo, Anneliese Bopp, Marco G. Kappenberger, Foad Katirai.
2. World Food Conference; Rome, Italy; 6-16 November 1974.
Reps.: Ezzat Zahrai, Manuela Fanti.
3. World Conference of the International Women's Year; Mexico City, Mexico; 19 June-2 July 1975.
Reps.: Dorothy Wright Nelson, Shirin Fozdar.
4. Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (First session, New York, U.S.A., 1973; Third session, Geneva, Switzerland, 17 March-10 May 1975; Fourth session, New York, 15 March-7 May 1976).
Reps.: Victor de Araujo, Will. C. van den Hoonard.
5. Fifth UN Congress on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders; Geneva, Switzerland; 1-15 September 1975.
Reps.: Marco G. Kappenberger, Anneliese Bopp.
6. Regional Preparatory Conference on Human Settlements for Asia, the Pacific and Western Asia; Tihrán, Irán; 14-19 June 1975.
Rep.: John Jameson Bond.
7. Regional Preparatory Conference on Human Settlements for Africa; Cairo, Egypt; 21-26 June 1975.
Rep.: John Jameson Bond.
8. Latin American Regional Preparatory Conference for Habitat: the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements; Caracas, Venezuela; 30 June-4 July 1975.
Rep.: Raúl Pavón.
9. Interregional Seminar on the Family in a Changing Society: Problems and Responsibilities of its Members; London, United Kingdom; 18-31 July 1973.
Reps.: Léa Nys, Shomais Afnan.
10. Seminar on Youth and Human Rights; San Remo, Italy; 28 August-10 September 1973.
Reps.: Foad Katirai, Sohrab Youssefian.
11. Regional Consultation for Asia and the Far East on the Integration of Women in Development with Special Reference to Population Factors; Bangkok, Thailand; 13-17 May 1974.
Rep.: Shantha Sundram.
12. Regional Seminar for Africa on the Integration of Women in Development with Special Reference to Population Factors; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; 3-7 June 1974.
Reps.: Alasebu Gebre Sellassie, Elfinesh Worku.
13. Seminar on the Promotion and Protection of the Human Rights of National, Ethnic and Other Minorities; Ohrid, Yugoslavia; 25 June-8 July 1974.
Reps.: Marco G. Kappenberger, Foad Katirai.
14. Interregional Seminar on National Machinery to Accelerate the Integration of Women in Development and to Eliminate Discrimination on Grounds of Sex; Ottawa, Canada; 4-17 September 1974.
Reps.: Carol A. Bowie, Judy Gibson.
15. Regional Seminar for Latin America on the Integration of Women in Development with Special Reference to Population Factors; Caracas, Venezuela; 28 April-2 May 1975.
Reps.: Carole G. Woodard, Martha F. Posner.
16. Regional Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations Organized by the Office of Public Information of the United Nations in Co-operation with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; Bangkok, Thailand; 27-29 May 1975.
Reps.: Firaydún Mitháqián (Laos), Shantha Sundram (Malaysia), Vicente Samaniego (Philippines), Chusiri Frakdian (Thailand).
17. Seminar on the Participation of Women in Economic, Social and Political Development: Obstacles that Hinder their Integration; Buenos Aires, Argentina; 22-30 March 1976.
Reps.: Nylza Taetz, Dolores Caballero.

Annex II

**STATEMENTS, REPORTS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS PRESENTED BY THE
BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO THE UNITED NATIONS
1973-1976**

1. Statement to the first session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme; May 1973.
2. 'Comments on Resolution 1 (XXIV) of the Commission on the Status of Women entitled "Influence of Mass Communication Media on the Formation of a New Attitude towards the Role of Women in Present Day Society".' Statement to the United Nations Branch for the Promotion of Equality of Men and Women; 12 July 1973.
3. Statement to the United Nations Inter-regional Seminar on the Family in a Changing Society; Problems and Responsibilities of its Members; London, United Kingdom; 18-31 July 1973.
4. Statement to the United Nations Division of Human Rights on 'Study of the Problem of Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations'; 28 August 1973.
5. Statement to the United Nations Seminar on Youth and Human Rights; San Remo, Italy; 28 August-10 September 1973.
6. Statement to United Nations Division of Human Rights on 'Study on the Rights of Persons Belonging to Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities'; 31 August 1973.
7. Statement to the United Nations Division of Human Rights on 'Study of the Question of the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide'; 5 November 1973.
8. Statement to the twenty-fifth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women on 'Work Programme and Medium Term Plan', United Nations document E/CN.6/NGO/247; 26 December 1973.
9. 'Preliminary Enquiry into the Status of Women in the Bahá'í World Community.' Report to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and the



Mr. Will C. van den Hoonaard, a member of the Canadian Bahá'í community, who joined the Bahá'í International Community United Nations office in New York in the autumn of 1975, serving as alternate representative to Dr. Victor de Araujo.

- Branch for the Promotion of Equality of Men and Women; 7 January 1974.
10. Statement to the twenty-fifth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women on 'International Women's Year', United Nations document E/CN.6/NGO/251; 11 January 1974.
 11. Statement to the twenty-fifth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, on 'Implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and Related Instruments', United Nations document E/CN.6/NGO/252; 11 January 1974.
 12. Statement to the United Nations Regional Consultation for Asia and the Far East on the Integration of Women in Development with Special Reference to Population Factors; Bangkok, Thailand; 13-17 May 1974.
 13. 'A Digest of Bahá'í-UN Activities 1973'. Report to the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the United Nations Office of Public Information; 24 June 1974.
 14. 'Bahá'í-United Nations Programmes 1973'. Report to the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the United Nations Office of Public Information.
 15. 'Co-operation of the Bahá'í International Community with the United Nations during 1973.' A Summary to the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the United Nations Office of Public Information.
 16. Statement to the United Nations Seminar on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights of National, Ethnic and other Minorities; Ohrid, Yugoslavia; 25 June-8 July 1974.
 17. Statement to the World Food Conference on 'National and International Programmes of Action', United Nations document E/CONF.65/NGO/8; 5 November 1974.
 18. 'Co-operation of the Bahá'í International Community in the Fight Against Drug Abuse.' Statement to the United Nations Division of Narcotic Drugs; 14 November 1974.
 19. Statement to the twenty-fourth session of the United Nations Commission for Social Development on 'Popular Participation and Its Practical Implications for Developments', United Nations document E/CN.5/NGO/117; 3 January 1975.
 20. 'Global Education and the Environment.' Statement to the Workshop on Education and the Environment of the third session of the International Assembly of Non-Governmental Organizations Concerned with the Environment; Nairobi, Kenya, 13-16 April 1975.
 21. Statement to the World Conference for International Women's Year; Mexico City, Mexico; 19 June-2 July 1975.
 22. Statement to the United Nations Division of Human Rights on 'The Balance Which Should Be Established Between Scientific and Technological Progress and the Intellectual, Spiritual, Cultural and Moral Advancement of Humanity'; 7 July 1975.
 23. 'Programmes to Improve the Status of Women.' Statement presented to Mrs. Helvi Sipilä, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Director of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs; 12 November 1975.
 24. *Divine Law: Source of Human Rights—A Bahá'í View*, pamphlet published in English (1973).
 25. *One World, One People—A Bahá'í View*, pamphlet published in English and Danish (1974).
 26. *Equality of Men and Women: A New Reality*, pamphlet published in English, French, Spanish, Swedish, and Kanarese (1975).
 27. *The Environment and Human Values—A Bahá'í View*, pamphlet published in English (1974, rev. ed.)
 28. 'A Pattern for Justice,' compilation comprising excerpts from pamphlets, statements and information presented to the United Nations on human rights, the elimination of the crime of genocide, the rights of minorities, of indigenous populations, of the family, rights of women, rights of youth, social and economic justice for all peoples (1973-1974).

VI

RECOGNITION OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

1. INCORPORATION OF NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

In previous volumes, certificates of incorporation or other documents attesting recognition of fifty-six National Spiritual Assemblies have been reproduced. The following eight are representative of the forms of recognition obtained by National Spiritual Assemblies during the period covered by this volume.

1. Extracts from the Official Journal of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg relating to the revision of the Articles of Incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Luxembourg; June 1973. This National Spiritual Assembly achieved its incorporation in April 1963.
2. Extract from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Jamaica Incorporation Act, No. 25-1974, of the Parliament of Jamaica; asserted to 16 April 1974.
3. Certificate of Incorporation on change of name of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Hong Kong; 12 July 1974.
4. Extract from Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Malaysia; incorporated 26 September 1974.
5. Letter dated 5 February 1975 from the President of the Republic of Upper Volta commending the principles of the Bahá'í Faith. On the basis of this letter official recognition of the Bahá'í community of Upper Volta was obtained on 11 February 1975.
6. Letter dated 10 March 1975 from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ghana according official recognition to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Ghana.
7. Certificate of Incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Nicaragua; 12 March 1975.
8. Certificate of Registration of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Portugal; 28 January 1976.

ASSEMBLEE SPIRITUELLE NATIONALE DES BAHÁ'IS DU GRAND-DUCHE DE LUXEMBOURG, association sans but lucratif.

Siège social: Luxembourg.

Les soussignés:

- 1) Monsieur Robert Bontemps, tourneur sur fer, demeurant à Esch-sur-Alzette, 34, rue Dicks, Luxembourgeois;
- 2) Monsieur Pierre Bram, commerçant, demeurant à Luxembourg, 1, rue Schiller, Luxembourgeois;
- 3) Monsieur Ernest Lévy, commerçant, demeurant à Luxembourg, 7 rue de Rollingergrund, Luxembourgeois;

4) Monsieur Leslie Marcus, employé, demeurant à Walferdange, citoyen des Etats-Unis d'Amérique;
5) Monsieur Abbas Raffii, ingénieur, demeurant à Béréldange, rue Roger Barthel, Iranien;
se sont réunis en Assemblée Générale Extraordinaire de l'ASSEMBLEE SPIRITUELLE NATIONALE DES BAHÁ'IS du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, association sans but lucratif, avec siège à Luxembourg, constituée le onze mars mil neuf cent soixante-trois, publiée au Memorial, Recueil Spécial du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, numéro 28 du douze avril mil neuf cent soixante-trois, — et ont pris à l'unanimité les résolutions suivantes:

- 1) La société «Assemblée Spirituelle Nationale des Baha'is du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg» sera dissoute avec effet immédiat.
- 2) L'Assemblée désigne comme liquidateurs Messieurs Leslie Marcus et Pierre Bram, tous deux pré-nommés.

3) Après déduction des dettes et charges, l'actif net restant sera affecté à l'Assemblée Spirituelle des Baha'is de Luxembourg.

Ainsi délibéré, décidé et signé à Luxembourg, le six avril mil neuf cent soixante-treize.

Signatures.

Enregistré à Echternach, le 15 juin 1973, vol. 120, fol. 11, case 9. — Reçu 20 francs.

Le Receveur (signé): J. Bodevin.

(30 lignes.) Déposé au greffe du tribunal d'arrondissement de et à Luxembourg, le 19 juin 1973.

ASSEMBLEE SPIRITUELLE NATIONALE DES BAHÁ'IS DU GRAND-DUCHE DE LUXEMBOURG, association sans but lucratif.

Siège social: Luxembourg.

Les soussignés:

- 1) Monsieur Robert Bontemps, tourneur sur fer, demeurant à Esch-sur-Alzette, 34 rue Dicks, Luxembourgeois;
- 2) Monsieur Pierre Bram, commerçant, demeurant à Luxembourg, 1 rue Schiller, Luxembourgeois;
- 3) Monsieur Ernest Lévy, commerçant, demeurant à Luxembourg, 7 rue de Rollingergrund, Luxembourgeois;

4) Monsieur Leslie Marcus, employé, demeurant à Walferdange, citoyen des Etats-Unis d'Amérique;
5) Monsieur Abbas Raffii, ingénieur, demeurant à Béréldange, rue R. Barthel, Iranien;
réunis en assemblée générale extraordinaire de « L'Assemblée Spirituelle des BAHÁ'IS de Luxembourg, association sans but lucratif avec Siège à Luxembourg », —

ont pris à la date de ce jour les résolutions suivantes, qui toutes ont été prises à l'unanimité des voix:

1. La dénomination de «Assemblée Spirituelle des BAHÁ'IS de Luxembourg, Association sans but lucratif, Siège social: Luxembourg» sera changée en

«Assemblée Spirituelle Nationale des BAHÁ'IS du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, Association sans but lucratif, Siège social: Luxembourg.»

Suite au changement de la désignation de l'Association les statuts ont été changés et auront la teneur suivante:

Dénomination, Objet, Durée, Siège

Art. 1^{er}. L'ASSOCIATION est dénommée «ASSEMBLEE SPIRITUELLE NATIONALE DES BAHÁ'IS DU GRAND-DUCHE DE LUXEMBOURG».

Art. 2. L'Association a pour objet:

- a) d'établir, de maintenir et de promouvoir les enseignements spirituels, éducatifs et humanitaires de fraternité, de foi et de dévouement révélés par tous les Messagers de Dieu, renouvelés par l'impul-

1. Extracts from the Official Journal of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg relating to the revision of the Articles of Incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Luxembourg; June 1973. This National Spiritual Assembly achieved its incorporation in April 1963.

JAMAICA

No. 25-1974

Assent

[L.S.]

F. A. GLASSPOLE,
Governor-General.

16th day of April, 1974.

AN ACT to Incorporate the National Assembly of the
 Baha'is of Jamaica Incorporation.

[16th day of April, 1974]

BE IT ENACTED by The Queen's Most Excellent Majesty
 by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House
 of Representatives of Jamaica and by the authority of the
 same as follows:—

1—This Act may be cited as the National Spiritual Assem-
 bly of the Baha'is of Jamaica Incorporation Act.

2—Sharing the ideals and assisting the efforts of Baha'is
 to establish, uphold and promote the spiritual, educational
 and humanitarian teachings of human brotherhood, radiant
 faith, exalted character and selfless love revealed in the lives
 and utterances of all the Prophets and Messengers of God,

No. 18881



CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION ON CHANGE OF NAME

WHEREAS The Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Hong Kong was incorporated in Hong Kong as a limited company under the Companies Ordinance on the Twenty-eighth day of November, 1969;

AND WHEREAS by special resolution of the Company and with the approval of His Excellency the Governor duly given on his behalf under delegated powers, it has changed its name;

THE COMPANIES ACT, 1965.

MALAYSIA

A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE ONLY

Memorandum

AND

Articles of Association

OF

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF MALAYSIA

Incorporated on the 26th day of September, 1974.

Premier Press Sdn. Bhd.
Kuala Lumpur.

4. Extract from Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of Malaysia; incorporated 26 September 1974.

RÉPUBLIQUE DE HAUTE-VOLTA
UNITÉ - TRAVAIL - JUSTICE

OUAGADOUGOU, LE 5 FÉV. 1975

Le Président de la République

N° 0095 / PRES/CAB

A Monsieur le Ministre
de l'Intérieur et de la Sécurité

OUAGADOUGOU

*4/1/75
A. V. M. qui pour l'instant
est en congé
1/75*

J'ai l'honneur de recommander à votre plus bienveillante attention le Docteur Aziz NAVIDI, représentant pour l'Afrique de la Communauté Bahá'ie, qui séjourne actuellement dans notre pays.

Comme vous le savez, cette religion, née à la fin du 19e siècle en Iran; présente cette particularité de ne comprendre ni hiérarchie religieuse, ni rites; de fait, elle a pour vocation essentielle d'assurer la synthèse de toutes les religions; elle prône, en particulier le principe de l'unicité de la Foi, et de l'égalité absolue des hommes et des femmes de toutes croyances, de toutes races et de tous pays.

Elle prêche le respect des gouvernants et des autorités constituées, et axe ses efforts vers le développement social, l'entente et la compréhension entre les hommes, en vue de faire disparaître toutes les causes de tension internationales et d'assurer l'avènement d'une société mondiale s'inspirant des commandements divins.

De fait, la Charte des Nations-Unies s'est inspirée de beaucoup des préceptes bahá'ie, ce qui explique l'appui constant qu'apporte l'Organisation internationale à cette communauté.

*
*

S'agissant du souhait formulé par le Docteur NAVIDI, de voir reconnaître officiellement la communauté Bahá'ie par la Haute-Volta, il est évident que cette reconnaissance ne peut intervenir que dans le cadre des dispositions de la Loi n° 18/AL/59 régissant les associations; par conséquent, l'initiative doit venir de personnalités privées voltaïques, étant entendu cependant qu'elle ne devra pas rencontrer de difficulté du côté de votre Département.

MINISTÈRE DE L'INTÉRIEUR
DE LA HAUTE-VOLTA
ARRIVÉE N° 745 / CAB
OUAGADOUGOU, le 5 FÉV. 1975



Général A. S. LAHIZANA

5. Letter dated 5 February 1975 from the President of the Republic of Upper Volta commending the principles of the Bahá'í Faith. On the basis of this letter official recognition of the Bahá'í community of Upper Volta was obtained on 11 February 1975.

In case of reply the
number and date of this
letter should be quoted.

My Ref. No. SCR.1060/1/100

Your Ref. No.



REPUBLIC OF GHANA

~~MINISTERIAL SECRETARY~~
Ministry of Internal Affairs
P.O. Box M.42
Accra


10th March, 1975

Dear Madam,

RE: RECOGNISED RELIGION

I wish to refer to your application for recognition dated 12th June, 1974 and pleased to inform you that my Commissioner has accorded official recognition to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Ghana.

Yours sincerely,


for: PRINCIPAL SECRETARY.
(K.E.K. TACHIE)

THE SECRETARY,
NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF GHANA,
P.O. BOX 7098,
ACCRA-NORTH.

6. Letter dated 10 March 1975 from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ghana according official recognition to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of Ghana.



Ministerio de la Gobernación
Managua, D. N.

Palacio Nacional

12 de marzo de 1975

Sector:

Para su conocimiento, transcribible:

Nº. 8.--EL PRESIDENTE DE LA REPUBLICA

De conformidad con el Decreto Legislativo Número 1910, publicado en "La Gaceta", Diario Oficial, número 2604 del veinte de noviembre de mil novecientos setenta y cinco, por el cual se le otorgó personalidad jurídica a la entidad denominada "ASAMBLA ESPIRITUAL NACIONAL DE LOS BAHARIS DE MANAGUA".

A C T U A :
A C T U A :

UNICO.--Aprobar los estatutos de la entidad denominada "ASAMBLA ESPIRITUAL NACIONAL DE LOS BAHARIS DE MANAGUA" que literalmente dice:

ESTATUTOS DE LA ASAMBLA ESPIRITUAL NACIONAL DE LOS BAHARIS DE MANAGUA

CONTINUACION:



Ministerio de la Gobernación
Managua, D. N.

Palacio Nacional

-10-

con su original con el que fue debidamente copiado y para ser presentado al Ministerio de Gobernación para su correspondiente aprobación extendiendo la presente certificación en la ciudad de Managua, D. N., a las tres de la tarde del día once de marzo de mil novecientos setenta y cinco.--ALFONSO ORLANDO GONZALEZ, Secretario de la Asamblea Espiritual Nacional de los Baharis de Managua."

Comandante.--JISA PRESIDENCIAL.--Managua, D. N., dieciocho de marzo de mil novecientos setenta y cinco.--A. SMOYLA.--ADOLFO RUBIÓ ORENO, Vice Ministro de la Gobernación."

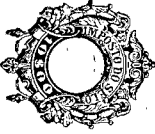
De usted atentamente:

ADOLFO RUBIÓ ORENO
Vice Ministro de la Gobernación

UJO/Arca:

VA/36

NOTA IMPORTANTE
Este documento é
a propriedade de
quem o recebeu e
deve ser guardado
com segurança.



[Handwritten signature]

Concetti: Em Anjoia do Gouto, Mencionada em Directo pela Universidade de

CS

Lisboa, técnico de primeira classe da Secretária-Geral do Ministério da Justiça, confissão, em conjunto com o extinto em requerimento da Assembleia Espiritual Nacional dos Bahá'ís de Portugal e para fins de arquivo, que no livro de registo das associações religiosas, existente nesta Secretária-Geral consta um Registo com o número cinco no seguinte teor: "Registo da Associação Religiosa "Assembleia Espiritual Nacional dos Bahá'ís de Portugal". - Por despacho de Sua Excelência o Ministro da Justiça, de vinte e dois de Dezembro de mil novecentos e setenta e cinco, foi autorizado o registo da Associação Religiosa "Assembleia Espiritual Nacional dos Bahá'ís de Portugal" com sede na Avenida Ventura

Terra, número um, em Lisboa, nos termos do Decreto-Lei número quarenta e nove e quatro/secretaria e quatro de 7 de Novembro, e do parecer da Procuradoria-Geral da República número quarenta e

a) Apel Pereira da Silva, " - - - - -

Para constar se fazem a presente certidão que os livros e volumes em folhas fiscais da taxa Global de trinta e cinco oitavos e vai emitida com o selo branco em uso nesta Secretária-Geral. Secretária-Geral do Ministério da Justiça, e Vinte e oito de Janeiro de mil novecentos e setenta e seis.

10800 10800 10800
Micael Augusto
[Handwritten signature]



2. INCORPORATION OF LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

Riḍván 1973 to Riḍván 1976

In previous volumes, certificates of incorporation of approximately two hundred Local Spiritual Assemblies have been reproduced. The following are selected from the more than three hundred that were obtained during the period covered by this volume.

1. Extract from the Official Journal of New Caledonia, No. 5682, 28 December 1973, relating to the incorporation of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Guahma (Mare), New Caledonia.
2. Extract from the Official Journal of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, No. 137, 11 July 1974, relating to the incorporation of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Luxembourg; 8 May 1974.
3. Certificate of Incorporation of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Naga City, Republic of the Philippines; 26 September 1974.
4. Extract from Certificate of Incorporation of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Puerto Tejada, Cauca, Colombia; 31 January 1975.
5. Certificate of Incorporation of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Freetown, Sierra Leone; 11 July 1975.
6. Extract from Certificate of Incorporation of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Travesía, Cortés, Honduras; 25 November 1975.

DECLARATION D'ASSOCIATION

**Titre : ASSEMBLEE SPIRITUELLE DES BAHÁ'IS DE
GUAHMA (MARE)**

Objet : Enseignement de la Foi baha'ie, religion universelle qui se présente comme l'aboutissement et le complément nécessaire de toutes les anciennes croyances.

Siège social : chez WAMEDJO TAODE-WAKUARORI (MARE)

Comité responsable :

Présidente :	Melle WAMEDJO Trepua
Vice-Président :	M. WAHNARA John
Secrétaire :	M. WAMEDJO Edouard
Trésorier :	M. KONYI Joseph
Membres :	Mme WIAKO Noni veuve ZONGO
	Mme WAHNARA Pélane née TRABE
	M. UREGUEI Werehnegu
	M. WELEPA Waroïne
	M. HMIJOC Magoï

Récépissé déclaratif n° 3454/SAGE du 22 novembre 1973.

1. Extract from the Official Journal of New Caledonia, No. 5682, 28 December 1973, relating to the incorporation of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Guahma (Mare), New Caledonia.

Extrait du Mémorial Recueil Spécial C — N° 137 du 11 juillet 1974

ASSEMBLEE SPIRITUELLE LOCALE DES BAHÁ'IS DE LUXEMBOURG

Association sans but lucratif

Siège social: Luxembourg.

—
Dénomination, objet, durée, siège

Art. 1^{er}. L'association est dénommée « Assemblée Spirituelle Locale des Baha'is de Luxembourg ».

Art. 2. L'association a pour objet:

A) d'établir, de maintenir et de promouvoir les enseignements spirituels, éducatifs et humanitaires de fraternité, de foi et de dévouement révélés par tous les Messagers de Dieu, renouvelés par l'impulsion créative et universelle, applicables aux conditions de notre ère, transmise par BAHÁ'U'LLAH.

La réalisation de ces idéaux et devoirs se fera par des

- réunion publiques et privées
- publications
- construction

B) de gérer les affaires de la présente association au profit des Baha'is de la commune de Luxembourg conformément aux principes d'enseignement et d'administration en accord avec les instructions et règlements écrits de Baha'u'llah, Abdul Baha, Shoghi Effendi, de la Maison Universelle de Justice et de l'Assemblée Spirituelle Nationale du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg. Elle pourra faire toute opération

2. Extract from the Official Journal of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, No. 137, 11 July 1974, relating to the incorporation of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Luxembourg; 8 May 1974.

S. F. C. Form No. 16

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
KAGAWARAN NG KALAKALANKomisyon sa mga Panagot at Palitan
(SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION)
MANILA

Reg. No. 58073

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS MAY COME, GREETINGS:

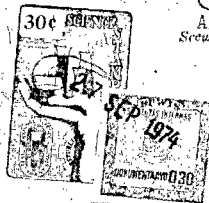
WHEREAS, Articles of Incorporation duly signed and acknowledged for the organization of the LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF NAGA CITY, INC.

under and in accordance with the provisions of Act of the Philippine Commission Numbered Fourteen hundred and fifty-nine, enacted March first, Nineteen hundred and six, as amended by Acts of the Philippine Legislature, Numbered Fifteen hundred and six, Fifteen hundred and sixty-five, Sixteen hundred and thirty, Seventeen hundred and forty-four, Eighteen hundred and thirty-four, Eighteen hundred and ninety-five, Twenty hundred and three, Twenty hundred and twelve, Twenty hundred and thirty-seven, Twenty hundred and ninety-two, Twenty-one hundred, Twenty-one hundred and thirty-five, Twenty-four hundred and fifty-two, Twenty-seven hundred and twenty-eight, Twenty-seven hundred and ninety-two, Twenty-nine hundred, Twenty-nine hundred and ninety-four, Thirty-five hundred and eighteen, Thirty-six hundred and ten, Thirty-seven hundred and forty-one, Thirty-eight hundred and forty-nine and Thirty-eight hundred and fifty, and Commonwealth Acts Numbered Two hundred and eighty-seven, and Four hundred and thirty-seven, were presented for filing in this Commission on September 9, 1974, and a copy of which said Articles is hereto

THEREFORE, by virtue of the powers and duties vested in me by law, I hereby certify that the said Articles of Incorporation were, after due examination, determine whether they are in accordance with law, duly registered in this Commission on the 26th day of September, Anno nineteen hundred and seventy-four.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of this Commission to be affixed at Manila, Philippines, this 26th day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and seventy-four.

ARCADIO B. YABYBIN
Securities and Exchange Commissioner



3. Certificate of Incorporation of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of Naga City, Republic of the Philippines; 26 September 1974.

DZ. 00955260



RESOLUCION NUMERO 07 DE 1975

(Enero 31)

Por la cual se reconoce una Personaería Jurídica.

LA GOBERNADORA DEL DEPARTAMENTO DEL CAUCA, en uso de sus facultades legales y en especial de las que le confiere el Decreto Ejecutivo Nacional No. 2705 de 1.959, y O O N-

S I D E R A N D O: a).- Que el señor CARLOS RUIZ, con cédula de ciudadanía No. 14972076 de Cali (Valle), obrando en su carácter de Secretario de la Entidad denominada "ASAMBLEA ESPIRITUAL DE LOS BAHÁ'IS" de Puerto Tejada, solicita a la Gobernación del Cauca el reconocimiento de Personaería Jurídica para la mencionada Entidad, domiciliada en el Municipio de Puerto Tejada (Cauca);

b).- Que el peticionario acompaña a su memorial copias auténticas de las Actas sobre constitución de la Entidad, elección de dignatarios y aprobación de Estatutos que van a regir su vida civil;

c).- Que estudiada la documentación en referencia, se infiere que la citada Entidad cuya Personaería se solicita se ajusta a los preceptos de la moral y del orden legal, tanto en su organización como en los fines que allí se persigue;

d).- Que se han llenado las formalidades prescritas en el Art. 44 de la Constitución Nacional, Título 36 del Libro Primero del Código Civil y Decretos Nos: 1326 de 1.922 y 1510 de 1.944;

e).- Que la Gobernación del Departamento tiene facultad para conceder Personaería Jurídica a las Entidades que solicitan este derecho, de acuerdo a la atribución delegada que le concede el citado Decreto 2705 de 1.959;

R E S U E L V E :

1o.- CONCEDER Personaería Jurídica a la Entidad denominada "ASAMBLEA ESPIRITUAL DE LOS BAHÁ'IS", con domicilio en el Municipio de Puerto Tejada (Cauca).

2o.- RECONOCER como Coordinador de la mencionada Entidad al señor JAMES GONZALEZ, de acuerdo y para los fines determinados en los Estatutos, quien tiene la representación de la misma y debe ser inscrito como tal en los libros respectivos hasta cuando se solicite modificación en la forma determinada por la Ley.

APR. 1 1975



SIERRA LEONE

No. C.F. / 25/1975. FORM A

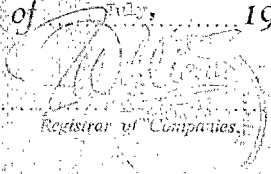
THE COMPANIES ACT, CAP. 249

Certificate of Incorporation

I hereby certify that

SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'Í'S OF FREETOWN ~~LIMITED~~

is this day incorporated under the above-named Act and that

the Company is ~~Limited~~ UNLIMITED WITHOUT A SHARE CAPITALGiven under my hand this 11th day of July, 1975.

 Registrar of Companies.

G.P. O/7728/62/200/9/72

5. Certificate of Incorporation of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Freetown, Sierra Leone; 11 July 1975.



PRIMERA CLASE
CINCUENTA CENTAVOS
1972-1975

Nº 2228801

CERTIFICACION

1
2 El Infrascrito Subsecretario de Estado en el Despacho de Gobernación y
3 Justicia, CERTIFICA la Resolución No 112, que literalmente dice:
4 "JEFATURA DE ESTADO. -Tegucigalpa, Distrito Central, once de noviem-
5 bre de mil novecientos setenta y cinco. -VISTA Para resolver, la solicitud pre-
6 sentada al Poder Ejecutivo, por medio de la Secretaría de Estado en el Despacho
de Gobernación y Justicia, con fecha treinta y uno de octubre del presente año,
por el señor CARLOS A. VASQUEZ, mayor de edad, casado, Hondureño, Licen-
ciado en Economía y de este vecindario, actuando en representación de la Asam-
blea Espiritual Local de los Bahá'is de Travesía, Departamento de Cortés, con-
traída a pedir que se reconozca a su representada como Persona Jurídica y se a-
prueben sus Estatutos. -Confirió poder para la continuación del tramite al Lic.
12 Marco Aurelio Castro H., con las facultades a él conferidas. -RESULTA: que el
13 peticionario acompañó a su solicitud los documentos de rigor. -RESULTA: que
14 a la Solicitud se le dió el tramite de ley correspondiente, habiéndose mandado
15 a oír al señor Procurador General de la República, quién al devolver el trasla-
16 do emitió informe favorable. CONSIDERANDO: que los Estatutos de la Asamblea
17 Espiritual Local de los Bahá'is de la Travesía, Departamento de Cortés, y apro-
18 bar sus Estatutos en la forma siguiente: "ESTATUTOS DE LA ASAMBLEA ES-
19 PIRITUAL LOCAL DE LOS BAHÁ'IS DE TRAVESIA, DEPARTAMENTO DE COR-
20 TES. - Art. 1o. -Los Fideicomisarios, o sean, los miembros de la Asamblea Es-
21 piritual, declaran que esta acción se hace en completa un animidad y acuerdo. -
22 Reconocen en nombre propio y en el de sus sucesores la significación sagrada
23 y el propósito universal de la Fé Bahá'í cuyas enseñanzas y principios cumplen
24 la promesa divina de todas las antetiores religiones reveladas. -Art. 2o. -Al ad-
25

6. Extract from Certificate of Incorporation of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of Travesía, Cortés, Honduras; 25 November 1975.

3. A SELECTION OF OTHER DOCUMENTS RECORDING OFFICIAL RECOGNITION OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

Riḍván 1973 to Riḍván 1976

1. Letter dated 18 May 1973 from the Attorney General of American Samoa recording recognition of Bahá'í marriage.
2. Letter dated 20 June 1973 from the Banjul City Council exempting the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Gambia from the payment of rates on Bahá'í property.
3. Certificate of Registration of a Bahá'í symbol (the Greatest Name) granted to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Iceland; 31 July 1973.
4. Circular of the Department of Education of the Government of the Virgin Islands permitting 'public school pupils who are members of the Bahá'í Faith' to absent themselves from school without penalty on Bahá'í Holy Days; 15 February 1974.
5. Circular of the Government of Sarawak granting leave of absence on Bahá'í Holy Days to Bahá'ís in Government service; 18 March 1974.
6. Decree of the Italian Ministry of the Interior approving the appointment of Mr. Augusto Robiati as officiant of marriages for the Bahá'í community of Rimini on behalf of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Italy; 21 March 1974.
7. License to perform marriages, issued by the State of Hawaii to the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Lihue; 3 February 1975.
8. Extract from Bill No. 51 of the Government of Alberta, Canada, amending Chapter 226 of the Revised Statutes of Alberta (1970) by inserting a section according recognition of Bahá'í marriage; 1975.
9. Senate and House Resolutions of the State of Hawaii commending the Hawaiian Bahá'í community on the production of a 'series of thirteen half-hour television shows on the Bahá'í Faith' which 'depict the oneness of mankind and the oneness of religion'; March 1975.
10. Resolution No. 75-R-29 of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Wilmette, Illinois commending the Bahá'ís as 'outstanding citizens and neighbors' and extending congratulations to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States on its fiftieth anniversary; 24 April 1975.
11. Certificate of Registration of the Bahá'í Publishing Trust of Korea, with translation into English; 16 February 1976.



GOVERNMENT OF AMERICAN SAMOA
 PAGO PAGO, AMERICAN SAMOA 99920
 OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

In Reply, Please Refer to
 Serial: 779

May 18, 1973

Pat Moul, Secretary
 The National Spiritual Assembly
 of the Bahai's of Samoa Inc.
 P.O. Box 1418
 Pago Pago, American Samoa

Dear Mr. Moul:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter requesting an opinion from this office concerning the authority of members of the National Spiritual Assembly to perform marriages in American Samoa.
 Section 5.0102 Code of American Samoa, 1961 edition sets forth the requirements for performance of marriage ceremonies as follows:

"Sec: 5.0102-VALID AND BINDING MARRIAGE: The following are valid and binding marriages:

1. A marriage performed by a minister of any Christian religion authorized to perform marriages.

2. A marriage performed by an Associate Judge, the Associate Justice, or the Chief Justice of American Samoa.

Pat Moul
 5/18/73
 Page 2

The term minister has been recognized to mean a person authorized to conduct a marriage ceremony in accordance with the tenets of any religion or faith. *Harrell v. Harrell* (Feb. 1992), 53 N.W. 209, 211. The Bahai Faith is a recognized religion and it is my opinion the individuals authorized in accordance with the tenets of the faith to perform marriages would be ministers as defined in Sec. 5.0102.

The definition of christian religion should be liberally interpreted in keeping with the Revised Constitution of American Samoa Article I Sec. 1 regarding the free exercise of religion. Although the Bahai Faith may not be defined as a christian religion within the traditional definition of christianity it is clear from the information submitted by you that in your teachings you do recognize tenets of Christianity and it is my opinion this is sufficient to qualify under Sec. 5.0102.

Therefore, it is my opinion that marriages solemnized by authorized members of the Bahai Faith may be recognized in the territory of American Samoa. You should register those qualified pursuant to Sec. 5.0106 Code of American Samoa, 1961 edition.

Very truly yours,

DONALD C. WILLIAMS
 Attorney General

BANJUL
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ CITY COUNCIL
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS:
 TOWN CLERK. ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ BANJUL
 TELEPHONE No.
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
 BANJUL 415
 C. I. JAGNE
 TOWN CLERK

REF. 320/5/1972.



INDEPENDENCE DRIVE
 (P. O. BOX 90)
 BANJUL
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
 GAMBIA

20th June, 1973.

Dear Sir,

RE-EXEMPTION FROM RATES ON BAHÁ'IS
PROPERTY AT NO. 10B, GLOUCESTER
STREET, BANJUL.

I have to refer to your letter of 17th February, 1973, regarding the above subject, and to inform you that the property has now been inspected and found to be wholly and solely used as a place of Worship and is therefore exempted from the payment of rates with effect from the beginning of the financial year 1971/72. I should draw your attention, however, to Section 51(2) of the Local Government (City of Banjul) Act, Cap.110 which requires properties exempted from the payment of rates (Section 12) to pay Service Charge.

2. A Demand Note for this is attached herewith and I shall be grateful for an early payment, please.

Yours faithfully,


 TOWN CLERK.

The Secretary,
 National Spiritual Assembly of the
 Baha'is of Upper West Africa,
 10B, Gloucester Street,
 BANJUL.

ETBJ/JER

RECEIVED June 23 1973

2. Letter dated 20 June 1973 from the Banjul City Council exempting the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of the Gambia from the payment of rates on Bahá'í property.



LÝÐVELDIÐ ÍSLAND

Vörumerki samkvæmt viðfestu myndriti er skrásett svo sem þar greinir.

Vörumerkjaskráritarinn

Reykjavík, 31. júlí 1973

Vörumerkjaskrá

Vörumerkjaskrá		Ár	Nr.
		1973	249
		Skráningardagur	
		31. júlí 1973	
		Tilkynning auglýst	
		28. maí 1973	
		Dagbók nr.	
		T 187/1973	
		Endurnýjad frá	
T 187/1973.	Tilkynnt 9. maí 1973, kl. 14.20.		
Andlegt þjóðráð Baha'ía á Íslandi, Ófinsgötu 20, Rvík. Þjónusta.		(Fl. 35, 36, 41 og 42).	

3. Certificate of Registration of a Bahá'í symbol (The Greatest Name) granted to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Iceland; 31 July 1973.

GOVERNMENT OF
THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES
-0-
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHARLOTTE AMALIE, ST. THOMAS, V.I. 00801

February 15, 1974

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Principals
St. Thomas-St. John & St. Croix

FROM: Commissioner of Education

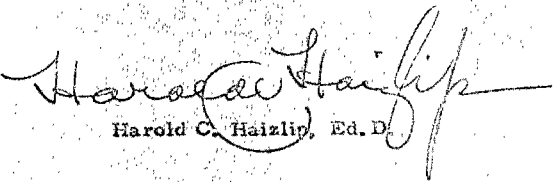
SUBJECT: Observance of Religious Holidays

Act No. 3422, Bill No. 5879 amends Title 17, Chapter 7 of the Virgin Islands Code, "to provide for the excused absence of certain public school pupils for religious holidays".

A new section, 64, gives the Commissioner of Education, with the approval of the Board of Education, the authority to prescribe rules relative to absences of pupils for religious holidays, and further notes that such absences shall be recorded as excused absences on the pupils' attendance records.

Under this act, public school pupils who are members of the Baha'i faith are excused from school on the following days:

Thursday	March 21
Monday	April 29
Thursday	May 2
Thursday	May 23
Wednesday	May 29
Tuesday	November 12


Harold C. Haizlip, Ed. D.

HCH/GEK/eh

cc: Mrs. Lorana Kerfoot, Secretary ✓
National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is
of the Leeward and Virgin Islands

4. Circular of the Department of Education of the Government of the Virgin Islands permitting 'public school pupils who are members of the Bahá'í Faith' to absent themselves from school without penalty on Bahá'í Holy Days; 15 February 1974.

JOINT CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM

To: All Residents, Permanent Secretaries to
Ministries, Heads of Departments

Subject: Unrecorded Leave

Ref: 6/EO/2694

Date: 18th March, 1974.

I have to inform you that the following religious festivities can be considered for the purpose of unrecorded leave in addition to those listed in para. 30 of Joint Circular Memorandum 146/EO/2592 dated 19.6.72:-

Christian - Christmas Eve

Muslim -

(i) Nuzul Kuran (Bulan Ramadan) including

Bahai -

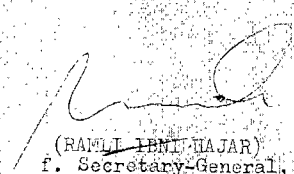
- (i) First Day of Ridvan - April 21st
- (ii) Ninth Day of Ridvan - April 29th
- (iii) Twelfth Day of Ridvan - May 2nd
- (iv) The Anniversary of the Declaration of the Bab - May 23rd
- (v) The Anniversary of the Birth of Baha 'U'llah - November 12th
- (vi) The Anniversary of the Birth of Bab - October, 20th
- (vii) The Anniversary of the Ascension of Baha 'U'llah - May 29th

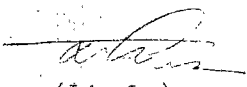
Buddhist -

(i) Sehari sebelum Tahun Baru Sinhalese

2. Unrecorded leave would also be granted, as far as possible and subject to exigencies of the service, to officers to enable them to participate in competitions that are connected with the cultural or social activities of one or more communities, e.g. dancing or music competitions and the like. The competitions only include those organised under the directive of the Government.

3. All applications for unrecorded leave mentioned in para. 2 above must be submitted in reasonable time to the State Secretary or Secretary-General, Ministry of Sarawak Affairs, as the case may be, with certificates from Heads of Departments that the officers can be spared and supporting recommendations by the sponsors.


(RAMLI BENNI HAJAR)
f. Secretary-General,
Ministry of Sarawak Affairs


(John Jee)
for State Secretary,
Sarawak.

MODULARIO
Interno 1343

Mod. 830

DIREZ. GEN. AFFARI di CULTO
Div. C.A.
Prot. N. 0282/31, 1*Il Ministro dell'Interno*

VISTA l'istanza in data 19 ottobre 1973, con la quale il Sig. Augusto ROBIATI, ministro di culto della Assemblea Spirituale Nazionale Baha'i d'Italia, chiede la approvazione governativa della sua nomina a ministro di culto della Comunità Baha'i di Rimini, a cui è stato assegnato;

VISTA la dichiarazione in data 24 marzo 1973 relativa alla nomina del predetto ministro, disposta dalla Assemblea Spirituale Nazionale Baha'i d'Italia;

VISTO il rapporto del Prefetto di Forlì in data 6 febbraio 1974;

VISTO l'art. 3 della Legge 24 giugno 1939, n. 1159, sull'esercizio dei culti ammessi nello Stato e sul matrimonio celebrato davanti ai ministri dei culti medesimi, nonché gli articoli 20 e 21 del regio decreto 28 febbraio 1939, n. 289;

VISTA la Legge 6 aprile 1933, n. 635;

D E C R E T A :

E' approvata la nomina del Sig. Augusto ROBIATI a ministro di culto della Assemblea Spirituale Nazionale Baha'i d'Italia per la comunità di Rimini.

Copia del presente decreto sarà trasmessa all'Ufficio dello Stato Civile del Comune di Rimini tramite la Prefettura di Forlì.

Il Prefetto di Forlì è incaricato dell'esecuzione del presente decreto.

Roma, 21 MAR, 1974



PEL MINISTRO

F. CONTE

PER COPIA CONFORME
IL DIRETTORE NELLA DIVISIONE

Cast/gm

6. Decree of the Italian Ministry of the Interior approving the appointment of Mr. Augusto Robiati as officiant of marriages for the Bahá'í community of Rimini on behalf of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Italy; 21 March 1974.

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

A 2582

License to Perform Marriage Ceremony

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, that

SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'Í'S OF LÍHUÉ

having been duly recommended and approved is hereby Licensed to Perform the

Marriage Ceremony in the State of Hawaii.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL of the Department of Health

Bill 51
Mr. Hyland

BILL 51

1975

(Second Session)

THE MARRIAGE AMENDMENT ACT, 1975

(Assented to _____, 1975)

HIS MAJESTY, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, enacts as follows:

1. *The Marriage Act is hereby amended.*

2. *The following section is added after section 4:*

4.1 (1) Notwithstanding sections 3 and 4, where

- (a) an incorporated Local Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'i Faith has received the approval of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Canada to appoint a marriage registrar, and
- (b) a person is designated as a marriage registrar by that Assembly,

the Director may register that person under this section to exercise the powers conferred and to carry out the duties imposed by this Act and *The Vital Statistics Act* upon a person authorized by this Act to solemnize marriage.

(2) A marriage is not invalid by reason only of the fact that it was authorized by an incorporated Local Spiritual Assembly, conducted in accordance with the rites and usages of the Baha'i Faith and registered by a marriage registrar described in subsection (1).

(3) Nothing in this section requires the marriage to be celebrated or solemnized by the person designated as a marriage registrar and registered under this section.

(4) Nothing in this section authorizes the marriage of a person under the age of 18 years except as provided in this Act.

(To be made one and two copies)
THE SENATE
DIGEST LEGISLATURE, 1975
STATE OF HAWAII

S.C.R. NO. 123

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

COMMENDING THE BAHAI' FAITH'S TELEVISION PROGRAMS PRODUCED IN CONJUNCTION WITH KITV.

WHEREAS, the Bahais of the Hawaiian Islands, in conjunction with KITV, Channel 4, have produced thirteen half-hour television shows on the Bahai' Faith; and

WHEREAS, these color programs will be shown in countries, islands, territories and principalities around the planet; and

WHEREAS, this series teaches the oneness of mankind and the oneness of religion, principles consonant with the spirit of Aloha; and

WHEREAS, these programs, featuring the beauty of the islands and its diverse peoples, will bring Hawaii's beauty of land and spirit to the world; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Eighth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 1975, that this body congratulates the Bahai' Faith, upon the completion of these programs and extends best wishes for their success; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the Hawaiian Islands and to the management of KITV.

(To be made one and two copies)
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
DIGEST LEGISLATURE, 1975
STATE OF HAWAII

H.R. NO. 688

HOUSE RESOLUTION

RECOGNIZING THE BAHAI' FAITH'S TELEVISION PROGRAMS PRODUCED IN CONJUNCTION WITH CHANNEL FOUR (KITV).

WHEREAS, the Bahais of the Hawaiian Islands, in conjunction with KITV, Channel 4, have produced a series of thirteen half-hour television shows on the Bahai' Faith; and

WHEREAS, the films depict the oneness of mankind and the oneness of religion, all of which are principles consonant with the spirit of Aloha; and

WHEREAS, these color programs will be televised around the globe, in numerous countries, territories, and islands around the world; and

WHEREAS, these programs which feature the beauty of the islands and its diverse cultural and ethnic heritage, will bring Hawaii's unique spirit and beauty to the entire world; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Eighth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 1975, that congratulations be extended to the Bahai' Faith and KITV upon the completion of the television series and that best wishes be extended for their success; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the Hawaiian Islands and to the management of KITV.

RESOLUTION NO. 75-R-29

WHEREAS, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary on Thursday, April 24, 1975, in the House of Worship in Wilmette; and

WHEREAS, the world famous House of Worship in Wilmette has brought hundreds of thousands of people to the Village over the years and stands as a symbol of harmony, equality and unity of mankind; and

WHEREAS, the National Spiritual Assembly and those members of the Baha'í faith who live and work in the Village have been outstanding citizens and neighbors for many years:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Wilmette, Cook County, Illinois, that they extend on behalf of all citizens of the Village of Wilmette, sincere congratulations and best wishes to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be spread upon the records of the Board of Trustees of the Village, and that a copy be tendered to the Assembly on the occasion of its Fiftieth Anniversary.



APPROVED:

[Signature]
 President, The Board of Trustees
 of the Village of Wilmette, Cook
 County, Illinois

ATTEST:

[Signature]
 Village Clerk

10. Resolution No. 75-R-29 of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Wilmette, Illinois commending the Baha'is as 'outstanding citizens and neighbors' and extending congratulations to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States on its fiftieth anniversary; 24 April 1975.

CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION

1. REGISTRATION NUMBER: 9-35
2. PUBLISHER: NAME & ADDRESS: BHA'I PUBLISHING TRUST
PRINTERS: 249-36 Heam-dong, Yongsan-
ku, Seoul
3. NAME & ADDRESS Yang-Su Hahn, 591-20 Kalleum-dong,
OF REPRESENTATIVE: Seongsuk-ku, Special City of Seoul
4. FIELD OF PUBLICATIONS
OR CLASSIFICATION OF PRINTING: Publishing (Religious
Books)
5. DATE OF REGISTRATION: February 16, 1976

This is to certify that the above Publisher/Printer
has completed registration pursuant to the Article 3 of
the Law on Registration of Publishers and Printers.

(Date) (Month) (Year)

Mayor/Seal affixed/
Special City of Seoul

등 록 증

1. 등록 번호: 제 9-35 호

2. 출판사: 명성출판사
출판사 주소: 바하이교 신라출판사
출판사 주소: 용인구 추암동 249-36

3. 대표인명: 양수 (서울특별시 용인구 추암동 591-20)

4. 출판분야: 종교서적: 도서출판 (종교서적)

5. 등록일: 1976년 2월 16일

출판사 및 인쇄소의 등록에 관한 법률 제3조의
에 따라 등록을 마친 것을 증명함

PART FOUR
THE WORLD ORDER OF
BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

I

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

1. THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Declaration of Trust

IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE ONE, THE INCOMPARABLE, THE ALL-POWERFUL, THE ALL-KNOWING, THE ALL-WISE.

The light that is shed from the heaven of bounty, and the benediction that shineth from the dawning-place of the will of God, the Lord of the Kingdom of Names, rest upon Him Who is the Supreme Mediator, the Most Exalted Pen, Him Whom God hath made the dawning-place of His most excellent names and the day-spring of His most exalted attributes. Through Him the light of unity hath shone forth above the horizon of the world, and the law of oneness hath been revealed amidst the nations, who, with radiant faces, have turned towards the Supreme Horizon, and acknowledged that which the Tongue of Utterance hath spoken in the kingdom of His knowledge: 'Earth and heaven, glory and dominion, are God's, the Omnipotent, the Almighty, the Lord of grace abounding!'

WITH joyous and thankful hearts we testify to the abundance of God's Mercy, to the perfection of His Justice and to the fulfilment of His Ancient Promise.

Bahá'u'lláh, the Revealer of God's Word in this Day, the Source of Authority, the Fountainhead of Justice, the Creator of a new World Order, the Establisher of the Most Great Peace, the Inspirer and Founder of a world civilization, the Judge, the Lawgiver, the Unifier and Redeemer of all mankind, has proclaimed the advent of God's Kingdom on earth, has formulated its laws and ordinances, enunciated its principles, and ordained its institutions. To direct and canalize the forces released by His Revelation He instituted His Covenant, whose power has preserved the integrity of His Faith, maintained its unity and stimulated its world-wide expansion throughout the successive ministries of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi. It continues to fulfil its life-giving purpose through the agency of the Universal House of Justice whose

fundamental object, as one of the twin successors of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, is to ensure the continuity of that divinely appointed authority which flows from the Source of the Faith, to safeguard the unity of its followers, and to maintain the integrity and flexibility of its teachings.

The fundamental purpose animating the Faith of God and His Religion, declares Bahá'u'lláh, is to safeguard the interests and promote the unity of the human race, and to foster the spirit of love and fellowship amongst men. Suffer it not to become a source of dissension and discord, of hate and enmity. This is the straight Path, the fixed and immovable foundation. Whatsoever is raised on this foundation, the changes and chances of the world can never impair its strength, nor will the revolution of countless centuries undermine its structure.

Unto the Most Holy Book, 'Abdu'l-Bahá declares in His Will and Testament, every one must turn, and all that is not expressly recorded

therein must be referred to the Universal House of Justice.

The provenance, the authority, the duties, the sphere of action of the Universal House of Justice all derive from the revealed Word of Bahá'u'lláh which, together with the interpretations and expositions of the Centre of the Covenant and of the Guardian of the Cause—who, after 'Abdu'l-Bahá, is the sole authority in the interpretation of Bahá'í Scripture—constitute the binding terms of reference of the Universal House of Justice and are its bedrock foundation. The authority of these Texts is absolute and immutable until such time as Almighty God shall reveal His new Manifestation to Whom will belong all authority and power.

There being no successor to Shoghi Effendi as Guardian of the Cause of God, the Universal House of Justice is the Head of the Faith and its supreme institution, to which all must turn, and on it rests the ultimate responsibility for ensuring the unity and progress of the Cause of God. Further, there devolve upon it the duties of directing and co-ordinating the work of the Hands of the Cause, of ensuring the continuing discharge of the functions of protection and propagation vested in that institution, and of providing for the receipt and disbursement of the Ḥuqúqu'lláh.

Among the powers and duties with which the Universal House of Justice has been invested are:

To ensure the preservation of the Sacred Texts and to safeguard their inviolability; to analyse, classify, and co-ordinate the Writings; and to defend and protect the Cause of God and emancipate it from the fetters of repression and persecution;

To advance the interests of the Faith of God; to proclaim, propagate and teach its Message; to expand and consolidate the institutions of its Administrative Order; to usher in the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh; to promote the attainment of those spiritual qualities which should characterize Bahá'í life individually and collectively; to do its utmost for the realization of greater cordiality and comity amongst the nations and for the attainment of universal peace; and to foster that which is conducive to the enlightenment and illumination of the souls of men and the advancement and betterment of the world;

To enact laws and ordinances not expressly recorded in the Sacred Texts; to abrogate, according to the changes and requirements of the time, its own enactments; to deliberate and decide upon all problems which have caused difference; to elucidate questions that are obscure; to safeguard the personal rights, freedom and initiative of individuals; and to give attention to the preservation of human honour, to the development of countries and the stability of states;

To promulgate and apply the laws and principles of the Faith; to safeguard and enforce that rectitude of conduct which the Law of God enjoins; to preserve and develop the Spiritual and Administrative Centre of the Bahá'í Faith, permanently fixed in the twin cities of 'Akká and Haifa; to administer the affairs of the Bahá'í community throughout the world; to guide, organize, co-ordinate and unify its activities; to found institutions; to be responsible for ensuring that no body or institution within the Cause abuse its privileges or decline in the exercise of its rights and prerogatives; and to provide for the receipt, disposition, administration and safeguarding of the funds, endowments and other properties that are entrusted to its care;

To adjudicate disputes falling within its purview; to give judgement in cases of violation of the laws of the Faith and to pronounce sanctions for such violations; to provide for the enforcement of its decisions; to provide for the arbitration and settlement of disputes arising between peoples; and to be the exponent and guardian of that Divine Justice which can alone ensure the security of, and establish the reign of law and order in, the world.

The members of the Universal House of Justice, designated by Bahá'u'lláh 'the Men of Justice', 'the people of Bahá who have been mentioned in the Book of Names', 'the Trustees of God amongst His servants and the day-springs of authority in His countries', shall in the discharge of their responsibilities ever bear in mind the following standards set forth by Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Cause of God:

'In the conduct of the administrative affairs

of the Faith, in the enactment of the legislation necessary to supplement the laws of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, the members of the Universal House of Justice, it should be borne in mind, are not, as Bahá'u'lláh's utterances clearly imply, responsible to those whom they represent, nor are they allowed to be governed by the feelings, the general opinion, and even the convictions of the mass of the faithful, or of those who directly elect them. They are to follow, in a prayerful attitude, the dictates and promptings of their conscience. They may, indeed they must, acquaint themselves with the conditions prevailing among the community, must weigh dispassionately in their minds the merits of any case presented for their consideration, but must reserve for themselves the right of an unfettered decision. *God will verily inspire them with whatsoever He willeth*, is Bahá'u'lláh's incontrovertible assurance. They, and not the body of those who either directly or indirectly elect them, have thus been made the recipients of the divine guidance

which is at once the life-blood and ultimate safeguard of this Revelation.'

The Universal House of Justice was first elected on the first day of the Festival of Ridván in the one hundred and twentieth year of the Bahá'í Era,¹ when the members of the National Spiritual Assemblies, in accordance with the provisions of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and in response to the summons of the Hands of the Cause of God, the Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth, brought into being this 'crowning glory' of the administrative institutions of Bahá'u'lláh, the very 'nucleus and forerunner' of His World Order. Now, therefore, in obedience to the Command of God and with entire reliance upon Him, we, the members of the Universal House of Justice, set our hands and its seal to this Declaration of Trust which, together with the By-Laws hereto appended, form the Constitution of the Universal House of Justice.

¹ 21 April 1963 A.D.

Hugh E. Chance

Hushmand Fatheazam

Amos E. Gibson

David Hofman

H. Borrah Kavelin

Ali Nakhjavani

David S. Ruhe

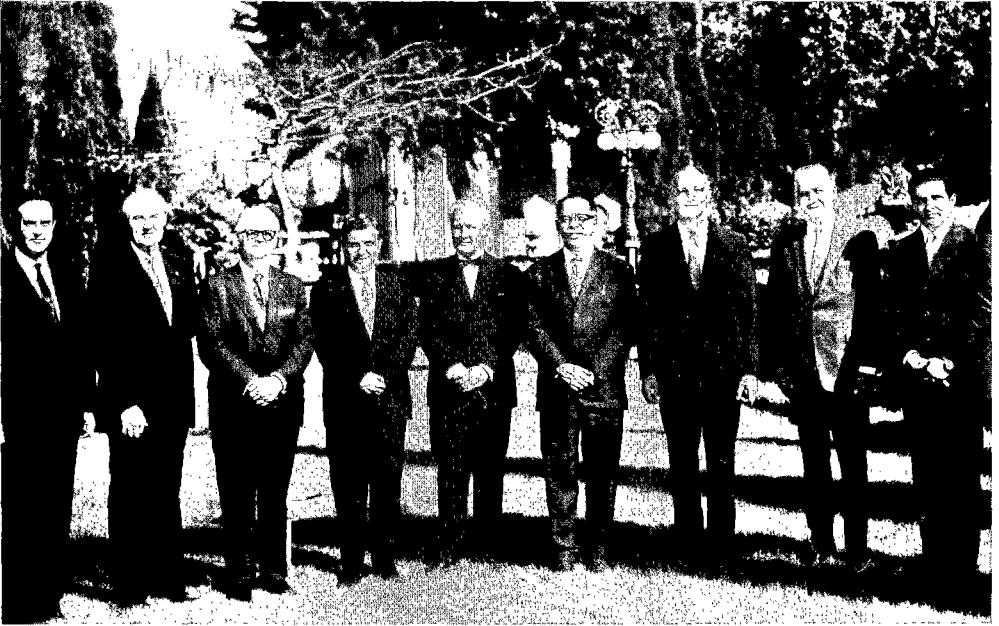
Ian C. Semple

Charles Wolcott

Hugh E. Chance
H. Fatheazam
Amos E. Gibson
David Hofman
H. Borrah Kavelin
Ali Nakhjavani
David S. Ruhe
Ian C. Semple
Charles Wolcott

Signed in the City of Haifa, on the fourth day of the month of Qawl in the one hundred and twenty-ninth year of the Bahá'í Era, corresponding to the twenty-sixth day of the month of November in the year 1972 according to the Gregorian calendar.





The members of the Universal House of Justice, elected at Ridván 1973. Left to right: Mr. Ian Semple, Mr. Hugh Chance, Mr. Charles Wolcott, Mr. 'Ali Nakhjaváni, Mr. David Hofman, Mr. Amoz Gibson, Dr. David S. Ruhe, Mr. H. Borrah Kavelin, Mr. Hushmand Fatheazam.



Partial view of the Bahá'ís gathered in Beit Harofe, Haifa during the third International Convention for the election of the Universal House of Justice; Ridván 1973. Seen standing is Dr. William Maxwell, Jr. of the Continental Board of Counsellors in North-western Africa.

By-Laws

PREAMBLE

THE Universal House of Justice is the supreme institution of an Administrative Order whose salient features, whose authority and whose principles of operation are clearly enunciated in the Sacred Writings of the Bahá'í Faith and their authorized interpretations. This Administrative Order consists, on the one hand, of a series of elected councils, universal, secondary and local, in which are vested legislative, executive and judicial powers over the Bahá'í community and, on the other, of eminent and devoted believers appointed for the specific purposes of protecting and propagating the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh under the guidance of the Head of that Faith.

This Administrative Order is the nucleus and pattern of the World Order adumbrated by Bahá'u'lláh. In the course of its divinely propelled organic growth its institutions will expand, putting forth auxiliary branches and developing subordinate agencies, multiplying their activities and diversifying their functions, in consonance with the principles and purposes revealed by Bahá'u'lláh for the progress of the human race.

I. MEMBERSHIP IN THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY

The Bahá'í Community shall consist of all persons recognized by the Universal House of Justice as possessing the qualifications of Bahá'í faith and practice.

1. In order to be eligible to vote and hold elective office, a Bahá'í must have attained the age of twenty-one years.
2. The rights, privileges and duties of individual Bahá'ís are as set forth in the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi and as laid down by the Universal House of Justice.

II. LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

Whenever in any locality the number of Bahá'ís resident therein who have attained the age of twenty-one exceeds nine, these shall on

the First Day of Riḍván convene and elect a local administrative body of nine members to be known as the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of that locality. Every such Spiritual Assembly shall be elected annually thereafter upon each successive First Day of Riḍván. The members shall hold office for the term of one year or until their successors are elected. When, however, the number of Bahá'ís as aforesaid in any locality is exactly nine, these shall on the First Day of Riḍván constitute themselves the Local Spiritual Assembly by joint declaration.

1. The general powers and duties of a Local Spiritual Assembly are as set forth in the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi and as laid down by the Universal House of Justice.
2. A Local Spiritual Assembly shall exercise full jurisdiction over all Bahá'í activities and affairs within its locality, subject to the provisions of the Local Bahá'í Constitution.¹
3. The area of jurisdiction of a Local Spiritual Assembly shall be decided by the National Spiritual Assembly in accordance with the principle laid down for each country by the Universal House of Justice.

III. NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

Whenever it is decided by the Universal House of Justice to form in any country or region a National Spiritual Assembly, the voting members of the Bahá'í community of that country or region shall, in a manner and at a time to be decided by the Universal House of Justice, elect their delegates to their National Convention. These delegates shall, in turn, elect in the manner provided in the National Bahá'í Constitution² a body of nine members to be known as the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of that country or region. The members shall continue in office for a period of one year or until their successors shall be elected.

¹ By-Laws of a Local Spiritual Assembly. See p. 479.

² Declaration of Trust and By-Laws for a National Spiritual Assembly. See pp. 451, 455.

1. The general powers and duties of a National Spiritual Assembly are as set forth in the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi and as laid down by the Universal House of Justice.
2. The National Spiritual Assembly shall have exclusive jurisdiction and authority over all the activities and affairs of the Bahá'í Faith throughout its area. It shall endeavour to stimulate, unify and co-ordinate the manifold activities of the Local Spiritual Assemblies and of individual Bahá'ís in its area and by all possible means assist them to promote the oneness of mankind. It shall furthermore represent its national Bahá'í community in relation to other national Bahá'í communities and to the Universal House of Justice.
3. The area of jurisdiction of a National Spiritual Assembly shall be as defined by the Universal House of Justice.
4. The principal business of the National Convention shall be consultation on Bahá'í activities, plans and policies and the election of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly, as set forth in the National Bahá'í Constitution.
 - (a) If in any year the National Spiritual Assembly shall consider that it is impracticable or unwise to hold the National Convention, the said Assembly shall provide ways and means by which the annual election and the other essential business of the Convention may be conducted.
 - (b) Vacancies in the membership of the National Spiritual Assembly shall be filled by a vote of the delegates composing the Convention which elected the Assembly, the ballot to be taken by correspondence or in any other manner decided by the National Spiritual Assembly.

IV. OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS OF SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

Among the most outstanding and sacred duties incumbent upon those who have been called upon to initiate, direct and co-ordinate the affairs of the Cause of God as members of its Spiritual Assemblies are: to win by every means in their power the confidence and affection of those whom it is their privilege to serve; to

investigate and acquaint themselves with the considered views, the prevailing sentiments and the personal convictions of those whose welfare it is their solemn obligation to promote; to purge their deliberations and the general conduct of their affairs of self-contained aloofness, the suspicion of secrecy, the stifling atmosphere of dictatorial assertiveness and of every word and deed that may savour of partiality, self-centredness and prejudice; and while retaining the sacred right of final decision in their hands, to invite discussion, ventilate grievances, welcome advice and foster the sense of interdependence and co-partnership, of understanding and mutual confidence between themselves and all other Bahá'ís.

V. THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

The Universal House of Justice shall consist of nine men who have been elected from the Bahá'í community in the manner hereinafter provided.

1. ELECTION

The members of the Universal House of Justice shall be elected by secret ballot by the members of all National Spiritual Assemblies at a meeting to be known as the International Bahá'í Convention.

- (a) An election of the Universal House of Justice shall be held once every five years unless otherwise decided by the Universal House of Justice, and those elected shall continue in office until such time as their successors shall be elected and the first meeting of these successors is duly held.
- (b) Upon receiving the call to Convention each National Spiritual Assembly shall submit to the Universal House of Justice a list of the names of its members. The recognition and seating of the delegates to the International Convention shall be vested in the Universal House of Justice.
- (c) The principal business of the International Convention shall be to elect the members of the Universal House of Justice, to deliberate on the affairs of the Bahá'í Cause throughout the world, and to make recommendations and suggestions for the consideration of the Universal House of Justice.

- (d) The sessions of the International Convention shall be conducted in such manner as the Universal House of Justice shall from time to time decide.
- (e) The Universal House of Justice shall provide a procedure whereby those delegates who are unable to be present in person at the International Convention shall cast their ballots for the election of the members of the Universal House of Justice.
- (f) If at the time of an election the Universal House of Justice shall consider that it is impracticable or unwise to hold the International Convention it shall determine how the election shall take place.
- (g) On the day of the election the ballots of all voters shall be scrutinized and counted and the result certified by tellers appointed in accordance with the instructions of the Universal House of Justice.
- (h) If a member of a National Spiritual Assembly who has voted by mail ceases to be a member of that National Spiritual Assembly between the time of casting his ballot and the date of the counting of the ballots, his ballot shall nevertheless remain valid unless in the interval his successor shall have been elected and the ballot of such successor shall have been received by the tellers.
- (i) In case by reason of a tie vote or votes the full membership of the Universal House of Justice is not determined on the first ballot, then one or more additional ballots shall be held on the persons tied until all members are elected. The electors in the case of additional ballots shall be the members of National Spiritual Assemblies in office at the time each subsequent vote is taken.

2. VACANCIES IN MEMBERSHIP

A vacancy in the membership of the Universal House of Justice will occur upon the death of a member or in the following cases:

- (a) Should any member of the Universal House of Justice commit a sin injurious to the common weal, he may be dismissed from membership by the Universal House of Justice.

- (b) The Universal House of Justice may at its discretion declare a vacancy with respect to any member who in its judgement is unable to fulfil the functions of membership.
- (c) A member may relinquish his membership on the Universal House of Justice only with the approval of the Universal House of Justice.

3. BY-ELECTION

If a vacancy in the membership of the Universal House of Justice occurs, the Universal House of Justice shall call a by-election at the earliest possible date unless such date, in the judgement of the Universal House of Justice, falls too close to the date of a regular election of the entire membership, in which case the Universal House of Justice may, at its discretion, defer the filling of the vacancy to the time of the regular election. If a by-election is held, the voters shall be the members of the National Spiritual Assemblies in office at the time of the by-election.

4. MEETINGS

- (a) After the election of the Universal House of Justice the first meeting shall be called by the member elected by the highest number of votes or, in his absence or other incapacity, by the member elected by the next highest number of votes or, in case two or more members have received the same highest number of votes, then by the member selected by lot from among those members. Subsequent meetings shall be called in the manner decided by the Universal House of Justice.
- (b) The Universal House of Justice has no officers. It shall provide for the conduct of its meetings and shall organize its activities in such manner as it shall from time to time decide.
- (c) The business of the Universal House of Justice shall be conducted by the full membership in consultation, except that the Universal House of Justice may from time to time provide for quorums of less than the full membership for specified classes of business.

5. SIGNATURE

The signature of the Universal House of Justice shall be the words 'The Universal House of Justice' or in Persian 'Baytu'l-'Adl-i-A'zam' written by hand by any one of its members upon authority of the Universal House of Justice, to which shall be affixed in each case the Seal of the Universal House of Justice.

6. RECORDS

The Universal House of Justice shall provide for the recording and verification of its decisions in such manner as it shall, from time to time, judge necessary.

VI. BAHÁ'Í ELECTIONS

In order to preserve the spiritual character and purpose of Bahá'í elections the practices of nomination or electioneering, or any other procedure or activity detrimental to that character and purpose shall be eschewed. A silent and prayerful atmosphere shall prevail during the election so that each elector may vote for none but those whom prayer and reflection inspire him to uphold.

1. All Bahá'í elections, except elections of officers of Local and National Spiritual Assemblies and committees, shall be by plurality vote taken by secret ballot.
2. Election of the officers of a Spiritual Assembly or committee shall be by majority vote of the Assembly or committee taken by secret ballot.
3. In case by reason of a tie vote or votes the full membership of an elected body is not determined on the first ballot, then one or more additional ballots shall be taken on the persons tied until all members are elected.
4. The duties and rights of a Bahá'í elector may not be assigned nor may they be exercised by proxy.

VII. THE RIGHT OF REVIEW

The Universal House of Justice has the right to review any decision or action of any Spiritual Assembly, National or Local, and to approve, modify or reverse such decision or action. The Universal House of Justice also has the right to

intervene in any matter in which a Spiritual Assembly is failing to take action or to reach a decision and, at its discretion, to require that action be taken, or itself to take action directly in the matter.

VIII. APPEALS

The right of appeal exists in the circumstances, and shall be exercised according to the procedures, outlined below:

1. (a) Any member of a local Bahá'í community may appeal from a decision of his Local Spiritual Assembly to the National Spiritual Assembly which shall determine whether it shall take jurisdiction of the matter or refer it back to the Local Spiritual Assembly for reconsideration. If such an appeal concerns the membership of a person in the Bahá'í community, the National Spiritual Assembly is obliged to take jurisdiction of and decide the case.
- (b) Any Bahá'í may appeal from a decision of his National Spiritual Assembly to the Universal House of Justice which shall determine whether it shall take jurisdiction of the matter or leave it within the final jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly.
- (c) If any differences arise between two or more Local Spiritual Assemblies and if these Assemblies are unable to resolve them, any one such Assembly may bring the matter to the National Spiritual Assembly which shall thereupon take jurisdiction of the case. If the decision of the National Spiritual Assembly thereon is unsatisfactory to any of the Assemblies concerned, or if a Local Spiritual Assembly at any time has reason to believe that actions of its National Spiritual Assembly are affecting adversely the welfare and unity of that Local Assembly's community, it shall, in either case, after seeking to compose its difference of opinion with the National Spiritual Assembly, have the right to appeal to the Universal House of Justice, which shall determine whether it shall take jurisdiction of the matter or leave it within the final jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly.

2. An appellant, whether institution or individual, shall in the first instance make appeal to the Assembly whose decision is questioned, either for reconsideration of the case by that Assembly or for submission to a higher body. In the latter case the Assembly is in duty bound to submit the appeal together with full particulars of the matter. If an Assembly refuses to submit the appeal, or fails to do so within a reasonable time, the appellant may take the case directly to the higher authority.

IX. THE BOARDS OF COUNSELLORS

The institution of the Boards of Counsellors was brought into being by the Universal House of Justice to extend into the future the specific functions of protection and propagation conferred upon the Hands of the Cause of God. The members of these boards are appointed by the Universal House of Justice.

1. The term of office of a Counsellor, the number of Counsellors on each Board, and the boundaries of the zone in which each Board of Counsellors shall operate, shall be decided by the Universal House of Justice.
2. A Counsellor functions as such only within his zone and should he move his residence out of the zone for which he is appointed he automatically relinquishes his appointment.
3. The rank and specific duties of a Counsellor render him ineligible for service on local or national administrative bodies. If elected to the Universal House of Justice he ceases to be a Counsellor.

X. THE AUXILIARY BOARDS

In each zone there shall be two Auxiliary Boards, one for the protection and one for the propagation of the Faith, the numbers of whose members shall be set by the Universal House of Justice. The members of these Auxiliary Boards shall serve under the direction of the Continental Board of Counsellors and shall act as their deputies, assistants and advisers.

1. The members of the Auxiliary Boards shall be appointed from among the believers of that zone by the Continental Board of Counsellors.
2. Each Auxiliary Board member shall be allotted a specific area in which to serve and, unless specifically deputized by the Counsellors, shall not function as a member of the Auxiliary Board outside that area.
3. An Auxiliary Board member is eligible for any elective office but if elected to an administrative post on a national or local level must decide whether to retain membership on the Board or accept the administrative post, since he may not serve in both capacities at the same time. If elected to the Universal House of Justice he ceases to be a member of the Auxiliary Board.

XI. AMENDMENT

This Constitution may be amended by decision of the Universal House of Justice when the full membership is present.

2. THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE ELECTION OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Riḍván 1973

FROM the far corners of the earth, sixteen Hands of the Cause of God, thirty-eight members of Continental Boards of Counsellors and 412 members of National Spiritual Assemblies gathered in the Holy Land during the Riḍván festival to attend the third International Bahá'í Convention. It was a thrilling sight to see the wide diversity of nations and races represented. Many were heard to comment that this was, perhaps, one of the most representative gatherings of believers ever held.

The three days immediately preceding the Ninth Day of Riḍván were set aside to give the friends an opportunity to visit the Shrines, the other holy places and the International Archives. They were taken by bus in small groups to the Prison in 'Akká and then to Bahjí where they visited the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh and the Mansion. The Shrines of the Báb and the Master were kept open during the morning, afternoon and evening of each day so that delegates might have the opportunity to meditate and pray as much as they wished in preparation for the discharge of their most important duty, the casting of their ballots in the election of the members of the Universal House of Justice.

During this same period the Universal House of Justice and the Hands of the Cause of God held meetings to consult on the affairs of the Cause, including consideration of new institutions to deal with the anticipated rapid expansion of the Faith in the years immediately ahead.

The three-day convention period was officially opened on the morning of the Ninth Day of Riḍván when the delegates assembled at Beit Harofe in Haifa to cast their ballots in the election of the Universal House of Justice. The Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum presided. Prayers were recited or chanted in several languages. Silently, deliberately and prayerfully the ballots were marked and sealed in their envelopes. When all had finished,

the roll was called of National Spiritual Assemblies, one hundred and thirteen of them, a process which was frequently punctuated with spontaneous applause in recognition of some special fact or circumstances attaching to a particular delegation.

Circumstances beyond their control prevented fourteen National Spiritual Assemblies from being represented in person, but there was at least one delegate from each of the remaining ninety-nine, and the entire membership of five National Spiritual Assemblies—Canada, Iceland, Ireland, Switzerland and the United Kingdom—was present. It required approximately one hour and thirty minutes for the chief tellers to call the names of the 1,017 members of National Spiritual Assemblies. Ballots sent by mail were cast by the tellers during the roll call. Finally the last ballot was placed in the box and the nineteen tellers retired to the Master's House to begin counting the votes, an arduous task which lasted through the night into the early hours of the morning.

The Feast in observance of the Ninth Day of Riḍván was held in the precincts of the Shrine of the Báb. Seating was provided in the courtyard in front of the Pilgrim House, extending more than half-way up the long drive toward the entrance gate. After the opening prayer, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, on behalf of the Universal House of Justice, announced that the first ruling monarch ever to embrace the Faith, His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II, Head of State of Western Samoa, had declared himself a Bahá'í shortly after being presented, in 1967, by the Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery, with the special edition of *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh*. She related the circumstances of his declaration and spoke of its historical significance, citing several passages from the Writings. She then read the beautiful

¹ See 'First Head of State Embraces the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, p. 180.



Bahá'ís gathered in the precincts of the Shrine of the Báb for the observance of the Ninth Day of Ridván during the third International Convention; Ridván 1973. Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm is seen reading to the assembled friends the message from His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II of Western Samoa, attesting his faith in Bahá'u'lláh (see 'First Head of State Embraces the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh', The Bahá'í World, vol. XV, pp. 180-183.)

letter² written by the Malietoa to the Universal House of Justice, the Hands of the Cause of God, the members of Continental Boards of Counsellors and the delegates attending the third International Convention.

A committee was appointed by the Universal House of Justice to draft an official reply from the convention to His Highness, and this was signed by the members of the Universal House of Justice, the Hands of the Cause, Counsellors and delegates and given to members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Samoa for presentation to the Malietoa when they returned to their country.

In the evening following the Feast the friends reassembled in the convention hall to hear the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga read the Ridván message of the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of the world, a message recounting the victories of the Nine Year Plan which had just been concluded. A slide programme entitled 'Entry by Troops' produced

for the convention by the Audio-Visual Department at the World Centre visually supplemented the written report on the Nine Year Plan. That same evening copies of *A Synopsis and Codification of the Laws and Ordinances of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas* and of *The Constitution of the Universal House of Justice* were made available to those attending the convention.

The proceedings for the second day of the convention were opened by a visit to the site above the arc on Mount Carmel where the building for the permanent seat of the Universal House of Justice was to be erected in the near future. Prayers were said on that spot, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm spoke of the significance of the developments on the arc, and the *Tablet of Carmel* was read. Just before the friends departed for Beit Harofe, the official convention photograph was taken.

Rúhíyyih Khánúm addressed the convention on the theme, 'What are the major challenges to the Bahá'í world during the next decade and how are they to be met?' She spoke of the

² See *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, p. 183.

paramount importance of unity in promoting the growth of the Faith, of the need for the feeling of oneness at all levels and in the relationship of the institutions of the Faith to each other. She drew frequently from her experiences in travelling and teaching in Africa, speaking of her meetings with Heads of State and other important people, and stating that during the latter part of her trip to Africa¹ she had begun to speak much more directly to such leaders about the spiritual aspects of the Cause but at the same time avoiding a direct confrontation in presenting the teachings.

At the conclusion of Rúhíyyih Khánum's talk, the chief tellers were called to the platform to announce the result of the election for the members of the Universal House of Justice. One by one, as their names were called, the newly-elected members went forward and stood before the huge assembly:

'Alí Nakhjavání
Hushmand Fatheazam

¹ See 'The Travels of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum during the Nine Year Plan: The Great Safari', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, p. 594.

Amoz Gibson
Ian Semple
David Hofman
Charles Wolcott
Borrah Kavelin
David Ruhe
Hugh Chance

During the afternoon and evening hours the delegates were divided into groups to discuss the theme of the convention. Reports were assembled, condensed and correlated so that all the friends could be provided with an overview of all the discussions, and during the last day of the convention two plenary sessions were held, providing the delegates with a further opportunity to consult on the convention theme.

Opening the final session the Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery alluded to the great celebration of the centenary of the revelation of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*² which was to be held the following day. He introduced the Hand of the Cause William Sears who closed the convention with an eloquent and inspiring address on the

² See 'The Centenary of the Revelation of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, pp. 87-105.



Mr. Asfaw Tessema, Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of North East Africa, casting his ballot for the election of the Universal House of Justice, April 1973, while Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum (centre) and the chief tellers look on.

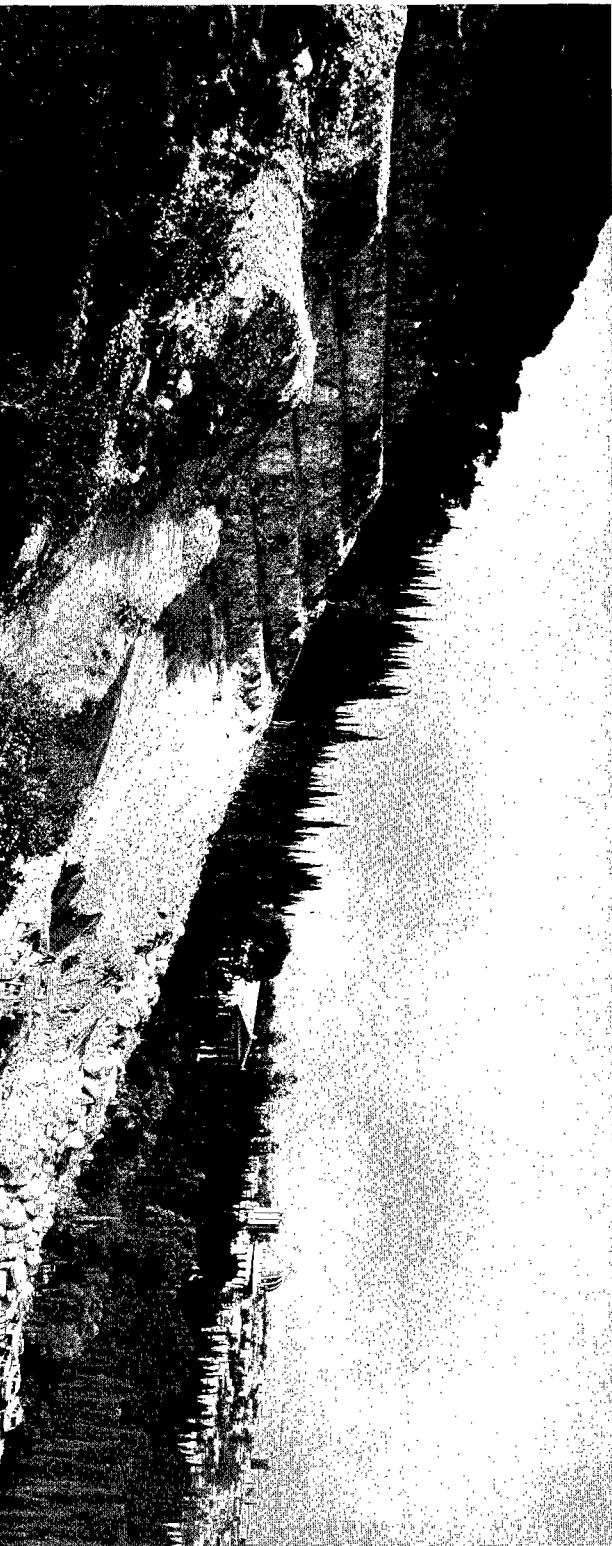


Hands of the Cause and members of the Universal House of Justice are seen above entering the House of 'Abbúd for prayers as part of the observance of the centenary of the revelation by Bahá'u'lláh of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas; April 1973. The observance was held on the Twelfth Day of Riḍván.

need for co-operative effort in the advancement of the Cause. He said that frequently he had travelled great distances just to meet with one Continental Board of Counsellors or a National Spiritual Assembly, but that most of them were represented here and he could address them all at once. He spoke of the great need for these two exalted institutions to combine their efforts.

To the strains of 'Alláh-u-Abhá' the friends slowly dispersed from the hall, remembering what the Hand of the Cause John Robarts had said earlier: 'None of us will ever be the same again. We must take all of the blessings to our own communities. If we do, the Faith will go ahead as never before.'

The Twelfth Day of Riḍván was entirely given over to the celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the revelation of Bahá'u'lláh's Most Holy Book, the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*. The friends visited the very room in the House of 'Abbúd where it was revealed, and in the afternoon assembled in the Ḥaram-i-Aqdas at Bahjí for the Feast. The Hands of the Cause and the members of the Universal House of Justice were the last to visit the House of 'Abbúd and to offer prayers in that holy spot, and then they joined the other believers at Bahjí. The final act of the observance was the visitation to the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh.



3. THE GREATEST SINGLE UNDERTAKING OF THE FIVE YEAR PLAN

Announcement by the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'is of the World of the Imminent Initiation of the Construction of the Permanent Seat of the Universal House of Justice

June 5, 1975

To the Followers of Bahá'u'lláh throughout the World

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

As the Five Year Plan gathers momentum in all parts of the world, with the followers of the Blessed Perfection firmly embarked on the course that will lead to victory, the time has come for us to contemplate, in preparation for its imminent initiation, the project which will rank as the greatest single undertaking of that Plan, the construction of a befitting seat for the Universal House of Justice in the heart of God's holy mountain.

Nearly thirty-six years ago, after overcoming a multitude of difficulties, the beloved Guardian succeeded in transferring to Mount Carmel the sacred remains of the Purest Branch and Navváb, interring them in the immediate neighbourhood of the resting-place of the Greatest Holy Leaf, and alluded, in these words, to the 'capital institutional significance' that these events constituted in the unfoldment of the World Centre of the Faith:

'For it must be clearly understood, nor can it be sufficiently emphasized, that the conjunction of the resting-place of the Greatest Holy Leaf with those of her brother and mother incalculably reinforces the spiritual potencies of that consecrated Spot which, under the wings of the Báb's overshadowing Sepulchre, and in the vicinity of the future Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, which will be reared on its flank, is destined to evolve into the focal centre of those world-shaking, world-embracing, world-directing administrative institutions, ordained by Bahá'u'lláh and anticipated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and which are to function in consonance with the principles that govern the twin institutions of the Guardianship and the Universal House of Justice. Then, and then only, will this momentous prophecy which illuminates the concluding pas-

sages of the *Tablet of Carmel* be fulfilled: *Ere long will God sail His Ark upon thee (Carmel), and will manifest the people of Bahá who have been mentioned in the Book of Names.*

'To attempt to visualize, even in its barest outline, the glory that must envelop these institutions, to essay even a tentative and partial description of their character or the manner of their operation, or to trace however inadequately the course of events leading to their rise and eventual establishment is far beyond my own capacity and power. Suffice it to say that at this troubled stage in world history the association of these three incomparably precious souls who, next to the three Central Figures of our Faith, tower in rank above the vast multitude of the heroes, Letters, martyrs, hands, teachers and administrators of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, in such a potentially powerful spiritual and administrative Centre, is in itself an event which will release forces that are bound to hasten the emergence in a land which, geographically, spiritually and administratively, constitutes the heart of the entire planet, of some of the brightest gems of that World Order now shaping in the womb of this travailing age.'

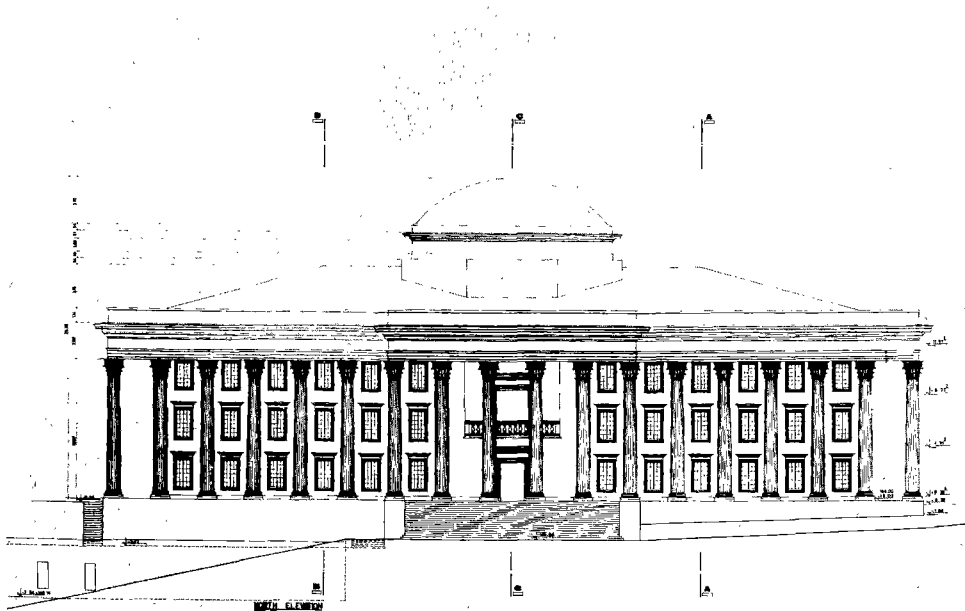
The first of the majestic edifices constituting this mighty Centre, was the building for the International Archives of the Faith which was completed in the summer of 1957 as one of the last major achievements of Shoghi Effendi's Guardianship and which set the style for the remaining structures which, as described by him, were to be raised in the course of time in the form of a far-flung arc on the slope of Mount Carmel. In the eighteen years since that achievement, the community of the Most Great Name has grown rapidly in size and influence: from twenty-six National Spiritual Assemblies to one hundred and nineteen, from some one thousand to seventeen thousand Local Spiritual Assemblies, and from four thousand five hundred

localities to over seventy thousand, accompanied by a corresponding increase in the volume of the work carried on at the World Centre of the Faith and in the complexity of its institutions. It is now both necessary and possible to initiate construction of a building that will not only serve the practical needs of a steadily consolidating administrative centre but will, for centuries to come, stand as a visible expression of the majesty of the divinely ordained institutions of the Administrative Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

Faced, like the Archives building, with stone from Italy, and surrounded by a stately colonnade of sixty Corinthian columns, the seat for the Universal House of Justice will contain, in addition to the council chamber of the House of Justice, a library, a concourse for the reception of pilgrims and dignitaries, storage vaults with air-purification for the preservation of original Tablets and other precious documents, accommodation for the secretariat and the many ancillary services that will be required. Conceived in a style of enduring beauty and majesty, and faced with stone that will weather the centuries, the building in its interior arrangements will be very simple and capable of adaptation in the generations ahead to whatever

technological advances will be made by the rapid growth of human knowledge.

The erection of this building which, comprising five and a half storeys, far surpasses in size and complexity any building at present in existence at the World Centre presents a major challenge to the Bahá'í community, whose resources are already too meagre in relation to the great tasks that lie before it. But the spirit of sacrifice has been the hallmark of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh of every race and clime and as they unite to raise this second of the great edifices of the Administrative Centre of their Faith they will rejoice at having the inestimable privilege of taking part in a 'vast and irresistible process' which Shoghi Effendi stated is 'unexampled in the spiritual history of mankind', a process 'which will synchronize with two no less significant developments—the establishment of the Lesser Peace and the evolution of Bahá'í national and local institutions—the one outside and the other within the Bahá'í world—will attain its final consummation, in the Golden Age of the Faith, through the raising of the standard of the Most Great Peace, and the emergence, in the plenitude of its power and glory, of the focal Centre of the agencies constituting the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.'



Architectural drawing of the front elevation of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice.

4. THE PERMANENT SEAT OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

ḤUSAYN AMÁNAT¹

Call out to Zion, O Carmel, and announce the joyful tidings: He that was hidden from mortal eyes is come! His all-conquering sovereignty is manifest; His all-encompassing splendour is revealed. Beware lest thou hesitate or halt . . . Verily this is the Day in which both land and sea rejoice at this announcement, the Day for which have been laid up those things which God, through a bounty beyond the ken of mortal mind or heart, hath destined for revelation. Ere long will God sail His Ark upon thee, and will manifest the people of Bahá who have been mentioned in the Book of Names.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablet of Carmel*

IN his letter written in Persian to the Bahá'ís of the East at Naw-Rúz 111 (1954 A.D.), Shoghi Effendi stated:

'In this great Tablet (of Carmel) which unveils divine mysteries and heralds the establishment of two mighty, majestic and momentous undertakings—one of which is spiritual and the other administrative, both at the World Centre of the Faith—Bahá'u'lláh refers to an "Ark", whose dwellers are the men of the Supreme House of Justice, which, in conformity with the exact provisions of the Will and Testament of the Centre of the Mighty Covenant is the body which should lay down laws not explicitly revealed in the Text. In this Dispensation, these laws are destined to flow from this holy mountain, even as in the Mosaic Dispensation the law of God was promulgated from Zion. The "sailing of the Ark" of His laws is a reference to the establishment of the Universal House of Justice . . .'

Shoghi Effendi referred to the Universal House of Justice as that institution 'which posterity will regard as the last refuge of a tottering civilization,'² and stated that its permanent seat would be built on the slopes of Mount Carmel in the vicinity of the Shrine of the Báb and close to the resting places of the Greatest Holy Leaf, the Purest Branch and Navváb. In anticipation, the beloved Guardian developed beautiful gardens in the shape of an arc 'around which the edifices, destined to serve as the seat of the future Bahá'í World Com-

monwealth, are to be erected.'³ In this connection he further stated:

'These Edifices will, in the shape of a far-flung arc, and following a harmonizing style of architecture, surround the resting-places of the Greatest Holy Leaf, ranking as foremost among the members of her sex in the Bahá'í Dispensation, of her brother, offered up as a ransom by Bahá'u'lláh for the quickening of the world and its unification, and of their mother, proclaimed by Him to be His chosen "*consort in all the worlds of God.*" The ultimate completion of this stupendous undertaking will mark the culmination of the development of a world-wide divinely-appointed Administrative Order whose beginnings may be traced as far back as the concluding years of the Heroic Age of the Faith.'⁴

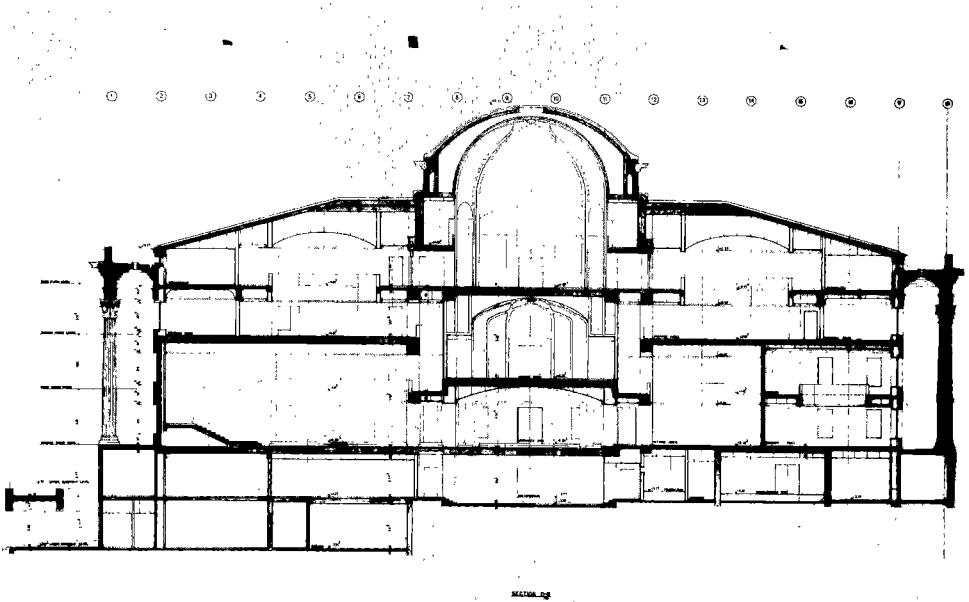
After studying the various references of the Guardian to the institutions that were to function from Mount Carmel, the Universal House of Justice decided that there would be five buildings on the arc: the International Archives

¹ The texts of the cablegrams of the Universal House of Justice announcing the appointment of Ḥusayn Amánat as architect of the permanent seat of the Universal House of Justice (18 September 1973) and the acceptance of his design and the decision to proceed with the negotiation of contracts for construction of the edifice (7 February 1974) may be seen in 'International Survey of Current Bahá'í Activities', p. 133.

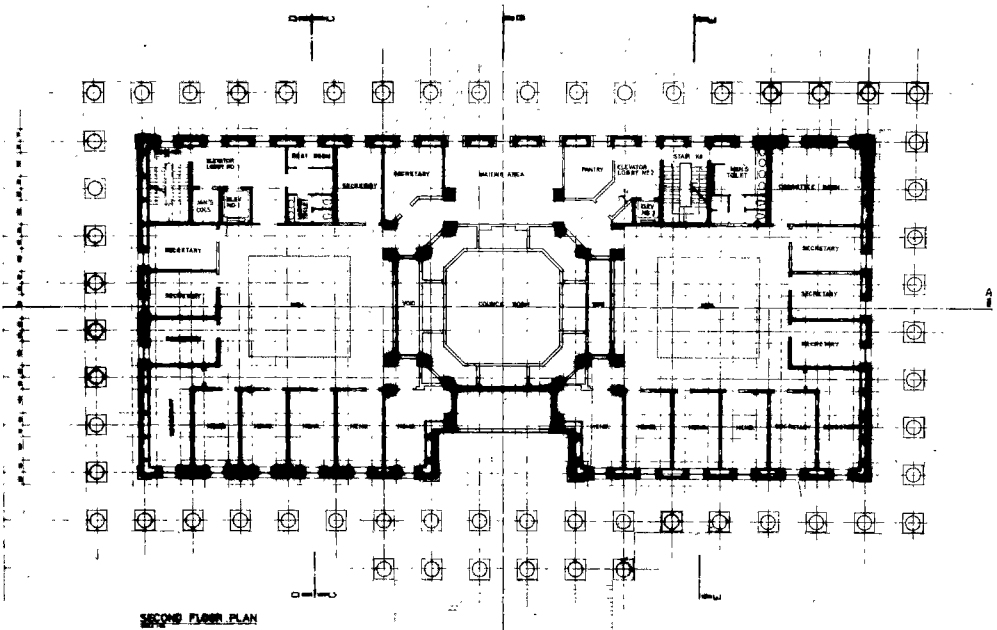
² Shoghi Effendi, 'America and the Most Great Peace', (*The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*), p. 89.

³ Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Bahá'í World, 1950-1957*, p. 79.

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 74.



Drawing of a longitudinal cross-section of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice.

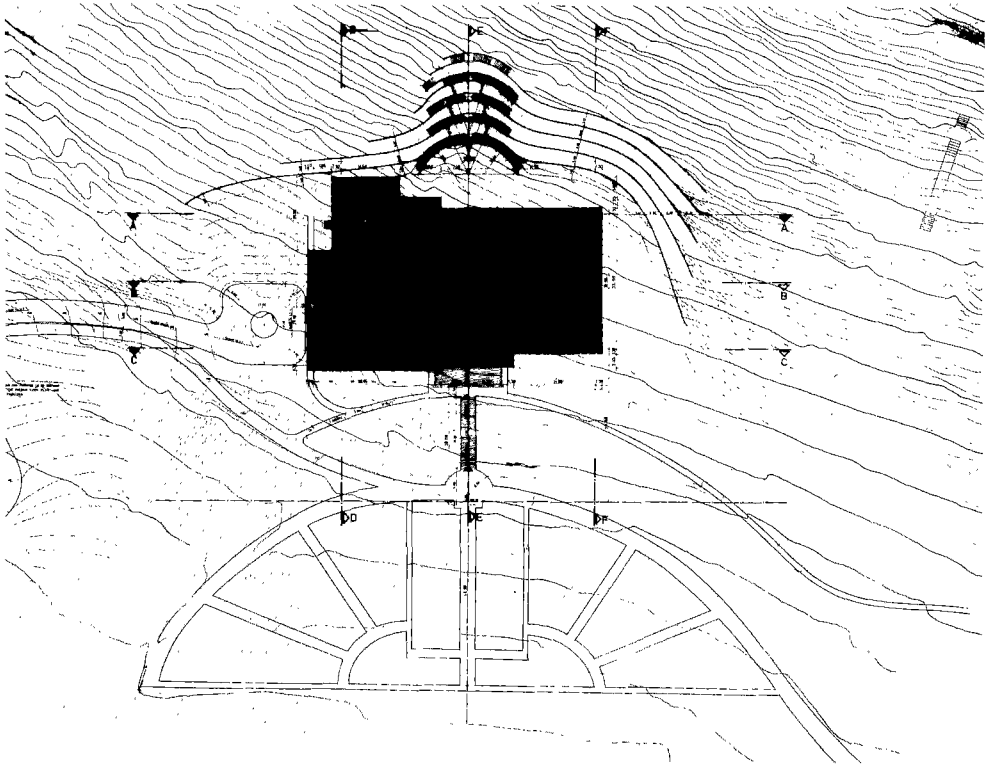


Plan of the members' office floor of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice. The Council Chamber, which is on the floor below, rises through two storeys and thus can be seen in the centre of the plan.

building which was completed in 1957, the seat of the Universal House of Justice, the International Teaching Centre, a Centre for the Study of the Texts and an International Bahá'í Library. In view of the importance attaching to the Universal House of Justice as the Supreme Institution in the Faith—the Guardian had referred to it as the 'apex of the administrative order' and 'the supreme organ of the Bahá'í World Commonwealth'—it became evident that the building which was to serve as its permanent seat should be more prominent, more imposing and larger than the other buildings, but should compose with them a harmonious and beautiful precinct. In the light of Shoghi Effendi's allusion to the Universal House of Justice as the crowning institution of the administrative order it seemed in conformity with the spirit of the writings to consider the building as a majestic crown adorning the great institutions around the arc on Mount Carmel. Such a building would have to be not only

functional but should also reflect the heavenly manifestations of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh; that is to say, that while serving all the purposes normally required of an administrative centre, it should suggest in its architecture something of the spiritual importance and majesty of the supreme administrative institution of Bahá'u'lláh's World Order which it houses. On seeing the building one should feel more than an aesthetic response; the structure should convey intimations of the beauty and majesty of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

The beloved Guardian had stated that the buildings around the arc were to follow a harmonizing style of architecture, a style which he himself established by building the International Archives in the classical Ionic order. This demanded that the architecture of the remaining buildings be classical, or of a contemporary style incorporating principles of classical architecture; and since the building for the Universal House of Justice had to be more



Sketch showing the siting of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice above the arc on Mount Carmel.



Preparing a full-scale model at Industria dei Marmi Vicentini, Chiampo, Italy, of the capitals of the columns for the Seat of the Universal House of Justice; April 1976. Mr. Ḥusayn Amánat is seen at the extreme left in dark jacket.

imposing, larger and more majestic than the other edifices to be built around the arc, it was felt appropriate to adopt the Corinthian order. Initially in the schemes proposed to the Universal House of Justice were included a design in the modern style with consideration given to classical proportions and principles, and one of pure classical style, which was accepted.

It would seem that the air of tranquillity and peace so apparent in the gardens and sacred precincts of the Holy Places would require the buildings to be erected in the area to have some degree of detail and fine work. The poetry and delicacy incorporated in the fine details of the Corinthian Order seemed to be an appropriate answer inspired by the existing atmosphere.

This building is to be situated on the axis of the arc at its highest and most prominent point, the main façade and the entrance looking out across the bay towards the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh. Its relationship in importance to the other buildings on the arc will be clearly stated by its location as well as by architectural details and by its size and height. Tall fluted Corinthian columns will adorn the arcade which surrounds the building. At the point of the axis of the arc, at the entrance to the building, there will be a portico projecting forward from the colonnade, supported by six additional columns. From this portico a flight of wide steps will lead down to the arc and to the path going to the International Archives. The proportion of this six-columned portico is the deciding factor establishing the relationship of harmony and proportion with the International Archives building. At the same time the depth and height of the portico will recall similar porticos in Persian architecture, and the space it provides will give the impression of inviting all to enter. Above the main door through which guests and pilgrims will enter, is the spacious window of the room in which the House of Justice will meet. This Council Chamber also faces towards the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh; it is the heart of the whole building and is crowned by the dome. Like many domes in eastern architecture, the dome of this building is based on an octagon in the heart of the building itself with an interesting system of integration with the geometry of the length and breadth of the building.

The building will be faced with white marble, and the columns and dome will be of the same kind of marble. The geometrical design, in terms

of proportion and size, was considered in relation to the existing structures as well as to the surrounding gardens. The building covers an area of sixty-eight by thirty-six metres, with eighteen columns on each long side and ten on each of the others. The height of the building is about fourteen metres, and from the base to the top of the dome will be twenty-five metres. The dome is deliberately not designed in a more prominent form in order not to compete with the beautiful dome of the Shrine of the Báb. The roof will have green glazed tiles similar to those used on the International Archives building, and will offer harmonious glimpses from the gardens above.

The interior of the building is essentially simple. The structural design has provided for installation in the future, as may become necessary, of new technological requirements; in other words, if advanced technology requires the installation of any particular piece of new machinery or equipment in the building, this can be done without alteration or difficulty.

In addition to the Council Chamber of the House of Justice, a reception hall for pilgrims and important visitors, a conference room, and space for the immediate secretariat of the House of Justice have been provided.

The slope of the mountain made it possible to build a basement and a sub-basement between the foundations and the main ground floor; therefore the building will have five and a half storeys, with a total surface of 11,000 square metres. One of these lower storeys will provide a secondary service entrance which will be used daily by those who work in the building. In the other there is adequate space to build a vault to safeguard original Tablets and manuscripts; air-conditioning and other scientific devices for the preservation of documents will be provided.

Once the design had been approved, studies began for the execution of the work. The first problem was the choice of the stone and its carving. After a very detailed study it was decided that Pentelikon marble from Greece, quarried near Athens, was the best possible stone for this building; this is the same stone as that used in the Acropolis. The blocks of marble from Greece were shipped to Italy where they were carved and cut and then re-shipped to Haifa.

The structural core or skeleton of the building is to be of reinforced concrete. The latest

electric lighting and air-conditioning systems will be installed.

A parking area is designed to the east of the building, cut into the slope of the mountain in such a way that it will be hidden by the gardens, and no automobiles will be seen around the building. Access to this parking area as well as to the service entrance is from a road which touches the boundary of the Bahá'í land on the east, and all traffic to the building will be from

this eastern road. Thus the serenity of the beautiful arc gardens will not be disturbed.

It is visualized that the building will be completed in approximately three years. It is the second of the complex of buildings which is to be erected around the arc by the end of this century, a period that will synchronize with the establishment of the Lesser Peace and the comprehensive growth of local, national and international Bahá'í institutions.



Ornamental urn in the Bahá'í gardens on Mount Carmel.

II

THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD

1. THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD AND THE EXTENSION OF THEIR FUNCTIONS INTO THE FUTURE

A. THE RULERS AND THE LEARNED

IN every society and community of human beings there are those who are revered for their learning and wisdom, and there are those who are invested with authority to govern. In religious communities it has been usual for the legislative and governing authority to be held by the learned who have thus, as priests or as doctors of religious law, combined both capacities in the same persons. Other communities have, only too often, been riven by the conflict between church and state, between priests and kings, or, in more modern terms, between intellectuals and the establishment. In the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh these two extremes, of the over-concentration of authority on the one hand and of division and conflict on the other, are eliminated. The way this is achieved is one of the unique features of that Order and confers unimagined benefits upon the Bahá'í community.

In the *Kitáb-i-'Ahd* (The Book of the Covenant) Bahá'u'lláh wrote, *Blessed are the rulers and the learned in Bahá*. The Guardian, interpreting this passage, stated on 4 November 1931:

In this holy cycle the 'learned' are, on the one hand, the Hands of the Cause of God, and, on the other, the teachers and diffusers of His teachings who do not rank as Hands, but who have attained an eminent position in the teaching work. As to the 'rulers' they refer to the members of the Local, National and International Houses of Justice. The duties of each of these souls will be determined in the future. (Translated from the Persian.)

Since those words were written the Bahá'í Administrative Order has developed rapidly

and is now functioning throughout the world. Under the supreme authority of the revealed Law of God the Bahá'í community is governed by its elected institutions: Local and National Spiritual Assemblies and the Universal House of Justice, while the institutions of the 'learned', which exercise no governing authority over the believers, are accorded an exalted rank which enables them to exert their beneficent influence over all parts of the community. Commenting on this feature of the Bahá'í Administrative Order, the Universal House of Justice wrote in its message of 24 April 1972:

The existence of institutions of such exalted rank, comprising individuals who play such a vital role, who yet have no legislative, administrative or judicial authority, and are entirely devoid of priestly functions or the right to make authoritative interpretations, is a feature of Bahá'í administration unparalleled in the religions of the past . . .

Developing this theme, the Universal House of Justice referred in that same message to a letter written on behalf of the Guardian on 14 March 1927, to the Spiritual Assembly of Istanbul, in which he expounded the Bahá'í principle of action by majority vote. In this letter Shoghi Effendi points out how, in the past, it was certain individuals who 'accounted themselves as superior in knowledge and elevated in position' who caused division, and that it was those 'who pretended to be the most distinguished of all' who 'always proved themselves to be the source of contention'. He praises God that Bahá'u'lláh had withdrawn authority from 'the unyielding and dictatorial views of the learned

and the wise', rejected the assertions of individuals, even though recognized as the most accomplished and learned among men, as authoritative criteria, and 'ordained that all matters be referred to authorized centres and assemblies'. Thus the institutions of the learned in the Bahá'í Faith, while invested with high rank and exercising invaluable moral authority and influence, have no executive power other than in the direction of their own institutions.

The difficulty of establishing a clear understanding of this administrative concept, new in the history of religion, is reflected in the concluding passage of the message of the Universal

House of Justice, of 24 April 1972, quoted above:

... The newness and uniqueness of this concept make it difficult to grasp; only as the Bahá'í community grows and the believers are increasingly able to contemplate its administrative structure uninfluenced by concepts from past ages, will the vital interdependence of the 'rulers' and 'learned' in the Faith be properly understood, and the inestimable value of their interaction be fully recognized.

Only now, as these two arms of the world-embracing system of Bahá'u'lláh begin to function in their separate but complementary roles towards a common achievement, are intimations caught of the divine beneficence of that system.

B. THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD

Bahá'u'lláh Himself created the institution of the Hands of the Cause and appointed four Hands to serve Him in His own lifetime. In the *Tablet of the World* He refers to the Hands of the Cause in words descriptive of the station of service to which they are called:

Light and glory, greeting and praise be upon the Hands of His Cause through whom the light of fortitude hath shone forth and the truth hath been established that the authority to choose rests with God, the Powerful, the Mighty, the Unconstrained, through whom the ocean of bounty hath surged and the fragrance of the gracious favours of God, the Lord of mankind, hath been diffused. We beseech Him—Exalted is He—to shield them through the power of His hosts, to protect them through the potency of His dominion and to aid them through His indomitable strength which prevaieth over all created things. Sovereignty is God's, the Creator of the heavens and the Lord of the Kingdom of Names.

The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá contains many references to the Hands of the Cause, including explicit definitions of their station and functions, as well as various admonitions addressed to them:

Salutation and praise, blessing and glory rest . . . upon the Hands of the Cause of God that have diffused widely the Divine Fragrances, declared His Proofs, proclaimed His Faith, published abroad His Law, detached themselves from all things but Him, stood for righteousness in this world, and kindled the Fire of the Love of God in the very hearts and souls of His servants; . . . the Hands of the Cause of God must be ever watchful and so soon as they find anyone beginning to oppose and protest against the Guardian of the Cause of God cast him out

from the congregation of the people of Bahá and in no wise accept any excuse from him. . . .

. . . The Hands of the Cause of God must elect from their own number nine persons that shall at all times be occupied in the important services in the work of the Guardian of the Cause of God. The election of these nine must be carried either unanimously or by majority from the company of the Hands of the Cause of God and these, whether unanimously or by a majority vote, must give their assent to the choice of the one whom the Guardian of the Cause of God hath chosen as his successor. . . .

O friends! The Hands of the Cause of God must be nominated and appointed by the Guardian of the Cause of God. All must be under his shadow and obey his command. . . .

The obligations of the Hands of the Cause of God are to diffuse the Divine Fragrances, to edify the souls of men, to promote learning, to improve the character of all men and to be, at all times and under all conditions, sanctified and detached from earthly things. They must manifest the fear of God by their conduct, their manners, their deeds and their words. This body of the Hands of the Cause of God is under the direction of the Guardian of the Cause of God. He must continually urge them to strive and endeavour to the utmost of their ability to diffuse the sweet savours of God, and to guide all the peoples of the world, for it is the light of Divine Guidance that causeth all the universe to be illumined. To disregard, though it be for a moment, this absolute command which is binding upon everyone, is in no wise permitted, that the surface of the earth may become heavenly, that contention and conflict amidst peoples, kindreds, nations and governments may disappear, that all the dwellers on earth may become one people and one race, that the world may become even as one home.

'Abdu'l-Bahá did not Himself appoint any additional Hands of the Cause. He did, how-



Hands of the Cause gathered in the precincts of the Shrine of the Báb during the third International Convention for the election of the Universal House of Justice; Riḍván 1973.

ever, refer to certain outstanding teachers of the Faith as Hands.

During the first three decades of his ministry as Guardian of the Faith, Shoghi Effendi designated certain outstanding Bahá'ís as Hands posthumously. Then, in December 1951, he raised twelve living believers to this exalted rank, a development of the Administrative Order which thrilled the entire Bahá'í world. In February 1952 he appointed a further seven, and in 1957 eight more, bringing the total number to twenty-seven. In these brief six years the Guardian not only established this institution on a firm foundation throughout the world, with a body of four Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land to act as the liaison between himself and the Hands in each con-

continent, but he brought into being in each continent two Auxiliary Boards, one for the protection and one for the propagation of the Faith, to act as the 'assistants, deputies and advisers' of the Hands of that continent.

The epic story of how in November 1957, the Hands of the Cause of God, called by the Guardian the 'Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth', rallied the grief-stricken and stunned Bahá'ís of the world, guided them to the victorious accomplishment of the Ten Year Crusade which he had launched, and convened the members of the National Spiritual Assemblies for the first election of the Universal House of Justice in April 1963, has been told in befitting detail in Volume XIII of this publication.

C. THE CONTINENTAL BOARDS OF COUNSELLORS

The establishment of the Universal House of Justice in 1963 ushered in a new phase in the evolution of the institution of the Hands of the Cause. In October 1963 the House of Justice

decided 'that there is no way to appoint or legislate to make it possible to appoint a second Guardian to succeed Shoghi Effendi'. Therefore, among the first questions which it was

necessary for it then to consider were the manner in which the institution of the Hands of the Cause was to continue to perform its appointed functions, the relationship which should exist between the House of Justice and the Hands of the Cause, and how the indispensable functions of the Hands of the Cause could be extended into the future, since, according to the text of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Hands of the Cause of God must be nominated and appointed by the Guardian of the Cause of God.*

Following consultation with a conclave of the Hands in October–November 1964, the Universal House of Justice announced to the believers in its message of November 1964 the following decisions:

There is no way to appoint, or to legislate to make it possible to appoint, Hands of the Cause of God.

Responsibility for decisions of matters of general policy affecting the institution of the Hands of the Cause, which was formerly exercised by the beloved Guardian, now devolves upon the Universal House of Justice as the supreme and central institution of the Faith to which all must turn.

That same message announced increases in the number of the members of the Auxiliary Boards for propagation in every continent, and the Hands were requested to appoint one or more members of each Auxiliary Board to act in an executive capacity on their behalf and in the name of each Hand, for the direction of the work of the Boards. The message continued:

The exalted rank and specific functions of the Hands of the Cause of God make it inappropriate for them to be elected or appointed to administrative institutions, or to be elected as delegates to national conventions. Furthermore, it is their desire and the desire of the House of Justice that they be free to devote their entire energies to the vitally important duties conferred upon them in the Holy Writings.

At the same time the House of Justice confirmed the request of the Hands of the Cause that henceforth members of the Auxiliary Boards should be freed from administrative responsibilities, including service on committees and as delegates to conventions.

On 21 June 1968 the House of Justice announced by cable to the Bahá'í world the decision to establish eleven Continental Boards of Counsellors for the protection and propagation of the Faith and, in a written message

issued on 24 June, outlined in detail the nature and scope of this action. Because of its great significance to the evolution of the Administrative Order, the entire text of this message is quoted:

The majestic unfoldment of Bahá'u'lláh's world-redeeming administrative system has been marked by the successive establishment of the various institutions and agencies which constitute the framework of that divinely-created Order. Thus, more than a quarter-of-a-century after the emergence of the first National Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'í world the institution of the Hands of the Cause of God was formally established, with the appointment by the beloved Guardian, in conformity with the provisions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament, of the first contingent of these high-ranking officers of the Faith. Following the passing of the Guardian of the Cause of God, it fell to the House of Justice to devise a way, within the Administrative Order, of developing 'the institution of the Hands of the Cause with a view to extension into the future of its appointed functions of protection and propagation', and this was made a goal of the Nine Year Plan. Much thought and study has been given to the question over the past four years, and the texts have been collected and reviewed. During the last two months, this goal, as announced in our cable to the National Conventions, has been the object of prolonged and prayerful consultation between the Universal House of Justice and the Hands of the Cause of God. All this made evident the framework within which this goal was to be achieved, namely:

The Universal House of Justice sees no way in which additional Hands of the Cause of God can be appointed.

The absence of the Guardian of the Faith brought about an entirely new relationship between the Universal House of Justice and the Hands of the Cause and called for the progressive unfoldment by the Universal House of Justice of the manner in which the Hands of the Cause would carry out their divinely-conferred functions of protection and propagation.

Whatever new development or institution is initiated should come into operation as soon as possible in order to reinforce and supplement the work of the Hands of the Cause while at the same time taking full advantage of the opportunity of having the Hands themselves assist in launching and guiding the new procedures.

Any such institution must grow and operate in harmony with the principles governing the functioning of the institution of the Hands of the Cause of God.

In the light of these considerations the Universal House of Justice decided, as announced in its recent cable, to establish Continental Boards of Counsellors for the protection and propagation of the Faith. Their duties will include directing the Auxiliary Boards in their respective areas, consulting and collaborating with National Spiritual Assemblies, and keeping the Hands of the Cause and the Universal House of Justice informed concerning the conditions of the Cause in their areas.

Initially eleven Boards of Counsellors have been appointed, one for each of the following areas: Northwestern Africa, Central and East Africa, Southern Africa, North America, Central America, South America, Western Asia, Southeastern Asia, Northeastern Asia, Australasia and Europe.

The members of these Boards of Counsellors will serve for a term, or terms, the length of which will be determined and announced at a later date, and while serving in this capacity, will not be eligible for membership on national or local administrative bodies. One member of each Continental Board of Counsellors has been designated as Trustee of the Continental Fund for its area.

The Auxiliary Boards for protection and propagation will henceforth report to the Continental Boards of Counsellors who will appoint or replace members of the Auxiliary Boards as circumstances may require. Such appointments and replacements as may be necessary in the initial stages will take place after consultation with the Hand or Hands previously assigned to the continent or zone.

The Hands of the Cause of God have the prerogative and obligation to consult with the Continental Boards of Counsellors and National Spiritual Assemblies on any subject which, in their view, affects the interests of the Cause. The Hands residing in the Holy Land will act as liaison between the Universal House of Justice and the Continental Boards of Counsellors, and will also assist the Universal House of Justice in setting up, at a propitious time, an international teaching centre in the Holy Land, as anticipated in the Guardian's writings.

The Hands of the Cause of God are one of the most precious assets the Bahá'í world possesses. Released from administration of the Auxiliary Boards, they will be able to concentrate their energies on the more primary responsibilities of general protection and propagation, 'preservation of the spiritual health of the Bahá'í communities' and 'the vitality of the faith' of the Bahá'ís throughout the world. The House of Justice will call upon them to undertake special missions on its behalf, to represent it on both Bahá'í and other occasions and to keep it informed of the welfare of the Cause. While the Hands of the Cause will, naturally, have special concern for the affairs of the Cause in the areas in which they reside, they will operate increasingly on an intercontinental level, a factor which will lend tremendous impetus to the diffusion throughout the Bahá'í world of the spiritual inspiration channelled through them—the Chief

Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth.

With joyful hearts we proclaim this further unfolding of the Administrative Order of Bahá'u'lláh and join our prayers to those of the friends throughout the East and the West that Bahá'u'lláh may continue to shower his confirmations upon the efforts of His servants in the safeguarding and promotion of His Faith.

A clarification of the status of Counsellors and their relationship to National Spiritual Assemblies was made by the House of Justice in a letter to a National Spiritual Assembly in May 1975:

... (it) must be one of warm and active collaboration, a full sharing in the excitement and the challenge of the teaching work and the establishment of living and growing Bahá'í communities . . . While the role of the Counsellors is normally to advise, encourage and reinforce, and they have no legislative or administrative authority, they nevertheless occupy a rank superior to that of the National Assembly or its members and each individual Counsellor is a high officer of the Faith entitled to the respect, honour and courtesy due to his rank. Each country which is privileged to have a resident Counsellor should prize that privilege. Each National Assembly which has a Counsellor at hand for frequent consultations should, without relinquishing any portion of its divinely assigned authority, call upon him often for his views and accord great weight to his advice.

On 8 June 1973 a further directive was sent to the Continental Boards of Counsellors which answered the need discussed by the Counsellors during their sessions in the Holy Land, at the time of the International Convention of that year, for some method to enable their institution to reach more deeply into the fabric of the Bahá'í world community. The House of Justice authorized each Board of Counsellors, at its discretion, to permit Auxiliary Board Members to appoint assistants, whose duties would be to activate and encourage Local Spiritual Assemblies, to call the attention of Local Spiritual Assembly members to the importance of regular meetings, to encourage local communities to gather for Nineteen Day Feasts and Holy Days, to help deepen their fellow-believers' understanding of the teachings, and generally to assist the Auxiliary Board members in the discharge of their duties. The advice, at that time, was to proceed gradually with this new step so that experience could indicate the most effective manner of its oper-

ation. Since then, as a result of the proven value of this expanded service, appointments of assistants in each zone have been steadily and rapidly augmented. The letter of 8 June 1973 stated that 'believers can serve at the same time both as assistants to Auxiliary Board members and on administrative institutions'.

Adjustments to the number of Continental Boards of Counsellors are made as the Universal House of Justice deems necessary, entailing adjustments to zones assigned to the Boards,

to the number of Counsellors and to the numbers of Auxiliary Boards and Auxiliary Board members.¹ Thus the institution operates at all levels throughout the world, reaching into the basic structure of local community life and exerting its encouraging and uplifting influence upon the lives of individuals and the deliberations of institutions, constantly watching over the security of the Faith, pointing the way to the promotion of its best interests, and to the ever wider dissemination of its healing message.

D. THE INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CENTRE

Assurance of the extension into the future of the appointed functions of protection and propagation conferred upon the Hands of the Cause was accomplished by the establishment of the Continental Boards of Counsellors. However, that vital goal having been accomplished, the problem remained of ordering the work of the new institution so that it would grow organically with the Faith itself.

In a letter addressed to all National Spiritual Assemblies on 24 June 1968 the Universal House of Justice confirmed that 'the relationship of Continental Boards of Counsellors to National Spiritual Assemblies will follow the pattern of the relationship between the Hands of the Cause and National Spiritual Assemblies, outlined by the beloved Guardian in various communications'.

The cablegram addressed by the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies on 21 June 1968 announcing the establishment of Continental Boards of Counsellors had contained a reference to the 'future establishment international teaching centre Holy Land foreshadowed writings beloved Guardian.'

In October 1971 the Hands of the Cause were notified that after the International Convention for the election of the Universal House of Justice during Riḍván 1973, their presence in the Holy Land for a period of time in order to consult on a number of important subjects would be most welcome. The foremost topic would be the establishment of the international teaching centre about which the Hands had previously been requested to submit their written views. The Universal House of Justice, in its letter

to the Hands of the Cause in October 1971, cited, amongst others, the following three quotations from the Guardian which anticipated the evolution of the World Administrative Centre of the Faith on Mount Carmel and the establishment there of an international teaching centre as the seat of the Hands of the Cause of God:

... it must be clearly understood, nor can it be sufficiently emphasized, that the conjunction of the resting-place of the Greatest Holy Leaf with those of her brother and mother incalculably reinforces the spiritual potencies of that consecrated Spot which, under the wings of the Báb's overshadowing Sepulchre, and in the vicinity of the future Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, which will be reared on its flank, is destined to evolve into the focal centre of those world-shaking, world-embracing, world-directing administrative institutions, ordained by Bahá'u'lláh and anticipated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and which are to function in consonance with the principles that govern the twin institutions of the Guardianship and the Universal House of Justice. Then, and then only, will this momentous prophecy which illuminates the concluding passages of the *Tablet of Carmel* be fulfilled: *Ere long will God sail His Ark upon thee (Carmel) and will manifest the people of Bahá who have been mentioned in the Book of Names.*²

In this great Tablet which unveils divine mysteries and heralds the establishment of two mighty, majestic and momentous undertakings—one of which is spiritual and the other administrative, both at the World Centre of the Faith—Bahá'u'lláh refers to an 'Ark', whose dwellers are the men of the Supreme House of

¹ At Riḍván 1976 there are thirteen Continental Boards of Counsellors, each Continental Board having two Auxiliary Boards, one for protection and one for propagation; and each Auxiliary Board member having assistants as needed and authorized.

² Shoghi Effendi, letter to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, 21 December 1939; see *Messages to America*, pp. 32–33.



The Hands of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khámum, 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, Paul E. Haney, and Abu'l-Qásim Faízi; and Counsellors members of the International Teaching Centre, Hooper Dunbar, Florence V. Mayberry, and 'Aziz Yazdí, gathered for prayers at the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, Bahjí, during the inaugural meeting of the Teaching Centre; 14 June 1973.

Justice, which, in conformity with the exact provisions of the Will and Testament of the Centre of the Mighty Covenant is the body which should lay down laws not explicitly revealed in the Text. In this Dispensation, these laws are destined to flow from this holy mountain, even as in the Mosaic Dispensation the law of God was promulgated from Zion. The 'sailing of the Ark' of His laws is a reference to the establishment of the Universal House of Justice, which is indeed the Seat of Legislation, one of the branches of the World Administrative Centre of the Bahá'ís on this holy mountain. It will be housed in a separate building near the International Archives Building, now under construction, on a site in the neighbourhood of the Shrine of the Báb, and overlooking the sacred and illumined Monuments. In the neighbourhood of these two stately edifices and two mighty Institutions (i.e. the Archives Building and the edifice for the House of Justice), another edifice will gradually be erected which will be the Seat of the Guardianship, the Centre which will interpret, expound and prepare commentaries on explicitly revealed laws, and will reinforce and supplement the legislative body. Yet another edifice to supplement these three edifices will be the Centre for the propagation and teaching of the Faith, the Seat for the Hands of the Cause, who, in accordance with the explicit text of the Will and Testament are charged with the security, the pres-

ervation and protection of the Cause, the safeguarding of the unity of the community, the promotion of God's religion and the spread of His Word. These majestic and mighty edifices, which will be constructed gradually in accordance with a beautiful and unique style of architecture around the sacred Monuments, are all considered as branches of this highly-exalted, firmly-grounded and broadly-based World Administrative Centre of the followers of the Cause of Him Who is the Lord of this Age and the Ruler of Creation.¹

The raising of this edifice (International Bahá'í Archives) will in turn herald the construction, in the course of successive epochs of the Formative Age of the Faith, of several other structures, which will serve as the administrative seats of such divinely appointed institutions as the Guardianship, the Hands of the Cause, and the Universal House of Justice. These edifices will, in the shape of a far-flung arc, and following a harmonizing style of architecture, surround the resting places of the Greatest Holy Leaf, ranking as foremost among the members of her sex in the Bahá'í Dispensation, of her brother, offered up as a ransom by Bahá'u'lláh for the quickening of the world and its unification and of their mother, proclaimed by Him to be His chosen 'consort in all the

¹ Shoghi Effendi, letter in Persian to the Bahá'ís of the East, Naw-Rúz 111 (1954).

worlds of God'. The ultimate completion of this stupendous undertaking will mark the culmination of the development of a world-wide divinely-appointed Administrative Order whose beginnings may be traced as far back as the concluding years of the heroic Age of the Faith.¹

On 5 June 1973, following the International Convention and the consultations with the Hands of the Cause, and less than a month after the Counsellors had left the Holy Land to resume their services within their zones, the following announcement was cabled by the Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies:

'ANNOUNCE ESTABLISHMENT HOLY LAND LONG ANTICIPATED INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CENTRE DESTINED EVOLVE INTO ONE THOSE WORLD SHAKING WORLD EMBRACING WORLD DIRECTING ADMINISTRATIVE INSTITUTIONS ORDAINED BY BAHÁ'U'LLAH ANTICIPATED BY 'ABDU'L-BAHA ELUCIDATED BY SHOGHI EFFENDI STOP MEMBERSHIP THIS NASCENT INSTITUTION COMPRISES ALL HANDS CAUSE GOD AND INITIALLY THREE COUNSELLORS WHO WITH HANDS PRESENT HOLY LAND WILL CONSTITUTE NUCLEUS ITS VITAL OPERATIONS STOP CALLING UPON HOOPER DUNBAR FLORENCE MAYBERRY AZIZ YAZDI PROCEED HOLY LAND ASSUME THIS HIGHLY MERITORIOUS SERVICE STOP OFFERING PRAYERS HEARTFELT GRATITUDE SACRED THRESHOLD THIS FURTHER EVIDENCE ORGANIC EVOLUTION ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER BAHÁ'U'LLAH.'

It was followed three days later by this expanded announcement to the Bahá'ís of the world:

The centennial year of the revelation of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* has already witnessed events of such capital significance in the annals of the Bahá'í Dispensation as to cause us to contemplate with awe the rapidity with which Divine Providence is advancing the Cause of the Most Great Name. The time is indeed propitious for the establishment of the International Teaching Centre, a development which, at one and the same time, brings to fruition the work of the Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land and provides for its extension into the future, links the institution of the Boards of Counsellors even more intimately with that of the Hands of the Cause of God, and powerfully reinforces the discharge of the rapidly growing responsibilities of the Universal House of Justice.

This International Teaching Centre now established will, in due course, operate from that building designated by the Guardian as the Seat for the Hands

of the Cause, which must be raised on the arc on Mount Carmel in close proximity to the Seat of the Universal House of Justice.

The duties now assigned to this nascent institution are:

To co-ordinate, stimulate and direct the activities of the Continental Boards of Counsellors and to act as liaison between them and the Universal House of Justice.

To be fully informed of the situation of the Cause in all parts of the world and to be able, from the background of this knowledge, to make reports and recommendations to the Universal House of Justice and give advice to the Continental Boards of Counsellors.

To be alert to possibilities, both within and without the Bahá'í community, for the extension of the teaching work into receptive or needy areas, and to draw the attention of the Universal House of Justice and the Continental Boards of Counsellors to such possibilities, making recommendations for action.

To determine and anticipate needs for literature, pioneers and travelling teachers and to work out teaching plans, both regional and global, for the approval of the Universal House of Justice.

All the Hands of the Cause of God will be members of the International Teaching Centre. Each Hand will be kept regularly informed of the activities of the Centre through reports or copies of its minutes, and will be able, wherever he may be residing or travelling, to convey suggestions, recommendations and information to the Centre and, whenever he is in the Holy Land, to take part in the consultations and other activities of the Centre.

In addition, we now appoint Mr. Hooper Dunbar, Mrs. Florence Mayberry and Mr. 'Aziz Yazdí to membership of the International Teaching Centre, with the rank of Counsellor. These believers, who have been serving with distinction on the Continental Boards of Counsellors in South America, North America and Central and East Africa respectively, will henceforth reside in Haifa and will, together with the Hands present in the Holy Land, constitute the nucleus of the operations of the Centre.

Authority for the expulsion and reinstatement of Covenant-breakers remains with the Hands of the Cause of God. All such matters will be investigated locally by the relative Continental Board of Counsellors in consultation with any Hand or Hands who may be in the area. The Continental Board of Counsellors and the Hands concerned will then make their reports to the International Teaching Centre where they will be considered. The decision whether or not to expel or reinstate will be made by the Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land who will, as at present, submit their decision to the Universal House of Justice for approval. . . .

¹ Shoghi Effendi, letter to the Bahá'ís of the world, 27 November 1954; see *Messages to the Bahá'í World*, p. 74.

The decisions now announced are the outcome of deliberation extending over a number of years, reinforced by consultations with the Hands of the Cause of God, and especially with the Hands residing in the Holy Land who were requested in 1968 to assist the Universal House of Justice in the establishment of the International Teaching Centre, a task that now increases in magnitude as that Centre begins its work.

One of the first tasks assigned by the Universal House of Justice to the International Teaching Centre was to devise the broad outlines of the global teaching plan to begin at Ridván 1974 and conclude five years later at Ridván 1979. This comprehensive and detailed survey of the entire Bahá'í world community provided an opportunity for the Teaching Centre to become thoroughly acquainted with the conditions, needs and potentialities of the one hundred and thirteen national Bahá'í communities which made up the Bahá'í international community at Ridván 1973. A greatly increased flow of vital information from the Continental Boards of Counsellors was called for by the International Teaching Centre, which promised, in turn, the development of an increasingly close relationship between itself and the Boards through a similarly increased flow of materials from the Teaching Centre. At the

request of the House of Justice the Teaching Centre also evolved a plan for international collaboration on travelling teaching projects.

The divinely ordained institution of the Hands of the Cause of God, having been brought into active reality by the Guardian of the Faith according to the directives of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament, was confronted in its infancy with an appalling crisis in the life of that Faith whose protection was its prime duty. During the interregnum between the passing of the Guardian and the election of the Universal House of Justice, the Hands of the Cause as its Chief Stewards, maintained the integrity and unity of the Faith. The functions of protection and propagation appointed to this great institution have now been extended into the future in a manner consonant with the principles of the Faith. The Continental Boards of Counsellors with their attendant Auxiliary Boards for protection and propagation, the assistants to the Auxiliary Board members, all co-ordinated and kept in relationship to the Universal House of Justice by the International Teaching Centre, form the fabric of the appointive arm of the Administrative Order of the Faith, which will in increasing measure exert its spiritualizing influence upon the development of the Bahá'í community and of all mankind.

2. THE WORK AND TRAVELS OF THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE

THE Hands of the Cause of God, freed, in 1968, of administrative duties, have continued to represent the Faith as ambassadors-at-large. Their assistance to the Continental Boards of Counsellors and to the National Spiritual Assemblies has shown that they are indeed 'one of the most precious assets the Bahá'í world possesses.'¹ The lengthy section in this volume comprising the world-wide survey of the Bahá'í national communities is studded with specific references to the visits of the Hands, and offers glowing tribute to their effective and inspiring encouragement.

It is beyond the scope of these pages to chronicle the ceaseless activities far and wide in the Bahá'í world of the seventeen Hands during the three years covered by this volume and the reader is referred to the section mentioned (pages 141 to 318). Brief summaries of the major travels of the Hands of the Cause follow.

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum

During this period, in addition to her service on the International Teaching Centre, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum undertook a lengthy journey to India, Bangladesh, Burma and Hong Kong, proceeding to the United States for the St. Louis Conference before visiting her homeland, Canada. Her 'Green Light Expedition', the historic odyssey which she undertook in the Amazon and Orinoco, is reported elsewhere (pages 419 to 448) and the motion picture and slide series of the great journey are described. Going on to the United States and Canada to supervise the making and release of the audio-visual products of the journey, she recorded the Canadian film of her reminiscences, *Invitation*. During this period, too, out of her experiences with and sympathy for Bahá'í pioneers in their often difficult, lonely and sacrificial services, she wrote *A Manual for Pioneers* (Bahá'í Publishing Trust, India, 1974).

Ugo Giachery

From his home in Monaco, Dr. Ugo Giachery has devoted himself primarily to the European communities, to the establishment and growth of which he has been so great a contributor; he has inspired many summer and winter schools, conferences, conventions and special events. In 1975 he was able to visit Greece and the Holy Land *en route* to an intensive teaching visit to the Cradle of the Faith. As a special mission, and in support of the growing prestige of the Cause in Europe, Dr. Giachery met and presented the Faith to Franz Joseph II, Prince of Lichtenstein.

'Alí-Akbar Furútan

Mr. 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, based in the Holy Land, has devoted himself to service in the International Teaching Centre, to duties of scholarship, to the Bahá'í pilgrims and visitors and, during the summers, to international travels in support of the Five Year Plan. In 1973 he was in various countries of western Europe; in 1974 in Írán for five intensive months of teaching, beginning with the annual convention; and, in 1975, participated in summer schools and conferences in western Europe.

Dhikru'lláh Khádem

Although based in the United States where he lent valuable reinforcement to the work of the Faith and participated in a number of significant conferences, Mr. Dhikru'lláh Khádem has devoted a great part of his time to the special project assigned by the Universal House of Justice of assembling as complete a record as possible of data on Bahá'í Holy Places and places of historical significance for the Faith in all parts of the world, the largest number of these, of course, being in Írán and 'Íraq. He attended the annual convention in Írán in 1973 and taught at the summer school, and visited Írán again at Riqván 1974.

Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í

General Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í lived in Írán throughout the period under review and vigorously pursued his work with the National Spiritual Assembly in the continuing problems

¹ The Universal House of Justice, letter to all National Spiritual Assemblies, 24 June 1968; *Wellspring of Guidance*, pp. 140-143.

of the protection of the Faith and its emancipation from the fetters of orthodoxy. In 1975 he visited a number of centres in the United Kingdom and Europe where he met the Bahá'í friends and addressed public meetings. In various centres in Germany, General 'Alá'í was introduced to a number of distinguished orientalist who accepted Bahá'í literature for university and State libraries.

Adelbert Mühlshlegel

Moving from Fribourg, Switzerland to Hofheim-am-Taunus in the shadow of the House of Worship in Langenhain, Germany, in December 1973, Dr. Adelbert Mühlshlegel has devoted himself to Europe's acute needs in the Five Year Plan. In early 1974 he made an extensive journey which took him to various centres in Switzerland, the United Kingdom and its northern island groups, to Iceland, the Faroes and Denmark. In the summer of 1975 he was able to undertake a lengthy South American itinerary, returning thence to serve, despite illness, on the German and European homefronts.

Jalál Kházeh

Colonel Jalál Kházeh has for some years concentrated on teaching and protection duties in Írán where the splendid upsurge of teaching work in the Provinces owes a great deal to his inspiration and encouragement. In the summer of 1973 he was able to undertake a globe-encircling journey to India, Japan, Alaska, Canada, the United States and Switzerland. In 1974 he made an extended tour of South America and the Caribbean islands.

Paul Haney

With the establishment of the International Teaching Centre in 1973 much of the responsibility for inaugurating the work of that institution fell upon Mr. Paul Haney from among the Hands of the Cause who reside in the Holy Land. The increasingly onerous duties cast upon the Boards of Counsellors throughout the world has greatly expanded the work of co-ordination and communication at the World Centre and has called heavily upon Mr. Haney's administrative talents. In addition, in 1973-1974 he visited the United States and the United Kingdom on a teaching mission.

'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá

Continuing his vital responsibilities as Trustee of the Ḥuququ'lláh, Dr. 'Alí-Muḥammad Varqá was able to undertake travels in the intervals allowed by his professorial duties at the University of Ṭíhrán. In the summer of 1973 he visited the western hemisphere, notably aiding the teaching work in the French Antilles. In the summer of 1974 he journeyed to Europe and to many francophone countries of West Africa. Although hampered by illness, he was able to be in Europe during the summer of 1975.

Enoch Olinga

Mr. Enoch Olinga, despite pressing duties in Uganda, has been able to serve the African communities far and wide. Travelling through East Africa in 1973-1974, he undertook thereafter a five-month West African teaching mission to twelve countries. In the spring of 1975 he embarked upon another intensive circuit through West Africa, aiding twelve countries in their demanding goals of the Five Year Plan, attending an International Youth Conference and the inaugural convention of the National Spiritual Assembly of Upper West Africa. At year's end he began a four-month teaching programme aimed at improving relationships of the many Ugandan Bahá'í communities of both the Western Provinces and the Eastern Provinces with the Government.

William Sears

Mr. William Sears has continued his zealous and creative labours via many modes of communication including writing, audio cassettes, radio and television programmes. Notable has been the completion of a television series produced in conjunction with the National Spiritual Assembly of the Hawaiian Islands. Based in Canada from the summer of 1974, Mr. Sears at intervals has been able to undertake lengthy teaching journeys: in 1974, to Korea and Japan, and to the youth conferences in Hilo, Hawaii, and Oklahoma and St. Louis in the United States; to Samoa in early 1975; to Iceland, the Faroes, Shetland and Orkney Islands that summer. His intensive work with the Canadian and American communities and his frequent travels have been a source of great stimulus to them.

John Robarts

On his departure from the Holy Land in May 1973, Mr. John Robarts flew home to Canada via Kenya and London, attending the annual conventions of the United Kingdom and Canada. Despite the difficulties of ill health Mr. Robarts gallantly abandoned his hoped-for sabbatical for rest and study in response to the urgent needs of the Canadian community. During the winter months he travelled through Canada's Provinces in support of the Canadian Bahá'í fund, visited the United States national centre at Naw-Rúz, and attended the Canadian annual convention at Riḍván 1974 at which time the new Canadian Ḥazíratu'l-Quds was dedicated. In the summer of that year he attended the St. Louis conference and North American summer schools, and then visited a number of centres in the Caribbean and Central America. The meetings and conference in Vancouver in the autumn of 1975 commemorating the eight-day visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Canada in 1912 were attended by Mr. Robarts.

H. M. Balyúzi

Mr. Ḥasan M. Balyúzi, in spite of chronic ill health, has persistently pursued his scholarship, research and writing for the Faith. His *Muḥammad and the Course of Islám* was published (George Ronald, Oxford; 1976) and attracted a good deal of critical appraisal. With this work, Mr. Balyúzi greatly consolidated his recognized position as a scholar and writer. He is completing his great trilogy on the three Central Figures of the Faith with a comprehensive survey of the life of Bahá'u'lláh set against the social and political conditions of the world at the time.

John Ferraby

Mr. John Ferraby died in September 1973¹ after a long illness which for some time had vastly restricted his activities.

H. Collis Featherstone

Although Mr. H. Collis Featherstone, who lives in Australia, has made the entire Pacific his particular area, constantly fostering the teaching

work and encouraging the friends by his visits, he has not confined his services to that vast zone. He travelled in 1973 to Europe, Canada, the United States, Alaska, Eastern Asia, Indonesia, the South Pacific and New Zealand. In 1974 he attended the Hawaiian Youth Conference and visited centres in the United States, Alaska, the West Pacific and Eastern Asia. He has undertaken delicate missions on behalf of the Universal House of Justice in efforts to free the Faith from restrictions.

Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir

With characteristic vigour and stamina, Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir has brought his zeal and fertile mind to serve the goals of the Five Year Plan in half a hundred national Bahá'í communities across the world, travelling almost ceaselessly on behalf of the Cause from his London home. In 1973–1974 he undertook four major journeys: to Europe and Africa; to Írán, South East Asia, the South Pacific, East and West Africa; to Europe; and to Latin America. In 1975 he was again in Latin America, thence travelling to West Africa, including attendance at two inaugural conventions, and thereafter to summer schools in Europe. In the autumn of 1975 he set off for Asia via the Holy Land, revisiting South East Asia, the North West Pacific, and on to Latin America, the United States and Canada.

Abu'l-Qásim Faizi

From his home in the Holy Land, amplifying the services which he offers to the International Teaching Centre as well as to the increasing flow of pilgrims and visitors, Mr. Abu'l-Qásim Faizi has moved outward to the Bahá'í world in a series of long teaching journeys. He visited Europe in the autumn of 1973; was in Europe, Latin America and North America from May to October of 1974, including the St. Louis and Hilo conferences; returned to Europe during the winter of 1974–1975 and again during the summer school period of 1975. In addition to his extensive correspondence, Mr. Faizi has published a number of his studies and scholarly commentaries.

¹ See 'In Memoriam', p. 511.

3. HANDS OF THE CAUSE WHO
 REPRESENTED THE UNIVERSAL
 HOUSE OF JUSTICE AT INAUGURAL
 CONVENTIONS FOR THE ELECTION
 OF NATIONAL SPIRITUAL
 ASSEMBLIES

1973-1976

Ridván 1974

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum

Hong Kong

(Seat: Kowloon, Hong Kong)

Ridván 1975

Dr. 'Alí Muḥammad Varqá

Jordan

(Seat: 'Ammán)

Enoch Olinga

Sierra Leone

(Seat: Freetown)

Upper West Africa

(Seat: Dakar, Sênégál)

Dr. Raḥmatu'lláh Muḥájir

Niger

(Seat: Niamey)

Togo

(Seat: Lomé)

4. THE GREEN LIGHT EXPEDITION OF RÚHÍYYIH RABBANI

FEBRUARY–AUGUST 1975

Adapted from the documentary slide programmes of the expedition¹

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, widow of the late Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, World Head and Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, is one of the highest-ranking officers of that Faith, a Hand of the Cause of God. She is better known to the general public as Madame Rabbani.

Born in 1910 of an American mother and a Canadian father, Madame Rabbani is an author, lecturer and world traveller, having already visited 109 countries at the time she undertook, in 1975, an expedition to visit the indigenous tribes of the Amazon Basin in South America. At the end of the jungle phase of this arduous and historic journey, she and the members of her party attended two Andean Bahá'í conferences, one held in the altiplano of Bolivia, the other in Cuzco, Peru. A team of professional film makers accompanied the expedition and a documentary film, two hours in length, entitled *The Green Light Expedition*, was produced with English, Spanish and Persian commentary. An extensive record was also made by a professional photographer. A selection of these photographs follows. Some intimation of the profound sensibility of Bahá'ís to the central teaching of Bahá'u'lláh, namely the oneness of mankind, may be gathered from the following account.

PART I—A VOYAGE ON THE ORINOCO AND VENTUARI RIVERS OF VENEZUELA

Venezuela, where the first stage of the expedition took place, is the area seen at the top of the map of South America.



Madame Rúhíyyih Rabbani and Dr. Pablo Anduze, Governor of the State of Amazonas in Venezuela, whom she had met on her previous visit to Puerto Ayacucho in 1968. Dr. Anduze is an authority on Amazonian Indian tribes and received Madame Rabbani very cordially prior to the commencement of the expedition, giving valuable advice about conditions in the interior.

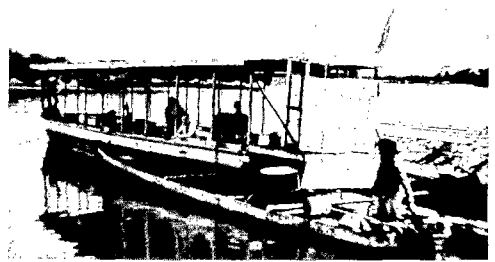
¹ Copyright © 1976 by Rúhíyyih Rabbani.
Distributed by International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Center,
1640 Holcomb Road, Victor, New York 14564, U.S.A.

Puerto Ayacucho, the rapidly growing provincial capital of the Amazonas State, is the door to the interior. The expedition met with the devoted and active all-Indian Bahá'í community in the outskirts of the town.



Madame Rabbani with Ramona and Leco Zamora. Mr. Zamora, a Mapuche Indian, who came as a Bahá'í pioneer to Venezuela from Argentina, accompanied the expedition throughout the first stage of its travels. Mrs. Zamora is a Venezuelan Indian of the famous Carib people. A marriage between two such widely different tribes is very unusual but exemplifies the complete lack of prejudice among Bahá'ís.

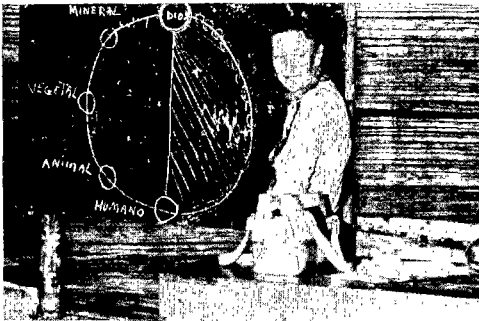
The expedition travelled over 1,700 kilometres on this river barge and affectionately christened it *Queen Mary*. Seven members of the expedition and three crewmen lived and slept on it for thirty-two nights; it was propelled by the outboard motors of two dugout canoes attached to its sides. The one with the thatched roof was the captain's quarters. The little hut in the middle housed the unbelievable luxury of a bathroom.



Dawn on the *Queen Mary* was a series of upheavals. Sleeping in hammocks—an invention of the Carib Indians now widely used in Central and South America—is a way of life both practical and comfortable but the 'gringo' or foreigner has to get used to it.

There were many villages on the Orinoco near Puerto Ayacucho with Bahá'í communities.

Leco Zamora was familiar with these and an impromptu meeting, often in the school house, would be held. Rúhíyyih Khánúm is speaking in English; on the left Mr. Mas'úd Khamsí, a member of the South American Continental Board of Counsellors who accompanied the expedition as its business manager, is translating into Spanish; and the lady at the far left into the local Indian language.



The Venezuelan Indians, an intelligent and highly spiritual people, were very interested in the Bahá'í teachings regarding the development of man on this earth and his soul after death. With the help of a chart drawn on the school house blackboard, Madame Rabbani is illustrating her points on this subject.

The visit of fellow-Bahá'ís was a great and happy event for people so isolated geographically from most national community activities within the Faith. All concerned were delighted to have their picture taken.



This woman, an expert potter in the great Indian tradition, had been a Bahá'í for more than ten years when the expedition visited her on Buenos Aires Island, near Venado. All her family are very active in teaching the Faith.

The daily life of the expedition as it proceeded ever deeper into the interior began to form a pattern: when a village was seen, the boat would put in to shore and Madame Rabbani and Mr. Khamsí, accompanied by other members of the expedition, would go to visit the villagers. If they seemed interested to know the reason for this visit, an informal meeting, such as this typical one, would be held.



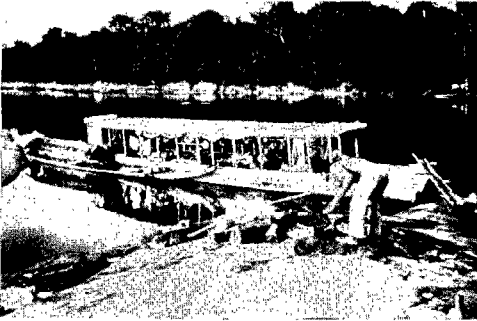
Night meetings were sometimes more convenient when people had come home from work on their plantations or the river. The universal instrument of Latin American Indians is the pipe, and the fact that one of the members of the expedition had brought his recorder was a key that unlocked many doors of friendly companionship.

From Puerto Ayacucho to San Fernando (the town on the distant shore) the Orinoco is the frontier between Colombia and Venezuela. *Queen Mary* is the boat on the left, moored on the Colombian side of the river, and the building floating on the water is a large general store. After leaving San Fernando, fewer evidences were seen of the disruption of village life by contact with civilization.



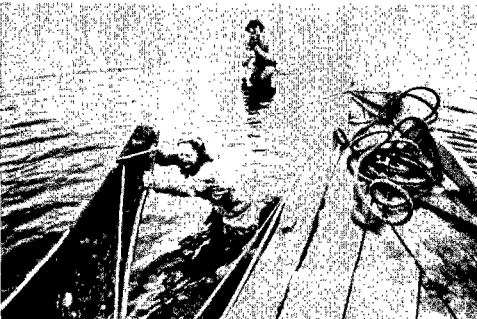
Such bridges are the usual way of crossing jungle streams. Most members of the expedition had not done any balancing of this kind since their childhood. Though it looks deceptively easy, it was in fact dangerous because the handrail was too light to support any weight, and the drop into the river was almost six metres.

Leaving the Orinoco, the expedition went up the shallower Ventuari River, finding many huts of this style where the thatched roof covers the entire building. They are shady and cool in the daytime, keep the heavy rains out and are warm at night.



Every night *Queen Mary* moored by the bank of the river and every morning members of the crew made a fire and cooked their meal. They rarely ate in the middle of the day but would content themselves with a handful of dry cassava meal washed down with a little river water. Their simple diet seems to keep these Indians healthy, strong and intelligent.

Although the expedition carried a stove and usually cooked on board, sometimes it followed the example of the crew and cooked over an open fire on a sand bank. Here Madame Rabbani is breaking driftwood to go under the pot on the right.



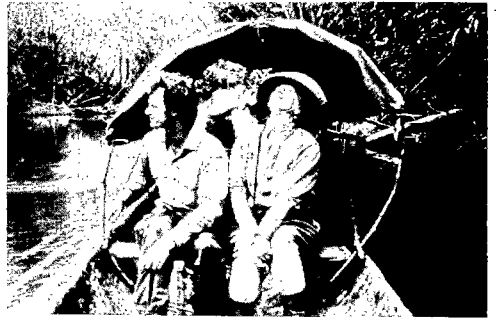
There were also many hidden sandbanks on which *Queen Mary* stuck and had to be pushed off, everyone ardently hoping they would not be bitten by the vicious piranha found in these rivers of South America.

The tributary rivers being narrow and shallow, the *Queen Mary* was often unable to navigate them, so the expedition rented this big dugout canoe, installed the extra outboard-motor it had brought along, and was free to travel anywhere.



The Venezuelan Indians are a fine looking race and the village children seem bursting with health. This little fellow is riding in a homemade carriage. He sits in the natural sheath from a particular kind of palm tree; these are widely used as a dish and for many other purposes.

Jungle such as this shown on the bank of the river is almost impenetrable on foot. One would have to clear a path with machetes every step of the way. The universal roads are therefore the rivers and streams, and to pass through the unspoiled wilderness is to experience unbelievable peace and beauty.



The staple food of the jungle people of South America is yucca, known also as manioc or cassava. It is first grated, the pulp put into a woven tube and compressed to extract the bitter juice, then rubbed through sieves (shown left) and the resulting coarse flour roasted over a fire and eaten as meal or made into flat, dry, hard cakes of bread which will keep for some time.

These Indians belong to one of the largest and most primitive groups in Venezuela, the Yanomamos. Although this small settlement was already affected by its proximity to civilization, these people were nearest, of the groups the expedition met in Venezuela, to the old, untouched way of jungle life. The women grow and spin the cotton to make thread for their beautiful, cool hammocks, such as the one this woman is weaving.



The Catholic priest in San Juan de Manapiare was a very fine, consecrated man; like so many missionaries in South America, he is from Spain, not Latin America. San Juan is a rapidly growing town in the interior, now connected with civilization by a road, and a centre from which this whole area is being opened up to agriculture, mining, and the general exploitation of civilization.

This is the 'capitán' or chief of an all-Bahá'í village way up the Ventuari River. The Government is giving to those who will settle in the interior grants of land for farming, and a number of families have settled there. The chief is pointing out the site they have set aside for their future Bahá'í Centre.



Sunset on a jungle river and an Indian preparing to shoot a fish for his dinner. Bahá'u'lláh said the city is the home of the body, but the country is the home of the soul. The Indians still live in the home of the soul.

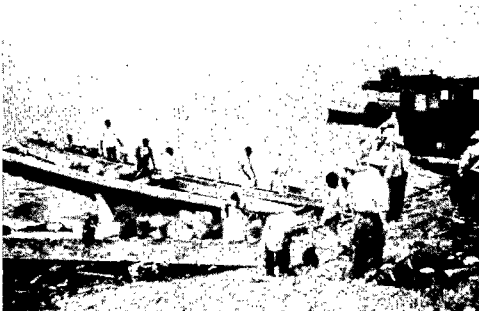
PART II—THE BUSH NEGROES OF SURINAM

The small area seen at the top of the map of South America is Surinam where the second stage of the Green Light Expedition took place. It consisted of visits to Bush Negro villagers in the interior; they are a unique people, descendants of slaves brought from Africa who fled into the jungles, reestablished their African way of life and were never recaptured.



Surinam is a multi-racial nation composed of people of Amerindian, Negro, Indonesian, Chinese, Caucasian and other backgrounds. The Bahá'í community in Paramaribo, the capital city, is a harmonious mixture of these races.

Some of the members of the expedition about to start out on Lake 'Professor Doctor Engineer Van Blumenstein' (shown in the background), a vast flooded valley area created through building a dam for electric power.



Dugout canoes—the universal conveyance—had been rented to take the expedition across this artificial lake which produces electric power for the mining of bauxite, the main export of Surinam.

The lake is filled with the trunks of dead trees, still sticking out of the water—a great hazard for navigation even in shallow dugout canoes—and it took almost three hours to reach Sarakreek, on the other side. The expedition members are disembarking at the village of Redi Doti.



The first act of the members of the expedition was to meet the captain or chief of Redi Doti, shown here with Madame Rabbani. He informed her they were welcome to use the village hall as a guest house during their stay; indeed, the word 'Welcome' in large letters hung over its door.

During the four-day stay in Redi Doti eight people slept and lived in this hut; on the left the hammocks can be seen rolled up on the wall, to be swung across the hut each night as beds; the expedition's kitchen is seen at the back and some of its members are sitting in the 'dining room'.



Bush Negroes are divided into four tribes; the people of Redi Doti, a village of about 1,000 people, belong to the Aukaner tribe. It was at the invitation of this student, shown with Madame Rabbani and his grandparents before their hut, that the expedition visited Redi Doti, which previously had had no contact with Bahá'ís.

These two men are witch doctors, the pagan priests of Redi Doti, an almost entirely pagan village. They are the guardians of its most sacred shrine, which they permitted the expedition members to enter and which is very like those in West Africa. Behind the man on the right is a 'spirit screen' to prevent evil spirits from entering the temple.



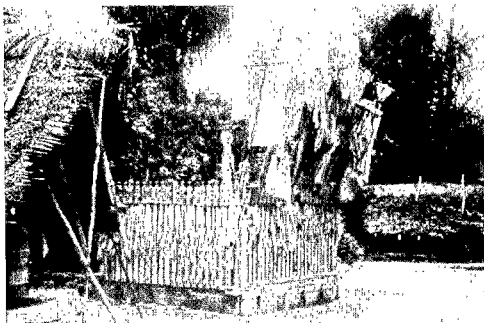
The doctor of the expedition, Núşrat Rabbani, a Persian pioneer who had practiced medicine for many years in Surinam, noticed this child had an eye infection. Like almost all jungle children, this little girl was not afraid, did not cry, and let herself be treated.

Madame Rabbani rolling and tying up her own bedding, much to everyone's amusement. On the right, the captain is having a good laugh at her because she refused all offers of help, saying her years of experience had made her more capable of doing this than anyone else. He cordially invited her and her party to come back, stating they would always be most welcome.



The second stage of the Surinam visit took place on the Surinam River. The expedition hired a plane to fly to Boto Passi (which means in Taki-Taki, the local language, 'boat passes') where a tremendous number of curious and eager children met them.

To these little people the members of the expedition and their piles of belongings, stranded on the grass airfield, were the most peculiar and fascinating sight they had ever seen. Mr. Khamsí called upon the village chief and asked him if a boat could be rented; he was very co-operative and dozens of people, at no cost, helpfully carried innumerable bundles through the village and down to the boat landing where the party embarked for Kamaloea.



The majority of Bush Negroes follow the old African religion of their forefathers. They are a reverent and spiritually-minded people and nearly every home has its own 'voodoo' or little protective shrine. Villages have larger ones like this in Kamaloea.

Madame Rabbani found Kamaloea the most beautiful village she had ever seen. The people are gifted wood carvers with a fine sense of design and use of materials, and a great many of the houses are elaborately decorated. In addition to being an artistic people, the Bush Negroes are spotlessly clean, and the visit there was a memorable and happy one.



The small Bahá'í group of Kamaloea, most of whom had accepted the Faith while working in Paramaribo, had never before received a visitor from the outside. Here a consultation is taking place as to how best they feel the visit of the expedition can be of help to them. It was decided to go back down river to Boto Passi.

The chief of Boto Passi, one of the elders of the village (centre), and Madame Rabbani in the meeting held in the village hall. She told the chief how the kindness shown to them the day before had touched their hearts and made them want to come back and meet them again and thank them. The old captain thanked her for her talk and insisted that on the way back down the river all the members of the expedition should sleep one night at Boto Passi, which they did.



They then went back up the Surinam River in their dugout canoe to pay a visit to the village of Lafanti. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said in the *Tablets of the Divine Plan* that those who go to serve the Cause in foreign countries should learn the native language. Here a Persian pioneer who is a member of the Auxiliary Board is addressing the meeting in Taki-Taki, which he speaks fluently and which is of tremendous assistance in his teaching activities.

After this meeting five new Bahá'ís were enrolled; one of them, the captain of the village, is seated to the right of Madame Rabbani. Behind her are some of the friends from Kamaloea who took the expedition members to visit their neighbours in Lafanti.



The illustrated teaching materials the Board member brought with him were a source of deep interest to the Bahá'ís in Kamaloea. They went over them very carefully, and, before he returned to Paramaribo, they had persuaded him to leave them with them for their own teaching work.

On the last night of the expedition's visit the election of the historic first Bush Negro Bahá'í Spiritual Assembly was held. The old man to the right of Madame Rabbani is the captain of the village, who accepted the Faith and was elected a member of the Assembly. Here the Board member is explaining the procedure in Bahá'í elections.



As most of the people are illiterate, the Board member wrote their ballots for them. The Bahá'ís were all radiantly happy over the establishment of their Assembly—to which one woman was elected—and the other villagers were duly impressed.

Next morning the expedition had to leave, and this new member of the Assembly accompanied them in the big dugout canoe for the nine-hour journey down the Surinam River. His costume is by no means unusual: he carries a gun for hunting, a big knife or machete for clearing undergrowth in the jungle, a briefcase, an umbrella, a boat paddle, and a bow and arrow for fishing.



For four nights—with 40 other passengers waiting in Mamadam for the Government ferry boat, all sleeping together in one huge shed—the expedition members and their Kamaloea friends lived, ate and chatted together, cementing the bonds of a very real friendship.

During this stay in Mamadam the man in the white shirt sitting beside the Board member became very interested in the Bahá'ís: Who were these white people and these Bush Negroes? He asked many questions and listened hour after hour to the explanations of the Kamaloea friends and accepted the Faith the morning the ferry came. Here he is being enrolled as a Bahá'í.



The ferry boat arrived at dawn and was now ready to recross the great inland lake. Dozens and dozens of people scrambled on board with all their parcels. So did the expedition members, even more heavily laden! The only way to get on board seemed to be to walk up this rope, and that is what Madame Rabbani is doing. The wonderful visit to Surinam was over, and the next phase of the Green Light Expedition—the Amazon River—lay ahead.

PART III—THE UPPER AMAZON AND ITS TRIBUTARIES

The area seen on the map of South America is Brazil and Peru. After leaving Surinam the expedition arrived in Belém, at the mouth of the Amazon River, situated near the island shown on the right upper side of the continent. From there it crossed the continent from east to west.



During the short visit to Belém, Brazil's most populous northern city, Madame Rabbani was interviewed on the first television presentation of the Bahá'í Faith in that area and lectured to university students taking post-graduate teacher training courses. She is shown seated between the Rector of the Federal University of Pará (left) and the Vice-Rector (right).

Some of the members of the first Bahá'í family of Macapa, a city north of Belém; they are fisher folk of Spanish-Indian blood. What appears to be the sea in the background is the Amazon River.



Near Macapa there are many Bahá'í fishermen and their families who are descendants of the African slaves brought to Brazil. The thatched hut is the village Bahá'í Centre where a happy meeting with the children was held, most of the adults being away at their work.

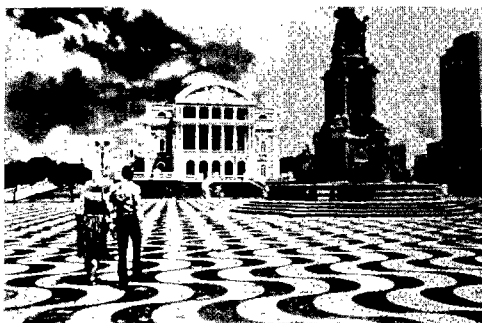
Madame Rabbani being welcomed on her arrival at the airport at Manaus where the first All-Amazon Bahá'í Conference was arranged to coincide with the arrival of the expedition.

The vast Amazon Basin area spreads over parts of nine countries: Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Surinam and French Guiana. Manaus, on the Amazon River, is the centre of this giant wheel, almost 2,000 kilometres inland from the Atlantic coast.



An excellent press conference attended by reporters from newspapers and television stations was held with Madame Rabbani. The teaching campaign which accompanied the first All-Amazon Bahá'í Conference resulted in a degree of publicity in this capital city of the State of Amazonas which she said she had never seen equalled anywhere in the world.

Part of this effort was reflected in Madame Rabbani's very cordial forty-five-minute interview with the Governor of the State, Sr. Da Silva Reis, who was particularly interested in the Bahá'í teachings about life after death and asked many questions.



Manaus, a city of almost half a million people, lies in the heart of the greatest jungle area on the globe. The discovery of rubber and its exploitation raised up this giant metropolis where the 'rubber barons' created a city of fabulous prosperity called the 'Paris of the Amazon'. On its main square, with its black and white mosaic pavement, stands this famous opera house, one of the most beautiful in Latin America.

The expedition's last meeting with the Bahá'ís. As in all huge cities, the entire community was not able to gather, but everyone's heart was full of thanksgiving for the wonderful success which had crowned the first All-Amazon Conference.



From Manaus the expedition flew to Leticia, a town in Colombia where the frontiers of Brazil, Peru and Colombia meet. It is an ideal centre for pioneering and Bahá'í activity as it lies in the centre of an area with many Indian tribes. During the week in which the expedition was preparing for the next stage of its journey, a meeting was held in a nearby Ticuna village. The people gathered in front of the verandah of the house of the chief, who next day accepted the Faith.

The small community of Bahá'is in Leticia, shown here, were very enthusiastic and active in the teaching work.



For eighteen days the captain, steersman, guide and seven expedition members slung their hammocks in this old cargo boat. Owing to the Amazon's torrential rains such boats are very shut in and the heat and smell of the diesel engine were suffocating. Because of all this they named her 'S.S. *Mutt*'.

Going up the gangplank onto the boat was always somewhat precarious, but it was getting onto the roof that was really difficult.



Every morning the members of the expedition climbed onto the roof of the *Mutt* to have prayers and discuss plans, because the noise of the engine inside the boat was deafening. As the boat had no deck, getting up and down could be achieved only with the assistance of a rope and by walking on a ledge four centimetres wide.

Because of the season of torrential rains the whole area beside the Amazon and its tributaries was flooded, an annual occurrence to which the Indians are completely adapted. Everyone goes about by boat, big or little, like this man who paddled along easily and swiftly, the top of his canoe only an inch above the river.



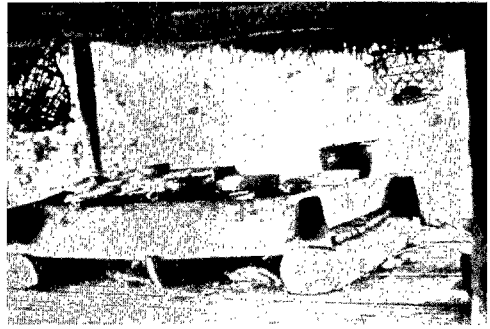
Types of hut differ greatly from tribe to tribe, but they are invariably well made and entirely suited to the climate. In this large Ticuna village the inhabitants had been recently converted to Christianity and had a school and regular chapel services. Their homes and way of life, however, were still traditional.

Seeking contact with less civilized villages, *Mutt* went up small tributary rivers. The welcome of the Indians—no doubt sensing the feeling of deep human oneness in the hearts of the Bahá'ís—was universally friendly. On one occasion the expedition was invited to come back and share in a fiesta to be held that evening. Many Indians were dancing, singing and playing their pipes, such as the one this chief is playing, which emit a shrill, very high pitched sound.



Deep in the unspoiled jungle, on a tranquil and beautiful stream, Madame Rabbani is about to go up the 'front steps' of a typical river home. The soil of the jungle, strangely enough, is very poor and one seldom finds large groups living together in the wilderness, as neither hunting nor agriculture can feed more than a small group in one place.

This is a typical open hearth for cooking, laid on the floor of the entirely wooden hut. Madame Rabbani had seen similar hearths in Panama among some of the Indian tribes she had visited there.



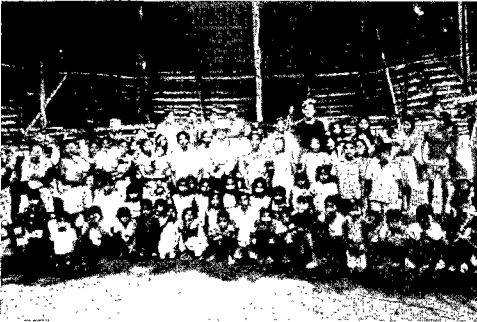
At last was found, in a village deep in the jungle, an Indian who proudly adhered to his ancestral costume and customs. He demonstrated the use of the blowpipe for shooting birds and small game with poison-tipped darts of wood, which are kept in the quiver hanging around his neck. Taking careful aim, with a tremendous puff the arrow is expelled from his two-and-a-half-metre long blowpipe. After journeying hours to meet him, the best reward was this wonderful smile.

Ruth Pringle, the skilled Bahá'í nurse who accompanied Madame Rabbani throughout this phase of the expedition, and who is a long-standing pioneer in Central America, is shown treating the scalp of a badly infected baby. When it was all over, the mother was very appreciative and greatly relieved.



The S.S. *Muti* heads up another small river to visit another tribe, this time the Boras. The Amazon is a land of mirror images; everywhere one goes, except where the current is swift, there is a perfect reflection in the water, an upside-down world so perfect it is hard to tell which is the real one.

The Boras are a distinctive people with their own style of huts, customs and music. One of the Indians obligingly played this very unusual drum. The long pieces of wood are from a special tree and give a pleasant, deep sound, like chimes. They are set over a hole in the earth which acts as a resonance box.



A number of meetings were held in the huge communal huts of this tribe, the village school teachers invariably acting as excellent translators into the native language from the Spanish of Mr. Khamsí, who in turn was translating the English of Madame Rabbani. Such experiences underline the necessity for an international auxiliary language, one of Bahá'u'lláh's fundamental teachings.

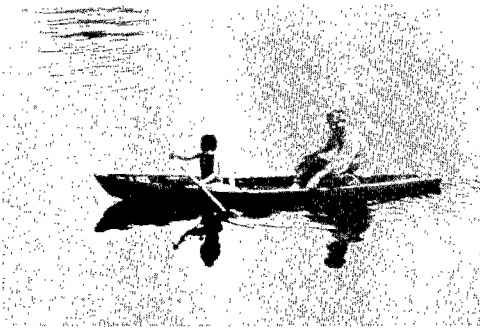
Quite spontaneously and with great affection this old Indian woman came up and embraced Madame Rabbani after her talk. What is in the heart can always be sensed by tribal people, who are very sensitive to such things. The Indians are for the most part a short race.

One can see here how much taller the members of the expedition are than the native people.



This bridge on the way to a Shipibo Indian village near Pucallpa serves its purpose as well as any other kind would, the people trotting over it as if it were completely flat and as wide as a city sidewalk.

It is always a pleasure to watch an Indian handle a boat, as they are so skilled that every gesture seems purely spontaneous, like breathing. One can also learn a great deal about creating stable family life by observing tribal life in which the children—of all ages—are, from birth, an integral part of all that goes on.

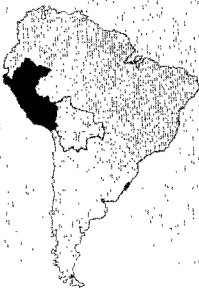


One day Mr. Khamsí went shopping, obligingly paddled by an extremely skilful young boatman who could not have been over five years old!

Village children do adult work; it makes them responsible and mature, but they are never over-burdened by their parents or treated harshly, only brought up to feel they are a normal part of a living organism—the family, the village, the tribe. This little girl was busily cooking on the typical out-door stove of the Shipibos, the last tribe of Amazonian Indians visited by the expedition before flying to Lima. The wonderful jungle journeys were at an end.



PART IV—THE ANDEAN BAHÁ'ÍS OF BOLIVIA AND PERU



The area seen on the map of South America is Peru and Bolivia. From Lima, the capital of Peru, the expedition went to La Paz, the capital of Bolivia. Its members then drove to Sacaca, on the altiplano, for a special Indian Bahá'í conference. Returning to Lima, Madame Rabbani and some of her companions attended in Cuzco, Peru, the first All-Quechua Bahá'í Conference.

A National Teaching Conference was arranged to coincide with the arrival of the expedition in Lima. Bahá'ís from all over Peru attended. This picture was taken in the public gardens adjoining the Bahá'í headquarters.



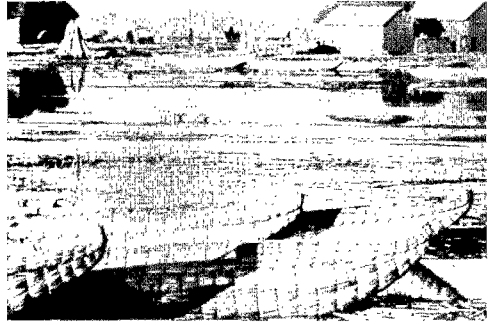
For the second time on her long journey Madame Rabbani met with the Continental Board of Counsellors for South America. Mr. 'Aziz Yazdí, a member of the International Teaching Centre in Haifa, was also present. Standing, from left to right, are Peter McLaren, Athos Costas, Donald Witzel, Mas'úd Khamsí, and 'Aziz Yazdí. Seated are Madame Rabbani and Mrs. Leonora Armstrong, the first pioneer to Latin America, who went to Brazil in 1922.

At a special function for prominent women Madame Rabbani was able to renew a very old friendship. Seated on the left is Miss Eve Nicklin, one of the earliest pioneers to South America, who had been there for thirty-seven years. She is the spiritual 'mother' of the Bahá'ís of Peru.



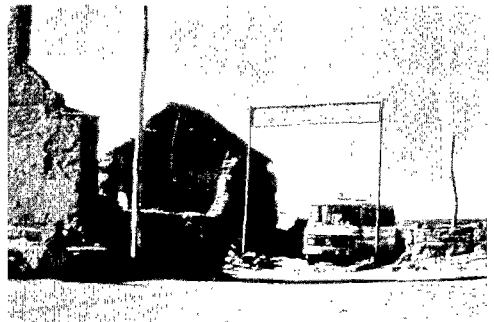
Another special event was a visit to one of the barrios of Lima to attend a Bahá'í children's class, held weekly in the home of this Quechua Indian Bahá'í. He is a widower, and these are his five children whom he has brought up in the Faith. During a previous trip Madame Rabbani had visited his home and was happy to renew her friendship with this devoted family.

Driving over the altiplano from Puno to La Paz the road skirts the shore of Lake Titicaca, the highest large navigable lake in the world, over 4,000 metres above sea level. The famous *titora* boats, made of bundles of special reeds, are used today as they were at the time of the Inca civilization. They are not only used on this lake all the time, but also on the seacoast and, strangely enough, similar boats are used on a lake in Ethiopia. Truly, man is universal!



During this third trip of Madame Rabbani to Bolivia she was cordially received by the President, General Hugo Banzer (right). Between them is seated Andrés Jachacollo, the first Bolivian Indian Bahá'í, now a member of the Auxiliary Board. The President was obviously impressed to learn that Mr. Jachacollo had been one of the Bolivian delegates who came to Haifa to elect the first Universal House of Justice in 1963.

A bus load of Bahá'ís entering Sacaca, a village of some 2,000 people, to attend the Bolivian Bahá'í Conference. Sacaca is entirely built of adobe (mud), the universal building material used by all people in every continent of the globe.



Madame Rabbani, riding a mule, on her way to the opening session of the conference in a village a thousand feet above Sacaca. The extreme altitude left all 'gringos', or foreigners, breathless, but nevertheless many of them struggled to the top, bringing very small children with them. No one wished to miss such a joyous and historic occasion.

Bahá'ís from far and wide, dressed for the conference in their festive clothes, poured into the tiny hamlet of Totoroco, many playing their pipes and beating their drums, hour after hour, as they climbed up the mountain from Sacaca.



Rúhiyyih Khánum told them how happy she was to see them again, and that as they were all coming across the hills together she had had a very vivid feeling that above their heads, invisible in the sky, a great army was marching with them—the souls of holy people who have passed away but continue to help us in this world, the Supreme Concourse.

The friends listened with great attention as she went on to say she felt sure their parents and grandparents were watching them on this joyous occasion and sharing it with them. 'This is a feast of love,' she told them. 'Why have I come? Why have you come? Only because we love each other. This is the greatest gift Bahá'u'lláh has brought into the world today—love between different people.'



The Indians, like all villagers all over the world, are good listeners, and their powers of concentration appear to far exceed those of many city people. The people shown here are descended from the Incas, who, without a written language, created a great empire.

After lunch the festivities started again. This beautiful woman is one of the very active Bahá'ís. Nearly everything these villagers are wearing was made by themselves from llama wool, dyed, spun, and woven at home. Even the felt hats, different in shape from village to village, are a local product.



Each group of villagers seemed to have its own band, the women and children also playing with ease and skill as they arrived to join in the festivities.

Sometimes the pipes are thick and long, like these, which produce deep notes. These mountaineers, completely adapted to the high altitudes at which they live, have a greater lung capacity than other races and do not know what it is to get short of breath. They can walk uphill for hours at a time while playing their instruments.



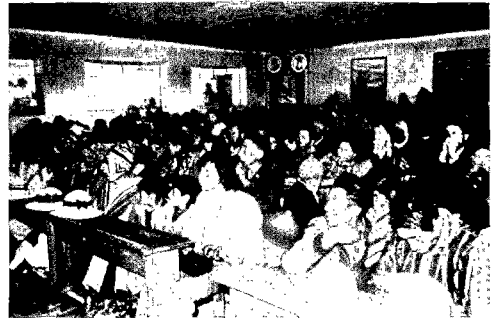
The panpipe, of all varieties and any number of reeds, seems to be the universal musical instrument of South American Indians, whether in the mountains or the jungles. Often the pipes have double rows, like the one seen here, which has over thirty reeds in it and a wide range of notes. In addition to the instrumental music, many of the Bahá'ís had composed special, beautiful songs for the occasion.

Not only are the people extremely musical, but dancing is a natural expression of feeling at every fiesta. The feather hats worn by this group of villagers are only taken out for very sacred celebrations. The feathers, from the rhea (the South American ostrich), have been imported as far back as Inca times from Argentina.



When the sun was getting low, all the attendants gathered for a group photograph. The prayers, the talks, the songs, music and dancing, the simple lunch eaten on the hillside, all the joyous events of a unique day, had knit the hearts of the Bahá'ís of different races, nations and villages into closer bonds of oneness under the shadow of Bahá'u'lláh's love.

The second day of the conference was held in the village school at Sacaca, which the authorities had kindly placed at the disposal of the Bahá'ís. There were not only talks but free consultation about the progress of the Five Year Plan in Bolivia, and many offers of help and suggestions were made.



On the eve of the unique All-Quechua Bahá'í Conference convened in Cuzco, Peru by the Continental Board of Counsellors for South America, a banquet was given for Government officials and other notabilities in this beautiful room at the Government tourist hotel.

The conference was entirely conducted in the Quechua language. Here the session is opening with a prayer in Quechua, the language of the old Inca empire, still spoken by millions of Indians in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru.



Madame Rabbani presented the message received from the Universal House of Justice. The main purpose of the conference was to see if the Quechua Bahá'ís from Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru could understand each other's dialects so that Bahá'í literature for the three countries could be made uniform. They held many special workshops on this subject during the conference.

While the Quechua Bahá'ís were consulting, many Spanish-speaking Bahá'ís were telling the people who the Bahá'ís are and what they believe. The people were very interested as they had never seen such an international group of friendly people, and the much-publicized All-Quechua Conference had astonished them. This sign says that Bahá'u'lláh is the return of Viracocha, a divine being of Indian tradition.



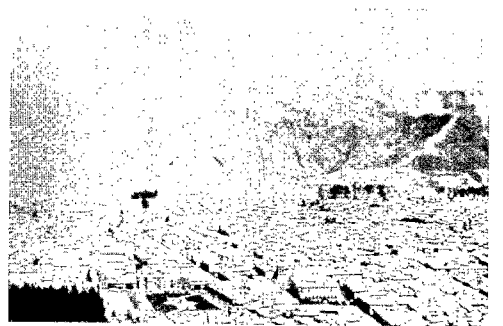
The Indian Bahá'ís went sight-seeing. Here, in front of one of the famous Inca walls, three of them from Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru are discussing the achievements of their ancestors. No civilization has ever surpassed the masonry of the Incas. Note the perfect fit of these stones.

The conference attendants were thrilled to visit Sacsahumán, one of the greatest achievements of the Incas. This mighty fortress, built on the approaches to Cuzco to protect it from its enemies, is estimated to have taken 30,000 Indians eighty years to construct.



Some of its stones are five-by-four metres in size. The only masonry comparable to it in scale is the pyramids in Egypt. As usual, the Bahá'ís arrived in festive spirit, village groups playing their music as they came.

This is the capital of the Inca empire, the golden city of Cuzco, as it appears today from the top of Sacsahumán. When the Spanish conquistadores beheld the sheets of gold covering the Temple of the Sun, the gold dust on the thatched roofs of the aristocracy, the statues of solid gold in the Temple garden, it was the death knell of the native state.



Inca tradition said 'the sun is tied' in very special, sacred places. This circle of stones, at the top of Sacsahumán, is one of them. The Bahá'ís gathered in this auditorium, as their ancestors may have done over five hundred years earlier on some solemn religious occasion. Madame Rabbani, aware that they knew very little of their own great history, spoke to them about the glory of their past and the achievements of their people.

This Bolivian woman had a most beautiful voice and sang songs in Quechua composed by the Bahá'ís themselves. The Indians are an extremely gifted people in all the arts.



The head of the Quechua Academy of Cuzco came with other officials to express appreciation for the step the Bahá'ís had taken in holding the first international Quechua Conference. Peru has recently made Quechua the second official language of the country, a most just and courageous step forward.

At the foot of Sacsahumán, sitting on the grass in a great circle, the friends had a picnic lunch in which the official guests joined them. Although it was wintertime, the direct sun at this altitude is always hot. The nights, however, are freezing cold.



Another memorable event of the conference was a visit to Machu Picchu, one of a series of hanging cities, fortresses built by the Incas all through these valleys to protect their empire from enemy tribes living in the jungles to the north-east.

Here in Machu Picchu was another of those sacred spots where 'the sun is tied', an unusual carved rock on a high hill overlooking the city. Instinctively the Ecuadorian friends took possession of it and began to play their music. Their ancestors had been subjects of the Incas, one of whose roads stretched over 2,000 kilometres from Cuzco to their country.



It was here at this sacred spot in the very heart of the Andes that the Bahá'ís gathered to pray, raising their voices in the language of their illustrious ancestors, glorifying Bahá'u'lláh and His Message, calling upon Him for assistance in taking His glad tidings to their own people and beyond them to other waiting tribes of the indigenous population of the Americas.

III

THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

1. INTRODUCTION

THE sacred Writings of the Bahá'í Faith create organic institutions having a membership elected by the Bahá'í community. Bahá'u'lláh called these institutions into being; their establishment, definition, training and development came later, in the ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and in that of the Guardian appointed in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Testament.

Since the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1921, the formation of Local Spiritual Assemblies has multiplied in East and West, and the institution of the National Spiritual Assembly has become firmly established. Concerning this national administrative body Shoghi Effendi has provided clear information and direction. Its purpose, its power, its responsibility and its functions and duties are definitely prescribed.

'Its immediate purpose is to stimulate, unify and co-ordinate by frequent personal consultations the manifold activities of the friends [believers] as well as the Local Assemblies; and by keeping in close and constant touch with the Holy Land [Bahá'í World Centre], initiate measures, and direct in general the affairs of the Cause in that country.

'It serves also another purpose, no less essential than the first . . . in conjunction with the other National Assemblies throughout the Bahá'í world, to elect directly the members of the International House of Justice, that Supreme Council that will guide, organize and unify the affairs of the [Faith] throughout the world.

' . . . it has to exercise full authority over all the Local Assemblies in its province, and will have to direct the activities of the friends, guard vigilantly the Cause of God, and control and supervise the affairs of the [Faith] in general.

'Vital issues, affecting the interests of the Cause in that country . . . that stand distinct from strictly local affairs, must be under the full jurisdiction of the National Assembly. It will have to refer each of these questions . . . to a

special committee, to be elected by the members of the National Spiritual Assembly, from among all the friends in that country . . .

'With it, too, rests the decision whether a certain point at issue is strictly local in its nature . . . or whether it should fall under its own province and be regarded as a matter which ought to receive its special attention.'¹

'The need for the centralization of authority in the National Spiritual Assembly, and the concentration of power in the various Local Assemblies, is . . . manifest.'²

'The authority of the National Spiritual Assembly is undivided and unchallengeable in all matters pertaining to the administration of the Faith [throughout its country].'³

The individual Bahá'í has spiritual citizenship in a world community of believers acting through local, national and international bodies. There is no division of interest or conflict of authority among these institutions, for ever since the ascension of Bahá'u'lláh in 1892 His Faith has possessed infallible guidance by virtue of His Covenant, which specifically provides it. The action of a Bahá'í administrative body, therefore, while rationally determined by constitutional principles, operates in a spiritual realm revealed by the Manifestation of God and maintained free from political pressure and the influence of materialism. Apart from the appointed Interpreter, no Bahá'í has individual authority. Decisions are confined to the sphere of action and are made by a body of nine persons.

The advice and direction clarifying the nature and operation of a National Spiritual Assembly have been compiled by the American Bahá'ís from letters written to them by Shoghi Effendi.⁴

¹ *Bahá'í Administration* (1960 edition) pp. 39-40.

² *ibid.*, p. 42. ³ *Bahá'í Procedure* (1949), p. 63.

⁴ *Bahá'í Administration: Declaration of Trust and By-Laws of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States.*

During the ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, after He had approved the petition submitted to Him by the American Bahá'ís expressing their desire to construct a House of Worship, these Bahá'ís formed a national body known as Bahá'í Temple Unity, incorporated for the purpose of gathering funds and co-ordinating plans to erect the Temple in Wilmette. That body, though national in scope and elected by delegates representing the various local Bahá'í communities, was not a National Spiritual Assembly. It is interesting to note that in Bahá'í Temple Unity the American Bahá'ís established a body reflecting their own national historical experience. The local communities preceded the national body in time and each exercised an independent authority in the conduct of its own affairs. When their representatives agreed to form a national Bahá'í body with full jurisdiction over Temple matters, they transferred to it powers which vested final decision not in its directors but in the Annual Convention. The vital distinction between Temple Unity and the National Spiritual Assembly when later established lay in this field of ultimate authority. The National Spiritual Assembly possessed original authority, powers and functions of its own. It came into existence through election of its nine members at a National Convention but constituted a continuing authority derived from the Bahá'í teachings and not conferred by any action of the believers, whether as local communities or as delegates. This authority emerged supreme in relation to Bahá'í matters within the national community but subject to the higher authority of the Guardian and also of the future International House of Justice.¹

Within its own realm the National Spiritual Assembly is an institution created by the Teachings of the Faith independent of the Bahá'ís who elect its members and of the Bahá'ís composing its membership. In no way does this institution reflect either the political or the ecclesiastical influences of its environment, whether in America, Europe or the East. This fact has paramount importance. On the one hand it reveals the existence of an organic religious society; on the other hand it demonstrates the freedom of this new community from the legalisms and devices acting within every human institution.

While the transition from Bahá'í Temple Unity to National Spiritual Assembly in North America emphasizes certain principles inherent in Bahá'í institutions, the formation of a National Spiritual Assembly in a new area represents more profoundly the creation of a new type of society. Every national Bahá'í community has gone through some evolution reflecting its historical background before its National Assembly was established.

The functions of a National Spiritual Assembly are manifold: the publication of Bahá'í literature; national teaching plans; supervision of local communities; encouragement and direction of all the Bahá'ís in their service to the Faith; and representation of the Bahá'ís in relation to the civil authorities. Each national body prepares and adopts its own constitution, formulated on the basis of the model approved by the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith. All the National Spiritual Assemblies collectively, under the title of the Bahá'í International Community, constitute an international non-governmental organization whose delegates are accredited by United Nations for attendance and participation in its regional conferences.²

Through the institution of the National Spiritual Assembly, Bahá'ís are enabled to carry out plans of considerable magnitude, collaborate with Bahá'ís of all other lands in matters of international interest, maintain common standards of administrative principle, and take advantage, in the appointment of committees, of particular talents and aptitudes possessed by individual believers. The National Spiritual Assembly stands as one of the pillars supporting the Bahá'í world community. Participation in national Bahá'í activities serves to insulate the individual Bahá'í from infection by the psychic ills which afflict modern society as result of its lack of faith and spiritual direction. Within the shelter of this emerging order the storms of partisanship cannot engulf the soul.

HORACE HOLLEY

¹ Written in 1954.

² Consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council was obtained on 27 May 1970.

2. A MODEL DECLARATION OF TRUST AND BY-LAWS

for a

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

FOREWORD

THE 1926–27 National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada completed a task which, while pertaining to the outer and more material aspects of the Cause, nevertheless has a special significance for its spirit and inward sacred purpose. This task consisted in creating a legal form which gives proper substance and substantial character to the National Spiritual Assemblies and the administrative processes embodied in the Bahá'í teachings by a form of incorporation recognized under common law. This Declaration of Trust, with its attendant By-Laws, became the model to be followed, with adaptations as local laws and circumstances required, by other National Spiritual Assemblies. The years following the election of the Universal House of Justice witnessed a great increase in the number of National Spiritual Assemblies (from 57 in 1963 to 117 by Ridván 1976) and the House of Justice itself provided a model document, largely based on the one devised by the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, to be followed as closely as possible by all new National Spiritual Assemblies as they became incorporated, which they were required to do under the Nine Year Plan.

Careful examination of the Declaration and its By-Laws will reveal the fact that this document contains no arbitrary elements nor features new to the Bahá'í Cause. On the contrary, it represents a most conscientious effort to reflect those very administrative principles and elements already set forth in the letters of the Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, and already determining the methods and relationships of Bahá'í collective association. The provision both in the Declaration and in the By-Laws for amendments in the future will permit the National Spiritual Assemblies to adapt this document to such new administrative elements or principles as may at any time be given forth. The Declaration, in fact, is nothing more nor less than a legal parallel of those moral and spiritual laws of unity inherent in the fullness of the Bahá'í Revelation and making it the fulfilment of the ideal of religion in the social as well as spiritual realm. Because, in the Bahá'í Faith, this perfect correspondence exists between spiritual and social laws, the Bahá'ís believe that administrative success is identical with moral success, and that nothing less than the true Bahá'í spirit of devotion and sacrifice can inspire with effective power the world-wide body of unity revealed by Bahá'u'lláh.

DECLARATION OF TRUST

By the NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS

OF

WE,

duly chosen by the representatives of the Bahá'ís of . . . at the Annual Meeting held at . . . , on . . . , to be the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of . . . , with full power to establish a Trust as hereinafter set forth, hereby declare that from this date the powers, responsibilities, rights, privileges and obligations reposed in said National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of . . . by Bahá'u'lláh, Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, its Interpreter and Exemplar, by



The first National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Hong Kong, formed at Riḍván 1974. The Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhiyyih Khánúm, who represented the Universal House of Justice at the inaugural convention, is seen in the centre seated between (left to right) Mr. Khudráhm Paymán and Mr. Yan Kee Leong of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South-eastern Asia.



The first National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Jordan, formed at Riḍván 1976.

Shoghi Effendi, its Guardian, and by the Universal House of Justice, ordained by Bahá'u'lláh in His sacred Writings as the supreme body of the Bahá'í religion, shall be exercised, administered and carried on by the above-named National Spiritual Assembly and their duly qualified successors under this Declaration of Trust.

The National Spiritual Assembly in adopting this form of association, union and fellowship, and in selecting for itself the designation of Trustees of the Bahá'ís of . . . , does so as the administrative body of a religious community which has had continuous existence and responsibility for In consequence of these activities the National Spiritual Assembly is called upon to administer such ever-increasing diversity and volume of affairs and properties for the Bahá'ís of . . . , that we, its members, now feel it both desirable and necessary to give our collective functions more definite legal form. This action is taken in complete unanimity and with full recognition of the sacred relationship thereby created. We acknowledge in behalf of ourselves and our successors in this Trust the exalted religious standard established by Bahá'u'lláh for Bahá'í administrative bodies in the utterance: *Be ye Trustees of the Merciful One among men*; and seek the help of God and His guidance in order to fulfil that exhortation.

(Signatures of the nine members)

Date

ARTICLE I

The name of said Trust shall be the 'National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of'

ARTICLE II

Sharing the ideals and assisting the efforts of our fellow Bahá'ís to establish, uphold and promote the spiritual, educational and humanitarian teachings of human brotherhood, radiant faith, exalted character and selfless love revealed in the lives and utterances of all the Prophets and Messengers of God, Founders of the world's revealed religions—and given renewed creative energy and universal application to the conditions of this age in the life and utterances of Bahá'u'lláh—we declare the purposes and objects of this Trust to be to administer the affairs of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh for the benefit of the Bahá'ís of . . . according to the principles of Bahá'í affiliation and administration created and established by Bahá'u'lláh, defined and explained by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, interpreted and amplified by Shoghi Effendi, and supplemented and applied by the Universal House of Justice.

These purposes are to be realized by means of devotional meetings; by public meetings and conferences of an educational, humanitarian and spiritual character; by the publication of books, magazines and newspapers; by the construction of temples of universal worship and of other institutions and edifices for humanitarian service; by supervising, unifying, promoting and generally administering the activities of the Bahá'ís of . . . in the fulfilment of their religious offices, duties and ideals; and by any other means appropriate to these ends, or any of them.

Other purposes and objects of this Trust are:

- a. The right to enter into, make, perform and carry out contracts of every sort and kind for the furtherance of the objects of this Trust with any person, firm, association, corporation, private, public or municipal or body politic, or any state, territory or colony thereof, or any foreign government; and in this connection, and in all transactions under the terms of this Trust, to do any and all things which a co-partnership or natural person could do or exercise, and which now or hereafter may be authorized by law.
- b. To hold and be named as beneficiary under any trust established by law or otherwise or under any will or other testamentary instrument in connection with any gift, devise, or bequest in which a trust or trusts is or are established in any part of the world as well as in . . . ; to receive gifts, devises or bequests of money or other property.
- c. All and whatsoever the several purposes and objects set forth in the written utterances of Bahá'u'lláh,

'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, and enactments of the Universal House of Justice, under which certain jurisdiction, powers and rights are granted to National Spiritual Assemblies.

- d. Generally to do all things and acts which in the judgement of said Trustees, i.e., the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of . . . , are necessary, proper and advantageous to promote the complete and successful administration of this Trust.

ARTICLE III

SECTION 1. All persons, firms, corporations and associations extending credit to, contracting with or having any claim against the Trustees, i.e., the National Spiritual Assembly, and the members thereof, of any character whatsoever, whether legal or equitable and whether arising out of contract or tort, shall look solely to the funds of the Trust and to the property of the Trust estate for payment or indemnity, or for payment of any debt, damage, judgement or decree or any money that may otherwise become due or payable from the Trustees, so that neither the Trustees nor any of them, nor any of their officers or agents appointed by them hereunder, nor any beneficiary or beneficiaries herein named shall be personally liable therefor.

SECTION 2. Every note, bond, proposal, obligation or contract in writing or other agreement or instrument made or given under this Trust shall be explicitly executed by the National Spiritual Assembly, as Trustees, by their duly authorized officers or agents.

ARTICLE IV

The Trustees, i.e., the National Spiritual Assembly, shall adopt for the conduct of the affairs entrusted to them under this Declaration of Trust, such by-laws, rules of procedure or regulations as are required to define and carry on its own administrative functions and those of the several local and other elements composing the body of the Bahá'ís of . . . , not inconsistent with the terms of this instrument and all in accordance with the instructions and enactments of the Universal House of Justice.

ARTICLE V

The central office of this Trust shall be located in

ARTICLE VI

The seal of this Trust shall be circular in form, bearing the following inscription:
National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of

ARTICLE VII

This Declaration of Trust may be amended by majority vote of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of . . . at any special meeting duly called for that purpose, provided that at least thirty (30) days prior to the date fixed for said meeting a copy of the proposed amendment or amendments is mailed to each member of the Assembly by the Secretary.

BY-LAWS OF THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

ARTICLE I

THE National Spiritual Assembly, in the fulfilment of its sacred duties under this Trust, shall have exclusive jurisdiction and authority over all the activities and affairs of the Bahá'í Cause throughout . . . , including paramount authority in the administration of this Trust. It shall endeavour to stimulate, unify and coordinate the manifold activities of the Local Spiritual Assemblies (hereinafter defined) and of individual Bahá'ís in . . . and by all possible means assist them to promote the oneness of mankind. It shall be charged with the recognition of such Local Assemblies, the scrutiny of all membership rolls, the calling of the Annual Meeting or special meetings and the seating of delegates to the Annual Meeting and their apportionment among the various electoral districts. It shall appoint all national Bahá'í committees and shall supervise the publication and distribution of Bahá'í literature, the reviewing of all writings pertaining to the Bahá'í Cause, the construction and administration of the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* and its accessory activities, and the collection and disbursement of all funds for the carrying on of this Trust. It shall decide whether any matter lies within its own jurisdiction or within the jurisdiction of any Local Spiritual Assembly. It shall, in such cases as it considers suitable and necessary, entertain appeals from the decisions of Local Spiritual Assemblies and shall have the right of final decision in all cases where the qualification of an individual or group for continued voting rights and membership in the Bahá'í body is in question. It shall furthermore represent the Bahá'ís of . . . in all their co-operative and spiritual activities with the Bahá'ís of other lands, and shall constitute the sole electoral body of . . . in the election of the Universal House of Justice provided for in the sacred Writings of the Bahá'í Cause. Above all, the National Spiritual Assembly shall ever seek to attain that station of unity in devotion to the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh which will attract the confirmations of the Holy Spirit and enable the Assembly to serve the founding of the Most Great Peace. In all its deliberation and action the National Assembly shall have constantly before it as Divine guide and standard the utterance of Bahá'u'lláh:

It behooveth them (i.e., members of Spiritual Assemblies) to be the trusted ones of the Merciful among men and to regard themselves as the guardians appointed of God for all that dwell on earth. It is incumbent upon them to take counsel together and to have regard for the interests of the servants of God, for His sake, even as they regard their own interests, and to choose that which is meet and seemly.

ARTICLE II

The Bahá'ís of . . . for whose benefit this Trust is established shall consist of all persons of the age of 15 years or over resident in . . . who are accepted by the National Spiritual Assembly as possessing the qualifications of Bahá'í faith and practice required under the following standard set forth by the Guardian of the Faith:

Full recognition of the station of the Báb, the Forerunner; of Bahá'u'lláh, the Author; and of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the True Exemplar of the Bahá'í religion; unreserved acceptance of, and submission to, whatsoever has been revealed by their Pen; loyal and steadfast adherence to every clause of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's sacred Will; and close association with the spirit as well as the form of Bahá'í Administration throughout the world.

Those residing in the area of jurisdiction of any Local Spiritual Assembly recognized by the National Assembly may declare their faith to, and be enrolled by, the Local Spiritual Assembly; those living outside any such area of local Bahá'í jurisdiction shall be enrolled in such manner as shall be prescribed by the National Assembly.

Upon attaining the age of 21 years, a Bahá'í is eligible to vote and to hold elective office.



The first National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Niger, formed at Riḍván 1975.



The first National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Sierra Leone, formed at Riḍván 1975. The Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga who represented the Universal House of Justice at the inaugural convention is seen in the front row, third from the right.

ARTICLE III

The National Assembly shall consist of nine members chosen from among the Bahá'ís of . . . , who shall be elected by the said Bahá'ís in manner hereinafter provided, and who shall continue for the period of one year, or until their successors shall be elected.

ARTICLE IV

The officers of the National Spiritual Assembly shall consist of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, and such other officers as may be found necessary for the proper conduct of its affairs. The officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the entire membership of the Assembly taken by secret ballot.

ARTICLE V

The first meeting of a newly-elected National Assembly shall be called by the member elected to membership by the highest number of votes or, in case two or more members have received the same said highest number of votes, then by the member selected by lot from among those members; and this member shall preside until the permanent Chairman shall be chosen. All subsequent meetings shall be called by the Secretary of the Assembly at the request of the Chairman or, in his absence or incapacity, of the Vice-Chairman, or of any three members of the Assembly; provided, however, that the Annual Meeting of the Assembly shall be held at a time and place to be fixed by a majority vote of the Assembly, as hereinafter provided.

ARTICLE VI

Five members of the National Assembly present at a meeting shall constitute a quorum, and a majority vote of those present and constituting a quorum shall be sufficient for the conduct of business, except as otherwise provided in these By-Laws, and with due regard to the principle of unity and cordial fellowship involved in the institution of a Spiritual Assembly. The transactions and decisions of the National Assembly shall be recorded at each meeting by the Secretary, who shall supply copies of the minutes to the Assembly members after each meeting, and preserve the minutes in the official records of the Assembly.

ARTICLE VII

Whenever in any locality of . . . , the number of Bahá'ís resident therein recognized by the National Spiritual Assembly exceeds nine, these shall on April 21st of any year convene and elect by plurality vote a local administrative body of nine members, to be known as the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of that community. Every such Spiritual Assembly shall be elected annually thereafter upon each successive 21st day of April. The members shall hold office for the term of one year or until their successors are elected and qualified.

When, however, the number of Bahá'ís in any authorized civil area is exactly nine, these shall on April 21st of any year, or in successive years, constitute themselves the Local Spiritual Assembly by joint declaration. Upon the recording of such declaration by the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly, said body of nine shall become established with the rights, privileges and duties of a Local Spiritual Assembly as set forth in this instrument.

SECTION 1. Each newly-elected Local Spiritual Assembly shall at once proceed in the manner indicated in Articles IV and V of these By-Laws to the election of its officers, who shall consist of a

Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, and such other officers as the Assembly finds necessary for the conduct of its business and the fulfilment of its spiritual duties. Immediately thereafter the Secretary chosen shall transmit to the Secretary of the National Assembly the names of the members of the newly-elected Assembly and a list of its officers.

SECTION 2. The general powers and duties of a Local Spiritual Assembly shall be as set forth in the writings of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, and as laid down by the Universal House of Justice.

SECTION 3. Among its more specific duties, a Local Spiritual Assembly shall have full jurisdiction of all Bahá'í activities and affairs within the local community, subject, however, to the exclusive and paramount authority of the National Spiritual Assembly as defined herein.

SECTION 4. Vacancies in the membership of a Local Spiritual Assembly shall be filled by election at a special meeting of the local Bahá'í community duly called for that purpose by the Assembly. In the event that the number of vacancies exceeds four, making a quorum of the Local Assembly impossible, the election shall be held under the supervision of the National Spiritual Assembly.

SECTION 5. The business of the Local Assembly shall be conducted in like manner as provided for the deliberations of the National Assembly in Article VI above.

SECTION 6. The Local Assembly shall pass upon and approve the qualifications of each member of the Bahá'í community before such members shall be admitted to voting membership; but where an individual is dissatisfied with the ruling of the Local Spiritual Assembly upon his Bahá'í qualifications, such individual may appeal from the ruling to the National Assembly, which shall thereupon take jurisdiction of and finally decide the case.

SECTION 7. On or before the 1st day of November of each year the Secretary of each Local Assembly shall send to the Secretary of the National Assembly a duly certified list of the voting members of the local Bahá'í community for the information and approval of the National Assembly.

SECTION 8. All matters arising within a local Bahá'í community which are of purely local interest and do not affect the national interests of the Cause shall be under the primary jurisdiction of the Spiritual Assembly of that locality; but decision whether a particular matter involves the interest and welfare of the national Bahá'í body shall rest with the National Spiritual Assembly.

SECTION 9. Any member of a local Bahá'í community may appeal from a decision of his Spiritual Assembly to the National Assembly, which shall determine whether it shall take jurisdiction of the matter or leave it to the Local Spiritual Assembly for reconsideration. In the event that the National Assembly assumes jurisdiction of the matter, its findings shall be final.

SECTION 10. Where any dissension exists within a local Bahá'í community of such character that it cannot be remedied by the efforts of the Local Spiritual Assembly, this condition shall be referred by the Spiritual Assembly for consideration to the National Spiritual Assembly, whose action in the matter shall be final.

SECTION 11. All questions arising between two or more Local Spiritual Assemblies, or between members of different Bahá'í communities, shall be submitted in the first instance to the National Assembly, which shall have original and final jurisdiction in all such matters.

SECTION 12. The sphere of jurisdiction of a Local Spiritual Assembly, with respect to residential qualification of membership, and voting rights of a believer in any Bahá'í community, shall be the locality included within the recognized civil limits.

All differences of opinion concerning the sphere of jurisdiction of any Local Spiritual Assembly or concerning the affiliation of any Bahá'í or group of Bahá'ís in . . . shall be referred to the National Spiritual Assembly, whose decision in the matter shall be final.

ARTICLE VIII

The members of the National Spiritual Assembly shall be elected at an annual meeting to be known as the National Convention of the Bahá'ís of . . . This Convention shall be held at a time

and place to be fixed by the National Assembly. The National Convention shall be composed jointly of representatives chosen by the Bahá'ís of each . . . under the principle of proportionate representation, and the members of the National Spiritual Assembly.

Notice of the annual meeting shall be given by the National Assembly sixty days in advance in the Convention Call which sets forth the number of delegates assigned to the various electoral units in proportion to the number of Bahá'ís resident in each such unit, to a total number of . . . delegates for the Bahá'ís of . . .

SECTION 1. All delegates to the Convention shall be elected by plurality vote. Bahá'ís who for illness or other unavoidable reasons are unable to be present at the election in person shall have the right to transmit their ballots to the meeting by mail. The meeting held in each . . . for the election of delegates shall be called by the National Spiritual Assembly and conducted by the Bahá'ís present under whatever procedure may be uniformly laid down by said body. Immediately after the meeting a certified report of the election containing the name and address of each delegate shall be transmitted to the National Spiritual Assembly.

SECTION 2. All delegates to be seated at the Convention must be recognized Bahá'ís and residents of the . . . represented by them.

SECTION 3. The rights and privileges of a delegate may not be assigned nor may they be exercised by proxy.

SECTION 4. The recognition and seating of delegates to the National Convention shall be vested in the National Spiritual Assembly.

SECTION 5. Delegates unable to be present in person at the Convention shall have the right to transmit their ballots for election of the members of the National Assembly under whatever procedure is adopted by the National Assembly.

SECTION 6. If in any year the National Spiritual Assembly shall consider that it is impracticable or unwise to assemble together the delegates to the National Convention, the said Assembly shall provide ways and means by which the annual election and the other essential business of the Convention may be conducted by mail.

SECTION 7. The presiding officer of the National Spiritual Assembly present at the Convention shall call together the delegates, who after roll call shall proceed to the permanent organization of the meeting, electing by ballot a Chairman, a Secretary and such other officers as are necessary for the proper conduct of the business of the Convention.

SECTION 8. The principal business of the annual meeting shall be consultation on Bahá'í activities, plans and policies, and the election of the nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly. Members of the National Assembly, whether or not elected delegates, may take a full part in the consultation and discussion but only delegates may participate in the election of Convention officers or in the annual election of the members of the National Assembly. All action by the delegates, other than the organization of the Convention, the transmission of messages to the World Centre of the Bahá'í Faith, and the election of the National Assembly, shall constitute advice and recommendation for consideration by the said Assembly, final decision in all matters concerning the affairs of the Bahá'í Faith in . . . being vested solely in that body.

SECTION 9. The general order of business to be taken up at the Annual Convention shall be prepared by the National Spiritual Assembly in the form of an agenda, but any matter pertaining to the Bahá'í Faith introduced by any of the delegates may upon motion and vote be taken up as part of the Convention deliberations.

SECTION 10. The election of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly shall be by plurality vote of the delegates recognized by the outgoing National Spiritual Assembly, i.e., the members elected shall be the nine persons receiving the greatest number of votes on the first ballot cast by delegates present at the Convention and delegates whose ballot has been transmitted to the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly by mail. In case, by reason of a tie vote or votes, the full membership is not determined on the first ballot, then one or more additional ballots shall be taken on the persons tied until all nine members are elected.

SECTION 11. All official business transacted at the National Convention shall be recorded and preserved in the records of the National Assembly.

SECTION 12. Vacancies in the membership of the National Spiritual Assembly shall be filled by a plurality vote of the delegates composing the Convention which elected the Assembly, the ballot to be taken by correspondence or in any other manner decided upon by the National Spiritual Assembly.

ARTICLE IX

Where the National Spiritual Assembly has been given in these By-Laws exclusive and final jurisdiction, and paramount executive authority, in all matters pertaining to the activities and affairs of the Bahá'í Cause in . . . , it is understood that any decision made or action taken upon such matters shall be subject in every instance to ultimate review and approval by the Universal House of Justice.

ARTICLE X

Whatever functions and powers are not specifically attributable to Local Spiritual Assemblies in these By-Laws shall be considered vested in the National Spiritual Assembly, which body is authorized to delegate such discretionary functions and powers as it deems necessary and advisable to the Local Spiritual Assemblies within its jurisdiction.

ARTICLE XI

In order to preserve the spiritual character and purpose of Bahá'í elections, the practice of nominations or any other electoral method detrimental to a silent and prayerful election shall not prevail, so that each elector may vote for none but those whom prayer and reflection have inspired him to uphold.

Among the most outstanding and sacred duties incumbent upon those who have been called upon to initiate, direct and co-ordinate the affairs of the Cause as members of Local or National Spiritual Assemblies are:

To win by every means in their power the confidence and affection of those whom it is their privilege to serve; to investigate and acquaint themselves with the considered views, the prevailing sentiments and the personal convictions of those whose welfare it is their solemn obligation to promote; to purge their deliberations and the general conduct of their affairs of self-contained aloofness, the suspicion of secrecy, the stifling atmosphere of dictatorial assertiveness and of every word and deed that may savour of partiality, self-centredness and prejudice; and while retaining the sacred right of final decision in their hands, to invite discussion, ventilate grievances, welcome advice, and foster the sense of inter-dependence and co-partnership, of understanding and mutual confidence between themselves and all other Bahá'ís.

ARTICLE XII

These By-Laws may be amended by majority vote of the National Spiritual Assembly at any of its regular or special meetings, provided that at least fourteen days prior to the date fixed for the said meeting a copy of the proposed amendment or amendments is mailed to each member of the Assembly by the Secretary.



The first National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of Togo, formed at Riḍván 1975. The Hand of the Cause Dr. Rahmatu'lláh Muhájir who represented the Universal House of Justice at the inaugural convention is seen seated in the front row, second from the left.



Bahá'is attending the inaugural convention for the election of the National Spiritual Assembly of Upper West Africa, formed at Riḍván 1975. The Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga who represented the Universal House of Justice is seen seated in the second row, third from the right.

3. A PROCEDURE FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE ANNUAL BAHÁ'Í CONVENTION

I. CONVENTION CALL

THE National Spiritual Assembly determines the date, duration and place of the Annual Convention and provides for such meetings in connection with the Convention as it may feel are desirable.

II. CONVENTION PROCEDURE

The Twenty-sixth Annual Convention [of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada], held in 1934, voted a recommendation calling upon the National Spiritual Assembly to supply a parliamentary procedure for the conduct of the Annual Convention, and the present material has been prepared to meet the need indicated by that recommendation.

Order of Business

Prayer and devotional readings, provided by the outgoing National Spiritual Assembly.

Opening of the Convention by Presiding Officer of the National Spiritual Assembly.

Roll call of delegates by the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly.

Election by secret ballot of Convention Chairman and Secretary. The Convention Officers are to be elected by the assembled delegates from among the entire number of delegates who are present at the Convention.

Annual Report of National Spiritual Assembly.

Annual Financial Report of National Spiritual Assembly.

Convention message to the World Centre of the Bahá'í Faith.

Annual Committee Reports: These are to be considered as part of the report of the National Spiritual Assembly. They are whenever possible published in *Bahá'í News* in advance of the Convention date, for the information of the delegates.

Subjects for Consultation: Any delegate may, before the Convention convenes, recommend to the National Assembly such topics as he deems of sufficient importance to be included in the Convention agenda; and the National Spiritual Assembly, from the list of topics re-

ceived from delegates, and also suggested by its own knowledge and experience, is to prepare an agenda or order of business as its recommendation to the Convention.

This agenda may include, as part of the National Assembly's annual report, the presentation of special subjects by well qualified members, committee representatives or non-Bahá'í experts whose exposition is necessary or desirable for the information of the delegates.

On motion duly made, seconded and voted, any such subject may be omitted, and also on motion duly made, seconded and voted, any other subject may be proposed for special consultation.

Annual Election: The election of members of the National Spiritual Assembly is to take place approximately midway during the Convention sessions, so as to enable the delegates to consult with both the outgoing and incoming Assemblies, in accordance with the Guardian's expressed desire.

Conduct of Business

Every deliberative body, to fulfil its functions, must conduct its deliberations in accordance with some established rules of order. The parliamentary procedure here set forth for the Convention is based upon the procedure already adopted for meetings of Local Assemblies and communities. It accordingly extends to sessions of the Annual Convention, the same procedure under which the delegates, in their other Bahá'í activities, are accustomed to conduct discussions and consultation.

The purpose of consultation at the Annual Convention is threefold: to arrive at full and complete knowledge of the current conditions, problems and possibilities of the Faith in America; to give the incoming National Assembly the benefit of the collective wisdom, guidance and constructive suggestions of the assembled delegates, and to contribute to the unity, in spirit and in action, of the entire American Bahá'í community.

The freedom of each and every delegate to take part in discussion and to initiate motions

is untrammelled save as the undue activity of one delegate might hamper the rights of the other delegates. Any necessary limitation to be placed upon individual discussion shall be determined by the Chairman in the absence of any specific motion duly voted by the delegates themselves.

It shall be the duty of the Chairman to encourage general consultation and make possible the active participation of the greatest possible number of delegates.

The Chairman has the same power and responsibility for discussion and voting upon motions as other delegates. Members of the outgoing and incoming National Assembly who are not delegates may participate in the consultation but not vote.

A resolution, or motion, is not subject to discussion or vote until duly made and seconded. It is preferable to have each resolution clear and complete in itself, but when an amendment is duly made and seconded, the Chairman shall call for a vote on the amendment first and then on the motion. An amendment must be relevant to, and not contravene, the subject matter of the motion.

The Chairman shall call for votes by oral expression of ayes and nays, but where the result of the vote is doubtful then by a show of hands or a rising vote. A majority vote determines.

Discussion of any matter may be terminated by motion duly made, seconded and voted, calling upon the Chairman to bring the matter to an immediate vote or proceed to other business.

The transactions of the Convention shall be recorded by the Secretary, and when certified by the Convention officers shall be given to the National Spiritual Assembly.

Annual Election

The electors in the Annual Election shall consist of those delegates included in the roll call prepared by the National Spiritual Assembly.

Ballots and tellers' report forms shall be provided by the National Assembly.

The election shall be conducted by the Convention, but delegates unable to attend the Convention shall have the right to vote by mail.

The Chairman shall appoint three tellers, chosen from among the assembled delegates.

The electoral method shall be as follows:

1. The Convention Secretary shall call the roll of delegates, whereupon each delegate, in turn, shall place his or her ballot in a ballot box; and as the names are called ballots received by mail shall be placed in the ballot box by the Secretary of the National Assembly.

2. The ballot box shall then be handed to the tellers, who shall retire from the Convention hall to determine the result of the election.

3. The result of the election is to be reported by the tellers, and the tellers' report is to be approved by the Convention.

4. The ballots, together with the tellers' report, certified by all the tellers, are to be given to the National Spiritual Assembly for preservation.

III. THE CONVENTION RECORD

The permanent record of each successive Annual Convention shall consist of the following:—(1) Convention Call as issued by the National Spiritual Assembly; (2) List of accredited delegates; (3) Annual Reports of the National Spiritual Assembly and of its Committees; (4) Messages sent to and received from the World Centre; (5) Resolutions and other transactions of the assembled delegates; (6) The result of the Annual Election.



The first Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Waterford, Ireland, formed at Ridván 1973.



The first Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Galatsi, Greece, formed at Ridván 1973.

IV

THE LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY¹

1. THE INSTITUTION AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

THE institution of the Spiritual Assembly was created by Bahá'u'lláh and is an integral part of His Revelation, together with the teachings, principles, supplications, truth, and laws written in the Books and Tablets. It is the foundation stone of the new World Order, the establishment of which is the essential aim of the Bahá'í Faith. Through the loyalty of the believers who assist in the unfoldment of its latent attributes and powers, divine guidance and reinforcement is promised, and the forces of unity, justice, affection and fellowship are made to prevail over the negative elements which prey upon and destroy the civilization of an unbelieving age.

'... To it (Local Assembly) all local matters pertaining to the Cause must be directly and immediately referred for full consultation and decision. The importance, nay the absolute necessity of these Local Assemblies is manifest when we realize that in the days to come they will evolve into the local House of Justice, and at present provide the firm foundation on which the structure of the Master's Will is to be reared in future.' B.A., p. 37.

'In order to avoid division and disruption, that the Cause may not fall a prey to conflicting interpretations, and lose thereby its purity and pristine vigour, that its affairs may be conducted with efficiency and promptness, it is necessary that every one should conscientiously take an active part in the election of these Assemblies, abide by their decisions, enforce their decree, and co-operate with them wholeheartedly in their task of stimulating the growth of the Movement throughout all regions. The members of these Assemblies, on their part, must disregard utterly their own likes and dislikes, their personal interests and inclinations, and concentrate their minds upon those measures that will conduce to the welfare and happiness

of the Bahá'í community and promote the common weal.' B.A., p. 41.

Formation of a Local Spiritual Assembly

When the requisite conditions exist, the local group of Bahá'ís is obligated to establish an Assembly. It is not an optional matter.

The requisite conditions are simple. They include the following:

1. There must be nine or more adult Bahá'ís in good standing resident in the community.

2. These Bahá'ís are to be declared and recognized believers, all meeting qualifications of faith laid down by the Guardian. If one or more members of the group are such newly-confirmed Bahá'ís that they are not yet recorded as believers by the National Spiritual Assembly, these new believers are to take a full part in the formation of the Assembly, subject to later determination of their Bahá'í status.

3. Each Local Assembly has a definite area of jurisdiction. In most cases the area is that of the civil boundaries of an incorporated village, town or city. An Assembly may also be formed by nine or more Bahá'ís who reside in the same township or county or unincorporated village.

Where the area of jurisdiction is a township, there must be nine or more adult Bahá'ís resident therein outside the limits of any incorporated town or city in the township, as each Bahá'í civil area must be separate and distinct from other areas where an Assembly might later be formed.

Where the area of jurisdiction is a county, the county itself must be small enough to permit all the believers to meet regularly. The county unit constitutes a Bahá'í area of jurisdiction only when in it there are nine or more Bahá'ís who have access to no smaller civil area such as township or permanent electoral district. Postal areas and school districts do not represent areas of jurisdiction for Bahá'í Assemblies.

4. At the present time there is only one date

¹ From *The Bahá'í Community*, Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, 1963.

when Local Assemblies can be formed—April 21 of any year. As the Bahá'í calendar consists of days which begin and end at sunset rather than midnight, the time to form an Assembly is after sunset on April 20 and before sunset on April 21.

5. Where there are more than nine adult Bahá'ís, they form an Assembly by electing the nine members of the Spiritual Assembly. Where there are exactly nine adult Bahá'ís, they establish an Assembly by joint declaration, and all nine members must participate. The National Spiritual Assembly provides different types of report forms for these two methods and the group should apply for the proper form in advance.

(For further information refer to the following section on 'The Annual Election and Organization.')

The Annual Election and Organization

'These Local Spiritual Assemblies will have to be elected directly by the friends, and every declared believer of 21 years and above, far from standing aloof and assuming an indifferent or independent attitude, should regard it his sacred duty to take part conscientiously and diligently, in the election, the consolidation and the efficient working of his own Local Assembly.' B.A., p. 39.

'Pending its (the Universal House of Justice) establishment,¹ and to ensure uniformity throughout the East and throughout the West, all Local Assemblies will have to be re-elected once a year, during the first day of Ridván, and the result of polling, if possible, be declared on that day.' B.A., p. 41.

The annual meeting on April 21, called for the election of the Spiritual Assembly, provides the occasion for the presentation of annual reports by the Assembly and by all its committees.

The chairman of the outgoing Assembly presides at this meeting.

The order of business includes:

- Reading of the call of the meeting
- Reading of appropriate Bahá'í passages bearing upon the subject of the election
- Appointment of tellers
- Distribution of ballots
- Prayers for the spiritual guidance of the voters
- The election by secret ballot

- Presentation of annual reports
- Tellers' report of the election
- Approval of the tellers' report

Assembly members are elected by plurality vote. The believers receiving the nine highest votes on the first ballot are elected, unless two or more are tied for ninth place. In case of a tie, a second ballot is cast by those present, and on this ballot the voter is to write the name of one of those who are tied in the first ballot.

Contrary to the ways of the world, Bahá'í elections are approached in a spirit of prayer without preliminary electioneering or nominating of candidates. Before the ballots are cast, prayers should be read and all participating ask for guidance in selecting those best fitted to serve. In this regard the Guardian wrote:

'... Let us recall His explicit and often-repeated assurances that every Assembly elected in that rarefied atmosphere of selflessness and detachment is, in truth, appointed of God, that its verdict is truly inspired, that one and all should submit to its decision unreservedly and with cheerfulness.' B.A., p. 65.

'... the elector ... is called upon to vote for none but those whom prayer and reflection have inspired him to uphold. Moreover, the practice of nomination, so detrimental to the atmosphere of a silent and prayerful election, is viewed with mistrust ... Should this simple system (based on plurality) be provisionally adopted, it would safeguard the spiritual principle of the unfettered freedom of the voter, who will thus preserve intact the sanctity of the choice he first made ...' B.A., p. 136.

'The newly-elected Assembly is called together by the believer who received the highest number of votes, or in case two or more members have received the same said highest number of votes, then by the member selected by lot from among those members; and this member shall preside until the permanent chairman is chosen.' By-Laws of a Local Spiritual Assembly, Art. VIII.

It is preferable to have the election of the officers of the Assembly immediately following the annual election or formation by joint declaration; however, all nine members of the Assembly must be given an opportunity to vote for the officers. In rare instances a meeting for the election of officers cannot be called because of inability on the part of one or more members

¹ Written in 1923.



The first Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Bensberg, Germany, formed in 1973.



The first Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Isle of Mull, Scotland, formed in 1975.

to attend. In such cases, the best procedure is to elect or appoint immediately a temporary chairman and secretary to serve until such time as all members of the Assembly can be present to vote in person.

Permanent officers are elected by secret ballot and by majority rather than by plurality vote. (Plurality is the largest number; majority is the number greater than half, which, in this case, is at least five out of the nine.)

When an Assembly is organized, it is to report its formation and election of officers to the National Spiritual Assembly, together with whatever relevant facts may be necessary for recognition of the Assembly.

Dissolution of a Local Spiritual Assembly

Once elected or formed by joint declaration, an Assembly continues to exist until the next annual election or until the National Spiritual Assembly acts to declare the Assembly dissolved. This decision is not to be made by the members of the Local Assembly itself nor by any regional or national committee.

If the number of adult Bahá'ís in the community becomes less than nine, or other conditions arise which make it impossible for the Local Assembly to function, the facts should be reported to the National Assembly for final determination of the status of the Assembly.

Authority and Functions

The Local Spiritual Assemblies are "invested with an authority rendering them unanswerable for their acts and decisions to those who elect them; solemnly pledged to follow, under all conditions, the dictates of the "Most Great Justice" that can alone usher in the reign of the "Most Great Peace" which Bahá'u'lláh has proclaimed and must ultimately establish; charged with the responsibility of promoting at all times the best interests of the communities within their jurisdiction, of familiarizing them with their plans and activities and of inviting them to offer any recommendations they might wish to make; cognizant of their no less vital task of demonstrating, through association with all liberal and humanitarian movements, the universality and comprehensiveness of their Faith; dissociated entirely from all sectarian organizations, whether religious or secular; assisted by committees annually appointed by, and directly responsible to them, to each of

which a particular branch of Bahá'í activity is assigned for study and action; supported by local funds to which all believers voluntarily contribute . . ." G.P.B., p. 331.

The various functions of the Local Spiritual Assembly, and its nature as a constitutional body, are duly set forth in Article VII of the By-Laws of the National Spiritual Assembly, and more definitely defined in the By-Laws of a Local Spiritual Assembly approved by the National Spiritual Assembly as recommended by the Guardian. Each Local Spiritual Assembly of the United States, whether or not legally incorporated, is to function according to those By-Laws, and all members of the local Bahá'í community shall be guided and controlled by their provisions.

An essential function of Local Spiritual Assemblies is to act as intermediaries between the local communities and the National Spiritual Assembly. The Local Assembly is, therefore, the proper medium through which local Bahá'í communities can communicate with the body of their national representatives.

Appointment of Committees

In the appointment of committees, only those committees needed to carry out the activities of the community are necessary. Such committees are appointed by the Assembly from among the entire membership of the community, have specific functions to perform, and are responsible to the Assembly who will exercise constant and general supervision over their work. Before making appointments, it is usually beneficial to discuss the special abilities, aptitudes and personal wishes of the members under consideration in relation to the tasks which are to be performed by the committees.

Meetings

A meeting of the Spiritual Assembly is valid only when it has been duly called, that is, when each and every member has been informed of the time and place. The general practice is for the Assembly to decide upon some regular time and place for its meeting throughout the Bahá'í year, and this decision when recorded in the minutes is sufficient notice to the members. When the regular schedule cannot be followed, or the need arises for a special meeting, the secretary, on request of the chairman, or, in his absence or incapacity, of the vice-chairman, or

of any three members of the Assembly, should send due notice to all the members.

The procedure for the calling of the Annual Meeting is outlined in Article XI of the By-Laws of a Local Spiritual Assembly.

Prime Requisites

The prime requisites for them that take counsel together are purity of motive, radiance of spirit, detachment from all else save God, attraction to His Divine Fragrances, humility and lowliness amongst His loved ones, patience and long-suffering in difficulties and servitude to His exalted Threshold. Should they be graciously aided to acquire these attributes, victory from the unseen Kingdom of Bahá shall be vouchsafed to them. In this day, assemblies of consultation are of the greatest importance and a vital necessity. Obedience unto them is essential and obligatory. B.A., p. 21.

The first condition is absolute love and harmony amongst the members of the Assembly. They must be wholly free from estrangement and must manifest in themselves the Unity of God, for they are the waves of one sea, the drops of one river, the stars of one heaven, the rays of one sun, the trees of one orchard, the flowers of one garden. Should harmony of thought and absolute unity be non-existent, the gathering shall be dispersed and that Assembly be brought to naught.

The second condition:— They must when coming together turn their faces to the Kingdom on High and ask aid from the Realm of Glory. They must then proceed with the utmost devotion, courtesy, dignity, care and moderation to express their views. They must in every matter search out the truth and not insist upon their own opinion, for stubbornness and persistence in one's views will lead ultimately to discord and wrangling and the truth will remain hidden. The honoured members must with all freedom express their own thoughts, and it is in no wise permissible for one to belittle the thought of another, nay, he must with moderation set forth the truth, and should differences of opinion arise a majority of voices must prevail, and all must obey and submit to the majority. It is again not permitted that any one of the honoured members object to or censure, whether in or out of the meeting, any decision arrived at previously, though that decision be not right, for such criticism would prevent any decision from being enforced.

In short, whatsoever thing is arranged in harmony and with love and purity of motive, its result is light, and should the least trace of estrangement prevail the result shall be darkness upon darkness . . . If this be so regarded, that assembly shall be of God, but otherwise it shall lead to coolness and alienation that proceed from the Evil One . . . Should they endeavour to fulfil these conditions the Grace of the Holy Spirit shall be vouchsafed unto them, and that assembly shall become the centre of Divine blessings, the hosts of Divine confirmation shall come to their aid, and they shall day by day receive a new effusion of spirit. 'Abdu'l-Bahá. B.A., pp. 22-23.

Recommended Agenda and Procedure

Since order is an important characteristic of the Bahá'í Faith, Bahá'ís should conduct their business in an orderly manner.

The following agenda is suggested for meetings of the Local Spiritual Assembly:

Prayer.

Reading and approval of minutes of previous meeting.
Report of Secretary (or Corresponding Secretary) including correspondence of interest and concern to the body of the believers, and any and all recommendations duly adopted by the community at the last Nineteen Day Feast.

Report of Treasurer.

Report of Committees.

Unfinished business.

New business, including conferences with members of the community and with applicants for enrolment as members of the community.

Closing prayer.

A Spiritual Assembly in maintaining its three-fold function of a body given (within the limits of its jurisdiction) an executive, a legislative and a judicial capacity, is charged with responsibilities for initiating action and making decisions. Its meetings, therefore, revolve around various definite matters which require deliberation and collective decision, and it is incumbent upon the members, one and all, to address themselves to the chairman on the subject under discussion and not introduce matters irrelevant to the subject.

Bahá'í principles of consultation and majority rule are requisite characteristics in Bahá'í Administration, and represent radical departures from the generally accepted rules of parliamentary procedure. In Bahá'í Assembly action, the chairman takes part in the discussion, and a majority decision becomes unanimous



The Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg; Ridván 1975.



The first Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Zeist, the Netherlands, formed in 1975.

and binding upon all. There is no minority opinion in Bahá'í Administration; the decision of the majority is the decision of all.

Every subject or problem before an Assembly is most efficiently handled when the following process is observed:

First, ascertainment and agreement upon the facts;

Second, agreement upon the spiritual or administrative principle which is involved;

Third, full and frank discussion of the matter, leading up to the offering of a resolution; and

Fourth, voting upon the resolution.

A resolution, or motion, is not subject to discussion or vote until duly made and seconded. It is preferable to have each resolution clear and complete in itself, but when an amendment is duly made and seconded, the chairman shall call for a vote on the amendment first and then on the original motion. An amendment must be relevant to, and not contravene, the subject matter of the motion. Only one motion should be considered at a time. The procedure for handling motions is:

1. Statement of motion
2. Second
3. Discussion of the motion
4. Voting
5. Announcement of the result of the voting.

Amendments are to be voted on before the main motion. Motions can be amended only once, by one of the following actions: adding, striking out, inserting, striking out and inserting, substituting, dividing.

An action may be agreed upon by the Assembly without going through the formality of making a motion and voting upon it; however if the agreement is not unanimous the question must be put to a vote.

The chairman, or other presiding officer, has the same right and responsibility as other members of the Assembly for discussing and voting upon all matters being considered by the Assembly.

Discussion of any subject before the Assembly may be terminated by a motion duly made, seconded and voted, calling upon the chairman to put the matter to a vote or to proceed to the next matter on the agenda. The purpose of this procedure is to prevent any member or members from unnecessarily prolonging the discussion beyond the point at

which full opportunity has been given to all members to express their views.

A motion to adjourn is always in order and has priority over all other motions except the motion to fix the time of the next meeting. The motion to adjourn is not debatable and cannot be amended. It requires a majority vote. Before voting, however, the presiding officer should point out items of unfinished business on the agenda, so that the members will know whether to vote for or against adjournment at that moment.

A motion may be withdrawn by the mover, provided no one objects, and before a vote has been taken.

When the Assembly has taken action upon any matter, the action is binding upon all members, whether present or absent from the meeting at which the action was taken. Individual views and opinions must be subordinated to the will of the Assembly when a decision has been made. A Spiritual Assembly is an administrative unit, as it is a spiritual unit, and therefore no distinction between 'majority' and 'minority' groups or factions can be recognized. Each member must give undivided loyalty to the institution to which he or she has been elected.

Any action taken by the Assembly can be reconsidered at a later meeting, on motion duly made, seconded and carried. This reconsideration, according to the result of the consultation, may lead to a revision or the annulment of the prior action. If a majority is unwilling to reconsider the prior action, further discussion of the matter by any member is improper.

Vacancies on Assembly

The Assembly has a responsibility in filling a vacancy caused by the inability of any member to attend the meetings. 'It is only too obvious that unless a member can attend regularly the meetings of his Local Assembly, it would be impossible for him to discharge the duties incumbent upon him, and to fulfil his responsibilities as a representative of the community. Membership in a Local Spiritual Assembly carries with it, indeed, the obligation and capacity to remain in close touch with local Bahá'í activities, and ability to attend regularly the sessions of the Assembly.' Letter from Shoghi Effendi, 16 Feb. 1935.

When a vacancy on an Assembly involves also one of its officers, the Assembly vacancy is filled in the usual manner by election at a special meeting of the local Bahá'í community, after which the entire Assembly elects the new officer.

Minutes

The Spiritual Assembly, as a permanent body, is responsible for maintaining all minutes of its meetings, important records and correspondence, and financial records throughout its existence as a Bahá'í institution. Each officer, therefore, on completing his or her term of office, shall turn over to the Assembly all records and files pertaining to the business of the Assembly. A permanent record of minutes is of special importance and necessity when an Assembly is incorporated, because situations could arise which would make it necessary to produce the minutes for inspection by state authorities.

Other items which would be of historical interest in the future should be kept in the local archives.

It is vitally important that each Local Spiritual Assembly maintain a complete file of *Bahá'í News* and the *U.S. Supplement* for reference on various directives regarding laws and procedures, teaching suggestions, and other pertinent information. It should also maintain and keep up to date a file of all special instructions and statements from the National Spiritual Assembly dealing with matters of permanent value.

Minutes are the permanent official record of the meeting taken by a secretary. If the community is large and the Assembly handles a great amount of business, a recording secretary may be elected to record the minutes. The minutes should include all essential details, such as the election of the Assembly and its officers at the beginning of each year, by-elections for filling vacancies on the Assembly occurring during the year, attendance of all members at its meetings, new enrolments and transfers, marriages and deaths.

All carried motions are recorded in the minutes. The minutes should be written in such a way as to provide sufficient background to understand the reason for the motions and decision, but the entire discussion does not need to be recorded. It is not necessary to record names of individuals making and seconding motions or

making comments during the discussion. Names are of importance, however, when the minutes record reports given on special assignments or situations, or when assignments are given to particular individuals.

If a decision is adopted by common consent without the formality of a motion, even this decision should be clearly stated by the chairman and recorded in the minutes so that there is no question as to what action was agreed upon by the group.

Correspondence should be listed in the minutes. Copies of important outgoing correspondence, in addition to the incoming letters, should be kept for the files.

Record should be made in the minutes of consultation with individuals meeting with the Assembly, whether requested by the individual or the Assembly.

Minutes should be written or typed legibly. They should be corrected and approved by the Assembly before they become a matter of permanent record.

Records of Nineteen-Day Feasts need include only the recommendations made by the community to be presented to the Local Spiritual Assembly, with the background necessary for understanding them.

Minutes of Assembly meetings are not read at the Nineteen-Day Feasts; only the actions taken by the Assembly which concern the community affairs are reported at Feasts. The judgment of what should be shared at the Feasts belongs to the Local Spiritual Assembly.

Legal Incorporation

Local Assemblies having fifteen or more active adult believers in the community are authorized to effect legal incorporation.

To do so the matter should be presented at a Nineteen-Day Feast and a recommendation adopted which expresses the desire of the community that the Spiritual Assembly be legally incorporated.

The Bahá'í World volumes reproduce many local Certificates of Incorporation which supply models for consideration by the Assembly's attorney. What is incorporated is the Spiritual Assembly, not the entire community. The community is associated with the instrument through the annual election of the Local Assembly and the Spiritual Assembly's

authority to enrol new believers and determine the membership list.

The Articles of Incorporation are to make proper reference to the Central Figures of the Faith and to the National Spiritual Assembly. If necessary, the National Assembly on request will provide an example of how this is to be done.

Before the Incorporation papers are recorded, a copy is to be sent to the National Spiritual Assembly for final approval. After recording, three photostatic copies of the recorded Articles are to be sent to the National Spiritual Assembly, together with a photograph of the nine Assembly members.

Incorporation must be preserved in accordance with the manner prescribed by state law.

THE NINETEEN-DAY FEAST

The institution of the Nineteen-Day Feast provides the recognized and regular occasion for general consultation on the part of the community, and for consultation between the Spiritual Assembly and the members of the community. The conduct of the period of consultation at Nineteen-Day Feasts is a vital function of each Spiritual Assembly.

From words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá: *The Nineteen-Day Feast was inaugurated by the Báb and ratified by Bahá'u'lláh, in His Holy Book, the Aqdas, so that people may gather together and outwardly show fellowship and love, that the Divine mysteries may be disclosed. The object is concord, that through this fellowship hearts may become perfectly united, and reciprocity and mutual helpfulness be established. Because the members of the world of humanity are unable to exist without being banded together, co-operation and helpfulness is the basis of human society. Without the realization of these two great principles no great movement is pressed forward.* B.W., Vol. XII, p. 298.

The Nineteen-Day Feast has been described by the Guardian as the foundation of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. It is to be conducted according to the following programme: the first part, entirely spiritual in character, is devoted to the reading of Bahá'í prayers and selections from the Bahá'í sacred Writings; the second part consists of general consultation on the affairs of the Cause; the third part is the material feast and social meeting of all the believers,

and should maintain the spiritual nature of the Feast.

In selecting the readings for the devotional part of the Feast the friends may be guided by the instructions printed in *Bahá'í News* quoting the following excerpt from a letter to a believer from the Guardian through his assistant secretary dated 27 April 1956, 'The Writings of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh can certainly be read at any time at any place; likewise the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá are read freely during the spiritual part of the Feast. The Guardian has instructed that during the spiritual part of the Feast, his own writings should not be read. In other words, during the spiritual part of the Feast, readings should be confined to the Writings of the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh and to a lesser extent, of the Master; but during that part of the Feast the Guardian's writings should not be read. During the period of administrative discussion of the Feast, then the Guardian's writings may be read. Of course, during the administrative part of the Feast there can be no objection to the reading of the Writings of the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh or 'Abdu'l-Bahá.' *Bahá'í News*, Jan. 1959.

Bahá'ís should regard this Feast as the very heart of their spiritual activity, their participation in the mystery of the holy utterance, their steadfast unity one with another in a universality raised high above the limitations of race, class, nationality, sect, and personality, and their privilege of contributing to the power of the Cause in the realm of collective action.

Attendance

Only members of the Bahá'í community and visiting Bahá'ís from other localities may attend these meetings. Young people between fifteen and twenty-one years of age, who have declared their acceptance of the qualifications of membership in the Faith are considered as members although they are referred to as Bahá'í youth. Children up to age fifteen, of Bahá'í parents, may also attend the Nineteen-Day Feasts.

Regular attendance at the Nineteen-Day Feast is incumbent upon every Bahá'í, illness or absence from the city being the only justification for absence. Believers are expected to arrange their personal affairs so as to enable them to observe the Bahá'í calendar.



The first Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Atar, Mauritania, formed in 1975.



The first Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Concord, New Hampshire, U.S.A., formed in 1975.

Order of Business for the Consultation Period

The chairman or other appointed representative of the Spiritual Assembly presides during the period of consultation.

The Spiritual Assembly reports to the community whatever communications have been received from the World Centre and the National Spiritual Assembly, as well as other correspondence of concern to all believers of the community. This does not necessarily mean that all communications must be read in full at the Feast.

A matter of vital importance at this meeting is consideration of national and international Bahá'í affairs, to strengthen the capacity of the community to co-operate in promotion of the larger Bahá'í interests and to deepen the understanding of all believers concerning the relation of the local community to the Bahá'í world community.

The Assembly likewise reports its own activities and plans, including committee appointments that may have been made since the last Feast, the financial report, arrangements made for public meetings, and in general shares with the community all matters that concern the Faith. These reports are to be followed by general consultation.

Provision is to be made for reports from committees, with discussion of each report.

The meeting is to be open for suggestions and recommendations from individual believers to the Local Spiritual Assembly on any matter affecting the Cause. Such recommendations must be adopted by majority vote of the community members present before constituting a resolution to be considered by the Local Spiritual Assembly.

Through this means individual Bahá'ís find in the Nineteen-Day Feast the channel through which to make suggestions and recommendations to the National Spiritual Assembly. These recommendations are offered first to the local community, and when adopted by the community come before the Local Assembly, which then may in its discretion forward the recommendations to the National Spiritual Assembly accompanied by its own considered view.

Upon each member of the community lies the obligation to make his or her utmost contribution to the consultation, the ideal being a gathering of Bahá'ís inspired with one spirit and

concentrating upon the one aim to further the interests of the Faith.

Bahá'í visitors attending a Feast do not take part in the consultation of the community unless invited to do so.

The secretary of the Assembly records each resolution adopted by the community, as well as the various suggestions advanced during the meeting, in order to report these to the Spiritual Assembly for its consideration. Whatever action the Assembly takes is to be reported at a later Nineteen-Day Feast.

It should be borne in mind that the consultation period of the Nineteen-Day Feast is not the time for the Local Spiritual Assembly to consult and make decisions.

Matters of a personal nature should be brought to the Spiritual Assembly and not to the community at the Nineteen-Day Feast. Concerning the attitude with which believers should come to these Feasts, the Master has said, *You must free yourselves from everything that is in your hearts, before you enter.*

CONSULTATION

In this Cause, consultation is of vital importance; but spiritual conference and not the mere voicing of personal views is intended . . . Antagonism and contradiction are unfortunate and always destructive of truth . . . The purpose is to emphasize the statement that consultation must have for its object the investigation of truth. He who expresses an opinion should not voice it as correct and right but set it forth as a contribution to the consensus of opinion; for the light of reality becomes apparent when two opinions coincide. . . . 'Abdu'l-Bahá. P.U.P., pp. 68-69.

'The principle of consultation, which constitutes one of the basic laws of the Administration, should be applied to all Bahá'í activities which affect the collective interests of the Faith for it is through co-operation and continued exchange of thoughts and views that the Cause can best safeguard and foster its interests. Individual initiative, personal ability and resourcefulness, though indispensable, are, unless supported and enriched by the collective experience and wisdom of the group, utterly incapable of achieving such a tremendous task.' Shoghi Effendi, *Bahá'í News*, Nov. 1933.

'Shoghi Effendi firmly believes that consultation must be maintained between the

National Spiritual Assembly and the entire body of the believers, and that such consultation, while the Convention is not in session, can best be maintained through the agency of the Local Assemblies, one of whose essential functions is to act as intermediaries between the local communities and their national representatives. The main purpose of the Nineteen-Day Feast is to enable individual believers to offer any suggestion to the Local Assembly which in its turn will pass it to the National Spiritual Assembly. The Local Assembly is, therefore, the proper medium through which local Bahá'í communities can communicate with the body of the national representatives.' Letter on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 18 Nov. 1933.

'Let us also remember that at the very root of the Cause lies the principle of the undoubted right of the individual to self-expression, his freedom to declare his conscience and set forth his views . . .

'Let us also bear in mind that the keynote of the Cause of God is not dictatorial authority but humble fellowship, not arbitrary power, but the spirit of frank and loving consultation. Nothing short of the spirit of a true Bahá'í can hope to reconcile the principles of mercy and justice, of freedom and submission, of the sanctity of the right of the individual and of self-surrender, of vigilance, discretion and prudence on the one hand, and fellowship, candour, and courage on the other.' B.A., pp. 63-64.

DECISIONS AND APPEALS

At this crucial stage in the history of our Faith it seems advisable to emphasize to each Local Assembly an important principle of administration which has been too frequently overlooked. This principle establishes the National Assembly as the court of appeal from decisions of Local Assemblies when protested by one or more members of the community as unjust or as not conforming to the actual facts.

A court of appeal is not responsible for determining the facts but only for reviewing the local decision based upon the facts assembled by the Local Assembly itself. On receiving an appeal the National Spiritual Assembly will send a copy of it to the Local Assembly and request its opinion. When this is received the case will be studied in the light of the facts presented to the National Assembly and a final decision made. The National Assembly can

decide only upon the facts presented to it; therefore, when a matter is submitted to it, all obtainable facts, together with supporting documentary evidence should be included. The National Assembly's decision, whether approving or disapproving the original decision of the Local Assembly, will be communicated to both the Local Assembly and to the person or persons who made the appeal.

This procedure is in accordance with both the national and local By-Laws.

Any complaint received by the National Assembly from a member or members of a local community who have not first submitted their complaint to the Local Assembly will be returned to those making the protest, with a copy of the letter being sent to the Local Assembly for its information. In such a case the Local Assembly is to call the person or persons in for consultation and act upon the complaint.

An essential function of the Local Spiritual Assembly is the maintenance of unity and devotion among the believers. As 'Trustees of the Merciful' the Spiritual Assembly must be selfless and impartial, considerate of the rights of the individual, but firm and steadfast in upholding the vital truths of the Revelation and obedience to its institutions. Therefore, they must discriminate between situations which are transient and trivial and those which threaten to disrupt the community. A distinction is to be made between personalities who cause disturbances because they lack grounding in the basic Teachings and attitudes of the Bahá'í life, and those who deliberately cause trouble because in their hearts they do not accept the principle of authority as vested in the Manifestation, or in the institutions of the Bahá'í world community.

The Local Assembly is responsible for dealing with all local problems, but can call upon the National Spiritual Assembly for advice if necessary.

The National Assembly, in any case involving two or more local communities, however, acts directly and deals with the problems as the court of original jurisdiction, since no Local Assembly has authority outside its own civil area.

'The authority of the National Spiritual Assembly is undivided and unchallengeable in all matters pertaining to the administration of the Faith throughout the United States, . . . therefore, the obedience of individual Bahá'ís, delegates, groups and Assemblies to that authority

is imperative and should be wholehearted and unqualified. He is convinced that the unreserved acceptance and complete application of this vital provision of the Administration is essential to the maintenance of the highest degree of unity among the believers, and is indispensable to the effective working of the administrative machinery of the Faith in every country.' Letter from Shoghi Effendi through his secretary. *Bahá'í News*, July 1934.

THE BAHÁ'Í FUND

'As the progress and extension of spiritual activities is dependent and conditioned upon material means, it is of absolute necessity that immediately after the establishment of Local as well as National Spiritual Assemblies, a Bahá'í Fund be established, to be placed under the exclusive control of the Spiritual Assembly. All donations and contributions should be offered to the treasurer of the Assembly, for the express purpose of promoting the interests of the Cause, throughout that locality or country. It is the sacred obligation of every conscientious and faithful servant of Bahá'u'lláh who desires to see His Cause advance, to contribute freely and generously for the increase of that Fund. The members of the Spiritual Assembly will at their own discretion expend it to promote the Teaching Campaign, to help the needy, to establish educational Bahá'í institutions, to extend in every way possible their sphere of service. I cherish the hope that all the friends, realizing the necessity of this measure will bestir themselves and contribute, however modestly at first, towards the speedy establishment and the increase of that Fund . . .' B.A., pp. 41-42.

'We must be like the fountain or spring that is continually emptying itself of all that it has and is continually being refilled from an invisible source. To be continually giving out for the good of our fellows undeterred by the fear of poverty and reliant on the unailing bounty of

the Source of all wealth and all good—this is the secret of right living.' Shoghi Effendi, *Bahá'í News*, Sept. 1926.

'As the activities of the American Bahá'í community expand, and its worldwide prestige correspondingly increases, the institution of the National Fund, the bedrock on which all other institutions must necessarily rest and be established, acquires added importance, and should be increasingly supported by the entire body of the believers, both in their individual capacities, and through their collective efforts, whether organized as groups or as Local Assemblies. The supply of funds, in support of the National Treasury, constitutes, at the present time, the lifeblood of these nascent institutions you are labouring to erect. Its importance cannot, surely, be overestimated. Untold blessings shall no doubt crown every effort directed to that end.' M.A., p. 5.

'In connection with the institution of the National Fund . . . I feel urged to remind you of the necessity of ever bearing in mind the cardinal principle that all contributions to the Fund are to be purely and strictly voluntary in character . . .' B.A., p. 101.

'Moreover, we should, I feel, regard it as an axiom and guiding principle of Bahá'í administration that in the conduct of every specific Bahá'í activity, as different from undertakings of a humanitarian, philanthropic, or charitable, character, which may in future be conducted under Bahá'í auspices, only those who have already identified themselves with the Faith and are regarded as its avowed and unreserved supporters, should be invited to join and collaborate.' B.A., p. 182.

A statement from the National Treasurer is included in an issue of the *Bahá'í News* each year, setting out the various funds—international, national, and local—with instructions for making contributions to each of them.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS SECTION

B.A.	<i>Bahá'í Administration</i>
<i>Bahá'í News</i>	<i>U.S. Bahá'í News</i>
B.W.	<i>The Bahá'í World</i>
G.P.B.	<i>God Passes By</i>
M.A.	<i>Messages to America</i>
P.U.P.	<i>The Promulgation of Universal Peace</i>



The first Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Dillingham, Alaska, formed at Ridván 1974. (Three members absent.)

The Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of St. Michael Parish, Barbados, which achieved incorporation on 16 October 1975, the first incorporated Local Assembly in the jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly of Barbados and the Windward Islands.



The Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Guildford, United Kingdom; Ridván 1975.

2. BY-LAWS OF A LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

WE, the undersigned members of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of . . . , desiring to incorporate this body do hereby adopt the following By-Laws:

ARTICLE I

The Trustees, i.e., the members of the Spiritual Assembly, recognize that this action has been taken in full unanimity and agreement. They acknowledge for themselves and on behalf of their successors the sacred meaning and universal purpose of the Bahá'í Faith, the teachings and principles of which fulfil the divine promise of all former revealed religions.

ARTICLE II

In administering the affairs of the Bahá'í religion under this Corporation for the benefit of the Bahá'ís of . . . in accordance with the religious teachings and administrative principles of this Faith, the Spiritual Assembly shall act in conformity with the functions of a Local Spiritual Assembly as defined in the By-Laws adopted by the National Spiritual Assembly and published by that body for the information and guidance of Bahá'ís throughout . . .¹

ARTICLE III

The Spiritual Assembly, in the fulfilment of its obligations and responsibilities under this Corporation, shall have exclusive jurisdiction and authority over all the local activities and affairs of the Bahá'í community of . . . , including paramount authority in the administration of this Corporation. It shall be responsible for maintaining the integrity and accuracy of all Bahá'í teaching, whether written or oral, undertaken throughout the local community. It shall make available the published literature of the Faith. It shall represent the community in relationship to the National Spiritual Assembly, the Universal House of Justice, other local Bahá'í communities and the general public in . . . It shall be charged with the recognition of all applicants requesting membership in the local Bahá'í community. It shall pass upon the right of any and all members of the community whose membership is in question to retain their status as voting members of the community. It shall call the meetings of the community, including the Bahá'í Anniversaries and Feasts, the Meetings of consultation, and the Annual Meeting at which the members of the Assembly are elected. It shall appoint and supervise all committees of the Bahá'í community. It shall collect and disburse all funds intended for the maintenance of this Corporation. It shall have full and complete custody of the headquarters or meeting place of the Bahá'í community. It shall have exclusive authority to conduct Bahá'í marriage ceremonies and issue Bahá'í marriage certificates within the area of its jurisdiction. It shall report to the National Spiritual Assembly annually, or when requested, the membership roll of the Bahá'í community, for the information and approval of the National Assembly. The Spiritual Assembly, however, shall recognize the authority and right of the National Spiritual Assembly to declare at any time what activities and affairs of the Bahá'í community of . . . are national in scope and hence subject to the jurisdiction of the National Assembly. It shall likewise recognize the right of any member of the community to appeal to the National Spiritual Assembly for review and decision of any matter in which the previous decision of the Local Spiritual Assembly is felt by the member to be contrary to the explicit teachings of the Bahá'í Faith or opposed to its best interests. It shall, on the other hand, have the authority and right to appeal from the decision of the National Assembly to the Universal House of Justice for review and final decision of any matter related to the Faith in . . .

ARTICLE IV

The Spiritual Assembly, in administering this Corporation, shall ever bear in mind the ideals upheld in the sacred Writings of the Bahá'í Faith respecting the relationships of a Spiritual

¹ Name of country or region.

Assembly to its Bahá'í community, respecting the relations of Bahá'ís to one another in the community, and the relationships of Bahá'ís to all non-Bahá'ís, without prejudice of race, creed or nationality. The Assembly shall therefore above all recognize its sacred duty to maintain full and complete unity throughout the Bahá'í community, to relieve and comfort the sick and distressed, to assist the poor and destitute, to protect the orphans, the crippled and the aged, to educate the children of Bahá'ís according to the highest religious and intellectual standards, to compose differences and disagreements among members of the community, to promulgate the principles of Divine Civilization revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, and to promote in every way possible the Bahá'í aim of the oneness of mankind. It shall faithfully and devotedly uphold the general Bahá'í activities and affairs initiated and sustained by the National Spiritual Assembly. It shall co-operate wholeheartedly with other Local Spiritual Assemblies throughout . . .¹ in all matters declared by the National Spiritual Assembly to be of general Bahá'í importance and concern. It shall rigorously abstain from any action or influence, direct or indirect, that savours of intervention on the part of a Bahá'í body in matters of public politics and civil jurisdiction. It shall encourage intercourse between the Bahá'í community of . . . and other recognized Bahá'í communities, issuing letters of introduction to Bahá'ís travelling from . . . and passing upon letters of introduction issued by other Bahá'í Assemblies. It shall regard its authority as a means of rendering service to Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís and not as a source of arbitrary power. While retaining the sacred right of final decision in all matters pertaining to the Bahá'í community, the Spiritual Assembly shall ever seek the advice and consultation of all members of the community, keep the community informed of all its affairs, and invite full and free discussion on the part of the community of all matters affecting the Faith.

ARTICLE V

The Bahá'ís of . . . for whose benefit this Corporation has been established shall consist of all persons of the age of 15 years or over resident in . . . who are accepted by the National Spiritual Assembly as possessing the qualifications of Bahá'í faith and practice required under the following standard set forth by the Guardian of the Faith:

Full recognition of the station of the Báb, the Forerunner; of Bahá'u'lláh, the Author; and of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the True Exemplar of the Bahá'í religion; unreserved acceptance of, and submission to, whatsoever has been revealed by their Pen; loyal and steadfast adherence to every clause of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's sacred Will; and close association with the spirit as well as the form of Bahá'í Administration throughout the world.

Upon attaining the age of 21 years, a Bahá'í is eligible to vote and to hold elective office.

ARTICLE VI

The Spiritual Assembly shall consist of nine Trustees chosen from among the Bahá'ís of . . . , who shall be elected by these Bahá'ís in a manner hereinafter provided and who shall continue in office for the period of one year, or until their successors shall be elected.

ARTICLE VII

The officers of the Spiritual Assembly shall consist of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, and such other officers as may be found necessary for the proper conduct of its affairs. The officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the entire membership of the Assembly taken by secret ballot.

ARTICLE VIII

The first meeting of a newly-elected Assembly shall be called by the member elected to membership by the highest number of votes or, in case two or more members have received the same said highest number of votes, then by the member selected by lot from among those members; and this member shall preside until the permanent Chairman shall be chosen. All subsequent meetings shall be called by the Secretary of the Assembly at the request of the Chairman or, in his absence or incapacity, of the Vice-Chairman, or of any three members of the Assembly; provided however,

¹ Name of country or region.

that the Annual Meeting of the Assembly shall be held on April 21, in accordance with the administrative principles recognized by all Bahá'í Assemblies.

SECTION 1. Five members of the Assembly present at a meeting shall constitute a quorum, and a majority vote of those present and constituting a quorum shall be sufficient for the conduct of business, except as otherwise provided in these By-Laws, and with due regard to the principle of unity and cordial fellowship involved in the institution of a Spiritual Assembly. The transactions and decisions of the Assembly shall be recorded at each meeting by the Secretary, who shall have the minutes adopted and approved by the Assembly, and preserve them in the official records of the Assembly.

SECTION 2. Vacancies in the membership of the Spiritual Assembly shall be filled by election at a special meeting of the local Bahá'í community duly called for that purpose by the Assembly. In the event that the number of vacancies exceeds four, making a quorum of the Spiritual Assembly impossible, the election shall be under the supervision of the National Spiritual Assembly.

ARTICLE IX

The sphere of jurisdiction of the Spiritual Assembly, with respect to residential qualification of membership, and voting rights of a believer in the Bahá'í community, shall be the locality included within the civil limits of . . .

ARTICLE X

SECTION 1. In the event that any decision of the Assembly is unacceptable to any member or members of the community, the Assembly shall after endeavouring to compose the difference of opinion invite the said member or members to make appeal to the National Spiritual Assembly and notify that body of the condition of the matter and the readiness of the Assembly to become party to that appeal.

SECTION 2. In the same manner, if any difference arises between the Assembly and another Local Assembly, or Assemblies, in . . .¹, the Assembly shall report the matter to the National Assembly and inform that body of its readiness to make joint appeal together with the other Assembly or Assemblies.

SECTION 3. If, however, the result of such appeal is unsatisfactory to the Spiritual Assembly, or the Assembly at any time has reason to believe that actions of the National Spiritual Assembly are affecting adversely the welfare and unity of the Bahá'í community of . . . , it shall, after seeking to compose its difference of opinion with the National Assembly in direct consultation, have the right to make appeal to the Universal House of Justice.

SECTION 4. The Assembly shall likewise have the right to make complaint to the National Spiritual Assembly in the event that matters of local Bahá'í concern and influence are referred to the national body by a member or members of the local community without previous opportunity for action by the Local Assembly.

ARTICLE XI

The Annual Meeting of the Corporation at which its Trustees shall be elected shall be held on April 21, at an hour and place to be fixed by the Assembly, which shall give not less than fifteen days' notice of the meeting to all members of the local Bahá'í community.

SECTION 1. The Assembly shall accept those votes transmitted to the Assembly before the election by members who by reason of sickness or other unavoidable reason are unable to be present at the election in person.

SECTION 2. The election of members to the Spiritual Assembly shall be by plurality vote.

SECTION 3. All voting members of the local Bahá'í community are eligible for election as members of the Spiritual Assembly.

SECTION 4. The Assembly shall prepare an agenda for the Annual Meeting in which shall be included reports of the activities of the Assembly since its election, a financial statement showing all income and expenditure of its fund, reports of its committees and presentation of any other matters

¹ Name of country or region.

pertaining to the affairs of the Bahá'í community. The Assembly, both preceding and following the annual election, shall invite discussion and welcome suggestions from the community, in order that its plans may reflect the community mind and heart.

SECTION 5. The result of the election shall be reported by the Spiritual Assembly to the National Assembly.

ARTICLE XII

In addition to the Annual Meeting, the Assembly shall arrange for regular meetings of the Bahá'í community throughout the year at intervals of nineteen days, in accordance with the calendar incorporated in the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith.

ARTICLE XIII

The seal of the Corporation shall be circular in form, bearing the following inscription:
The Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of . . .

ARTICLE XIV

Alternative 'A'

These By-Laws may be amended by majority vote of the Spiritual Assembly at any of its regular or special meetings, provided that at least fourteen days prior to the date fixed for the said meeting a copy of the proposed amendment or amendments is mailed to each member of the Assembly by the Secretary.

Alternative 'B'

These By-Laws may be amended only by majority action of the National Spiritual Assembly, which, in making amendments, does so for the By-Laws of all Local Spiritual Assemblies throughout . . .¹

¹ Name of country or region.



The first Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Agartala, Tripura, India, formed in 1975. Mr. S. Chatterjee, a member of the Auxiliary Board, is seen sitting second from the left.

V

THE INSTITUTION OF THE MASHRIQU'L-ADHKÁR

1. FOREWORD

Blessed is he who directeth his steps towards the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár at the hour of dawn, communing with Him, attuned to His remembrance, imploring His forgiveness. And having entered therein, let him sit in silence to hearken unto the verses of God, the Sovereign, the Almighty, the All-Praised. Say, the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is in truth any House raised in towns or villages, for mention of Me. Thus hath it been named before His Throne; would that ye know it.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*

MANY discerning minds have testified to the profoundly significant change which has taken place during recent years in the character of popular religious thinking. Religion has developed an entirely new emphasis, more especially for the layman, quite independent of the older sectarian divisions.

Instead of considering that religion is a matter of turning toward an abstract creed, the average religionist today is concerned with the practical applications of religion to the problems of human life. Religion, in brief, after having apparently lost its influence in terms of theology, has been restored more powerfully than ever as a spirit of brotherhood, an impulse toward unity, and an ideal making for a more enlightened civilization throughout the world.

Against this background, the institution of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár stands revealed as the supreme expression of all those modern religious tendencies animated by social ideals which do not repudiate the reality of spiritual experience but seek to transform it into a dynamic striving for unity. The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, when clearly understood, gives the world its most potent agency for applying mystical vision or idealistic aspiration to the service of humanity. It makes visible and concrete those deeper meanings and wider possibilities of religion which could not be realized until the dawn of this universal age.

The term 'Mashriqu'l-Adhkár' means literally, 'Dawning-place of the praise of God.'

To appreciate the significance of this Bahá'í

institution, we must lay aside all customary ideas of the churches and cathedrals of the past. The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár fulfils the original intention of religion in each dispensation, before that intention had become altered and veiled by human invention and belief.

The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is a channel releasing spiritual powers for social regeneration because it fills a different function than that assumed by the sectarian church. Its essential purpose is to provide a community meeting-place for all who are seeking to worship God, and achieves this purpose by interposing no man-made veils between the worshipper and the Supreme. Thus, the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is freely open to people of all Faiths on equal terms, who now realize the universality of Bahá'u'lláh in revealing the oneness of all the Prophets. Moreover, since the Bahá'í Faith has no professional clergy, the worshipper entering the Temple hears no sermon and takes part in no ritual the emotional effect of which is to establish a separate group consciousness.

Integral with the Temple are its accessory buildings, without which the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár would not be a complete social institution. These buildings are to be devoted to such activities as a school for science, a hospice, a hospital, an asylum for orphans. Here the circle of spiritual experience at last joins, as prayer and worship are allied directly to creative service, eliminating the static subjective elements from religion and laying a foundation for a new and higher type of human association.

HORACE HOLLEY

2. THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MASHRIQU'L-ADHKÁR

A LETTER FROM SHOGHI EFFENDI

IT should be borne in mind that the central edifice of the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár*, round which in the fullness of time shall cluster such institutions of social service as shall afford relief to the suffering, sustenance to the poor, shelter to the wayfarer, solace to the bereaved, and education to the ignorant, should be regarded apart from these dependencies, as a house solely designed and entirely dedicated to the worship of God in accordance with the few yet definitely prescribed principles established by Bahá'u'lláh in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*. It should not be inferred, however, from this general statement that the interior of the central edifice itself will be converted into a conglomeration of religious services conducted along lines associated with the traditional procedure obtaining in churches, mosques, synagogues, and other temples of worship. Its various avenues of approach, all converging towards the central hall beneath its dome, will not serve as admittance to those sectarian adherents of rigid formulae and man-made creeds, each bent, according to his way, to observe his rites, recite his prayers, perform his ablutions, and display the particular symbols of his faith within separately defined sections of Bahá'u'lláh's Universal House of Worship. Far from the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* offering such a spectacle of incoherent and confused sectarian observances and rites, a condition wholly incompatible with the provisions of the *Aqdas* and irreconcilable with the spirit it inculcates, the central House of Bahá'í worship, enshrined within the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár*, will gather within its chastened walls, in a serenely spiritual atmosphere, only those who, discarding forever the trappings of elaborate and ostentatious ceremony, are willing worshippers of the one true God, as manifested in this age in the Person of Bahá'u'lláh. To them will the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* symbolize the fundamental verity underlying the Bahá'í Faith, that religious truth is not absolute but relative, that Divine Rev-

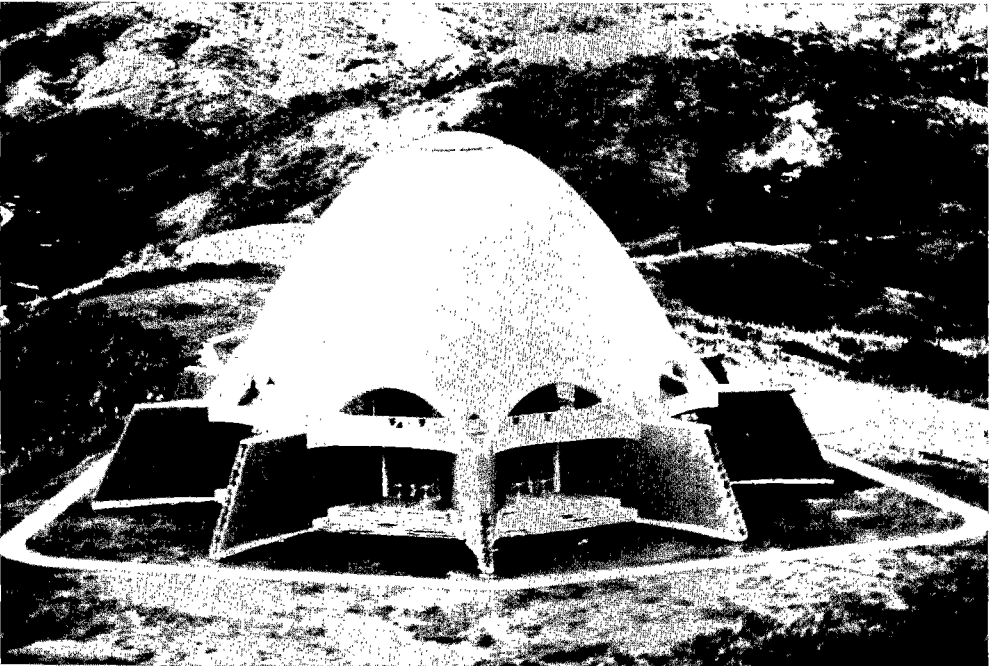
elation is not final but progressive. Theirs will be the conviction that an all-loving and ever-watchful Father Who, in the past, and at various stages in the evolution of mankind, has sent forth His Prophets as the Bearers of His Message and the Manifestations of His Light to mankind, cannot at this critical period of their civilization withhold from His children the guidance which they sorely need amid the darkness which has beset them, and which neither the light of science nor that of human intellect and wisdom can succeed in dissipating. And thus having recognized in Bahá'u'lláh the source whence this celestial light proceeds, they will irresistibly feel attracted to seek the shelter of His house, and congregate therein, unhampered by ceremonials and unfettered by creed, to render homage to the one true God, the Essence and Orb of eternal Truth, and to exalt and magnify the name of His Messengers and Prophets Who, from time immemorial even unto our day, have, under divers circumstances and in varying measure, mirrored forth to a dark and wayward world the light of heavenly guidance.

But however inspiring the conception of Bahá'í worship, as witnessed in the central edifice of this exalted Temple, it cannot be regarded as the sole, nor even the essential, factor in the part which the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár*, as designed by Bahá'u'lláh, is destined to play in the organic life of the Bahá'í community. Divorced from the social, humanitarian, educational and scientific pursuits centring around the dependencies of the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár*, Bahá'í worship, however exalted in its conception, however passionate in fervor, can never hope to achieve beyond the meagre and often transitory results produced by the contemplations of the ascetic or the communion of the passive worshipper. It cannot afford lasting satisfaction and benefit to the worshipper himself, much less to humanity in general, unless and until translated

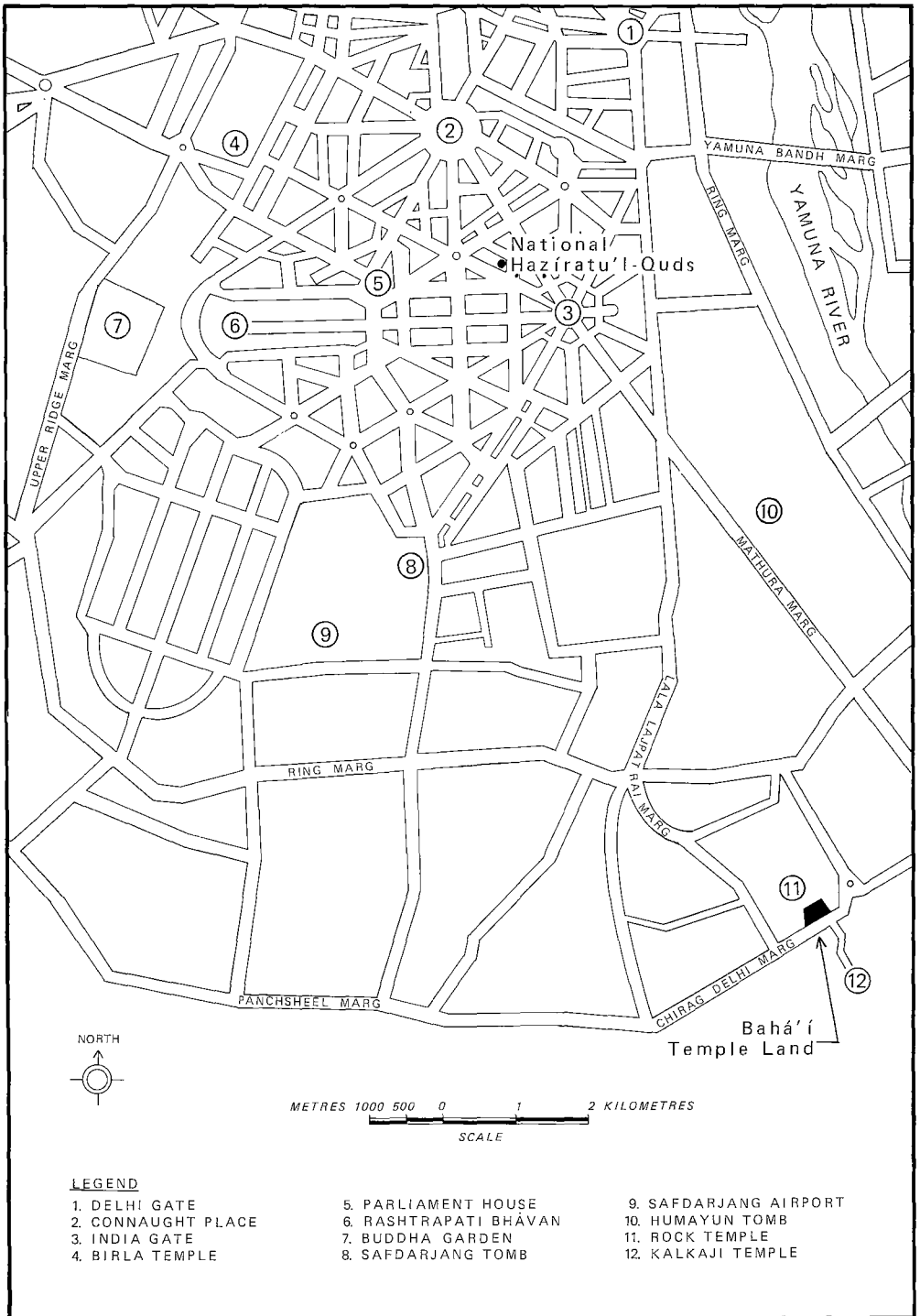
and transfused into that dynamic and disinterested service to the cause of humanity which it is the supreme privilege of the dependencies of the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* to facilitate and promote. Nor will the exertions, no matter how disinterested and strenuous, of those who within the precincts of the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* will be engaged in administering the affairs of the future Bahá'í commonwealth, fructify and prosper unless they are brought into close and daily communion with those spiritual agencies centring in and radiating from the central shrine of the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár*. Nothing short of direct and constant interaction between the spiritual forces emanating from this House of Worship centring in the heart of the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár*, and the energies consciously displayed by those who administer its affairs in their service to humanity can possibly

provide the necessary agency capable of removing the ills that have so long and so grievously afflicted humanity. For it is assuredly upon the consciousness of the efficacy of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, reinforced on one hand by spiritual communion with His Spirit, and on the other by the intelligent application and the faithful execution of the principles and laws He revealed, that the salvation of a world in travail must ultimately depend. And of all the institutions that stand associated with His Holy Name, surely none save the institution of the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* can most adequately provide the essentials of Bahá'í worship and service, both so vital to the regeneration of the world. Therein lies the secret of the loftiness, of the potency, of the unique position of the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* as one of the outstanding institutions conceived by Bahá'u'lláh.

25 October 1929.



The Mother Temple of Latin America, on Cerro Sonsonate, Panama. This House of Worship was dedicated 29 April 1972.



Map of New Delhi showing location of the national Haziratu'l-Quds of India and site of the Bahá'í Temple.

3. THE MOTHER TEMPLE OF THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

EARLY in the Ten Year Crusade the goal assigned to the National Spiritual Assembly of India of acquiring a Temple site for the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of India was achieved. At the time of the Intercontinental Conference in October 1953 an admirable site was found through the efforts of Shoghi Effendi's representative to that conference and members of the National Spiritual Assembly of India. This site, a few miles south of Delhi, on the road to Agra, the city of the Taj Mahal, is so located that any building erected on it will be readily visible to the thousands who pass daily by rail or highway between Delhi and important centres in the southern part of India.

It is interesting to note that the village situated on the Temple land is called Bahapur (literally the village of Bahá), and that opposite is a Hindu temple dedicated to Kalka Avatar. Kalka Avatar, according to Hindu belief, is one of the names of the Promised One of the Hindus whose appearance in the latter day will herald the age of peace, prosperity and universal brotherhood.

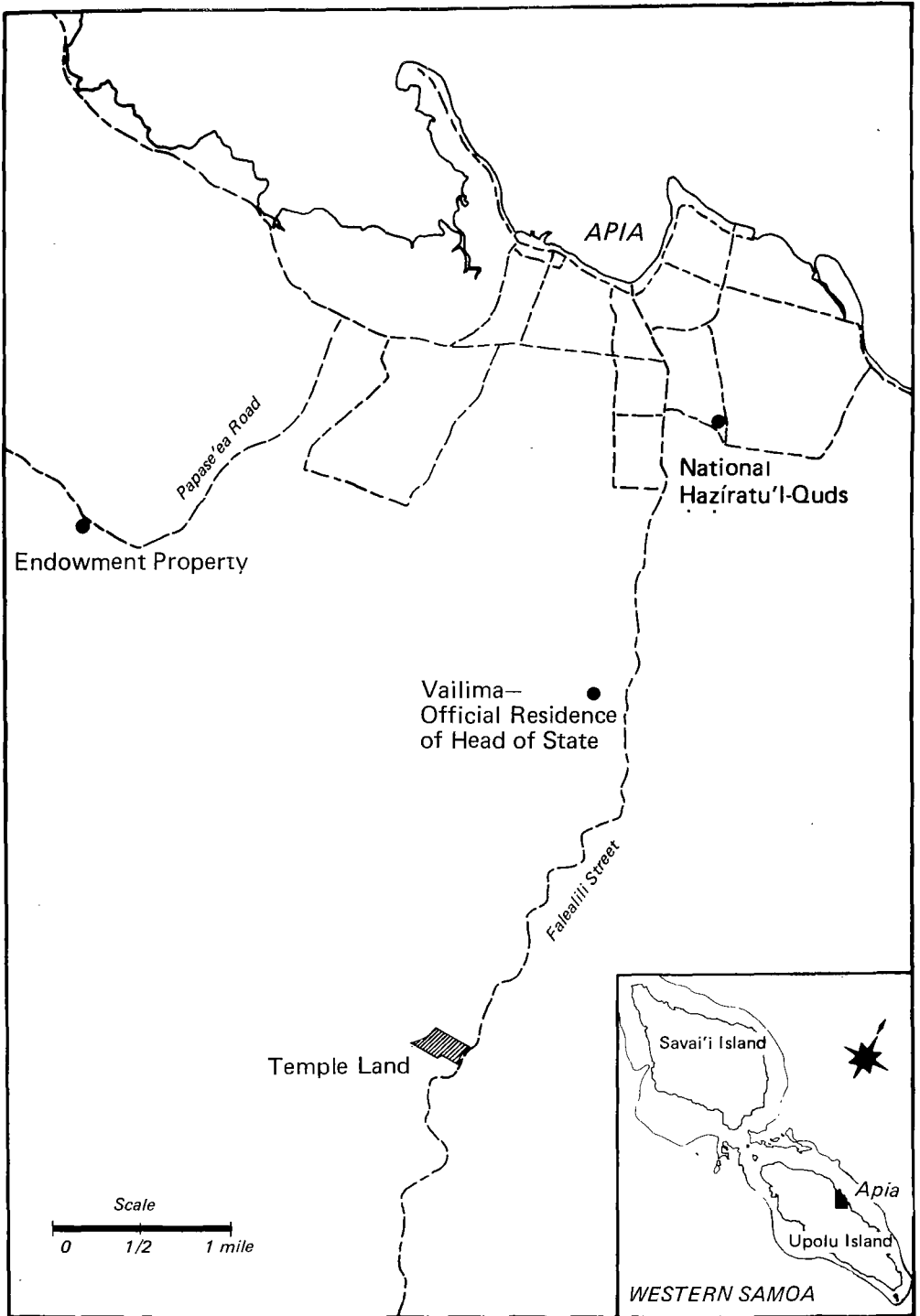
Shortly after purchasing the Temple site the National Spiritual Assembly built a low wall around it and erected a marker. On special

occasions, and particularly when a visiting Hand of the Cause was in attendance, members of the National Spiritual Assembly and other Bahá'í friends would gather at the site for prayers.

Unfortunately, due to a change in the town planning scheme for the land around Delhi, the area on which the Bahá'í House of Worship was to be constructed was zoned as a greenbelt for the town and legally no construction could be undertaken in this zone. But in view of the special nature of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, which will be open to all mankind regardless of race, colour, caste or religion, and whose surroundings will be beautiful parkland, the National Spiritual Assembly of India is trying hard to obtain permission for its construction. Although they have not yet obtained final permission they have been given encouragement and promises by high authorities that eventually they will be able to overcome objections and undertake construction of the building. A goal of the Five Year Plan for India requires that the construction of the Indian Mashriqu'l-Adhkár be initiated, and it is hoped that by the end of the plan, Ridván 1979, a design for the Temple will be announced by the Universal House of Justice.



Following the Bahá'í International Teaching Conference held in New Delhi in October 1953, a group of Bahá'ís (shown above) gathered for prayers at the site of the future Mother Temple of the Indian subcontinent.



Map showing location of the national *Haziratu'l-Quds* of Western Samoa and site of the first *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* of the Pacific Islands.

4. THE FIRST MASHRIQU'L-ADHKÁR OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

AT the beginning of the Five Year Plan the National Spiritual Assembly of Samoa already owned a Temple site of approximately four acres, but because of its low elevation and general configuration it was decided to look for a more suitable piece of land. Since there is little freehold property available for purchase in Apia, Western Samoa, finding a suitable plot posed some difficulties.

However, in July 1975 the committee of the National Spiritual Assembly of Samoa charged with the responsibility of securing an appropriate site located a twelve-acre lot at an elevation of 1,800 feet, overlooking the city of Apia and not far from Vailima, the official residence of His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II. His Highness visited the land and was delighted with its location. It was decided to negotiate with the owner for its purchase. A price, which included

accepting the former Temple site in trade as part of the transaction, was agreed upon, and the formal conveyance was accepted by the National Spiritual Assembly on 11 November 1975.

Most of the city of Apia can be seen from the site, and when the Temple has been erected it should be clearly visible from a wide area below. Another advantage of this particular site is that a relatively new two-storey house, admirably suited for use as a caretaker's cottage, already stands on the property.

As is the case with the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in India, the Five Year Plan requires that construction of the Temple be initiated before the end of the plan at Ridván 1979, but as there are no applicable zoning restrictions in Samoa, it is hoped that the project will have proceeded beyond initiation before the end of the plan.



View of site of the Bahá'í House of Worship to be built in Western Samoa.

VI

THE NON-POLITICAL CHARACTER OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

EXCERPTS FROM THE WRITINGS OF SHOGHI EFFENDI

THE Bahá'í principles clearly define and explain the non-political character of the Faith, and serve as a guide for conduct in the relations of Bahá'ís with one another, with their fellow men, and in their relations with different departments of the civil government. A brief summary of excerpts from the Bahá'í Writings will show that non-participation in political affairs is one of the basic axioms of Bahá'í action.

The keynote to this theme may be found in the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh. He has stated:

*That one indeed is a man who, today, dedicateth himself to the service of the entire human race. The Great Being saith: Blessed and happy is he that ariseth to promote the best interests of the peoples and kindreds of the earth. In another passage He hath proclaimed: It is not for him to pride himself who loveth his own country, but rather for him who loveth the whole world. The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens.*¹

Sow not the seeds of discord among men, and refrain from contending with your neighbour . . . Open, O people, the city of the human heart with the key of your utterance . . .

That which beseemeth you is the love of God, and the love of Him Who is the Manifestation of His Essence, and the observance of whatsoever He chooseth to prescribe unto you, did ye but know it.

Say: Let truthfulness and courtesy be your adorning. Suffer not yourselves to be deprived of the robe of forbearance and justice, that the sweet savours of holiness may be wafted from your hearts upon all created things. Say: Beware, O people of Bahá, lest ye walk in the ways of them whose words differ from their deeds. Strive that ye may be enabled to manifest to the peoples of the earth the signs of God, and to mirror forth His commandments. Let your acts be a guide unto all mankind, for the professions of most men, be they high or low, differ from their conduct. It is

*through your deeds that ye can distinguish yourselves from others. Through them the brightness of your light can be shed upon the whole earth . . .*²

The aim of the Faith is to produce the reality of virtue in souls and evolve institutions capable of dealing with social matters justly, in the light of the revealed truths. This is entirely distinct from the province filled by partisan civil institutions.

'Abdu'l-Bahá counselled the Bahá'ís from the early beginnings of the American Bahá'í community not to discuss political affairs.

. . . All conferences (i.e., all consultation and discussion) must be regarding the matters of benefit, both as a whole and individually, such as the guarding of all in all cases, their protection and preservation, the improvement of character, the training of children, etc.

*If any person wishes to speak of government affairs, or to interfere with the order of government, the others must not combine with him because the Cause of God is withdrawn entirely from political affairs; the political realm pertains only to the Rulers of those matters; it has nothing to do with the souls who are exerting their utmost energy to harmonizing affairs, helping character and inciting (the people) to strive for perfections. Therefore no soul is allowed to interfere with (political) matters, but only in that which is commanded.*³

With the development of a world-wide administrative structure within the Bahá'í Faith, institutions have been set up in national and local areas which assure the unity and integrity of the Faith. In unfolding these administrative institutions Shoghi Effendi has reiterated the importance of the non-political character of the Bahá'í teachings in a letter written 21 March 1932, to the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada:

¹ *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 250.

² *ibid.*, pp. 303-305. ³ *Bahá'í World Faith*, p. 407.

'I feel it, therefore, incumbent upon me to stress, now that the time is ripe, the importance of an instruction which, at the present stage of the evolution of our Faith, should be increasingly emphasized, irrespective of its application to the East or to the West. And this principle is no other than that which involves the non-participation by the adherents of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, whether in their individual capacities or collectively as Local or National Assemblies, in any form of activity that might be interpreted, either directly or indirectly, as an interference in the political affairs of any particular government. Whether it be in the publications which they initiate and supervise; or in their official and public deliberations; or in the posts they occupy and the services they render; or in the communications they address to their fellow-disciples; or in their dealings with men of eminence and authority; or in their affiliations with kindred societies and organizations, it is, I am firmly convinced, their first and sacred obligation to abstain from any word or deed that might be construed as a violation of this vital principle. Theirs is the duty to demonstrate, on one hand, their unqualified loyalty and obedience to whatever is the considered judgement of their respective governments.

'Let them refrain from associating themselves, whether by word or by deed, with the political pursuits of their respective nations, with the policies of their governments and the schemes and programmes of parties and factions. In such controversies they should assign no blame, take no side, further no design, and identify themselves with no system prejudicial to the best interests of that worldwide Fellowship which it is their aim to guard and foster. Let them beware lest they allow themselves to become the tools of unscrupulous politicians, or to be entrapped by the treacherous devices of the plotters and the perfidious among their countrymen. Let them so shape their lives and regulate their conduct that no charge of secrecy, of fraud, of bribery, or of intimidation may, however ill-founded, be brought against them. Let them rise above all particularism and partisanship, above the vain disputes, the petty calculations, the transient passions that agitate the face, and engage the attention, of a changing world. It is their duty to strive to distinguish, as clearly as they possibly can, and if needed with the aid of their elected representatives, such

posts and functions as are either diplomatic or political from those that are purely administrative in character, and which under no circumstances are affected by the changes and chances that political activities and party government, in every land, must necessarily involve. Let them affirm their unyielding determination to stand, firmly and unreservedly, for the way of Bahá'u'lláh, to avoid the entanglements and bickerings inseparable from the pursuits of the politician, and to become worthy agencies of that Divine Polity which incarnates God's immutable Purpose for all men.

'It should be made unmistakably clear that such an attitude implies neither the slightest indifference to the cause and interests of their own country, nor involves any insubordination on their part to the authority of recognized and established governments. Nor does it constitute a repudiation of their sacred obligation to promote, in the most effective manner, the best interests of their government and people. It indicates the desire cherished by every true and loyal follower of Bahá'u'lláh to serve, in an unselfish, unostentatious and patriotic fashion, the highest interests of the country to which he belongs, and in a way that would entail no departure from the high standards of integrity and truthfulness associated with the teachings of his Faith.

'As the number of the Bahá'í communities in various parts of the world multiplies and their power, as a social force, becomes increasingly apparent, they will no doubt find themselves increasingly subjected to the pressure which men of authority and influence, in the political domain, will exercise in the hope of obtaining the support they require for the advancement of their aims. These communities will, moreover, feel a growing need of the good-will and the assistance of their respective governments in their efforts to widen the scope, and to consolidate the foundations, of the institutions committed to their charge. Let them beware lest, in their eagerness to further the aims of their beloved Cause, they should be led unwittingly to bargain with their Faith, to compromise with their essential principles, or to sacrifice, in return for any material advantage which their institutions may derive, the integrity of their spiritual ideals. Let them proclaim that in whatever country they reside, and however advanced their institutions, or profound their

desire to enforce the laws, and apply the principles, enunciated by Bahá'u'lláh, they will, unhesitatingly, subordinate the operation of such laws and the application of such principles to the requirements and legal enactments of their respective governments. Theirs is not the purpose, while endeavouring to conduct and perfect the administrative affairs of their Faith, to violate, under any circumstances, the provisions of their country's constitution, much less to allow the machinery of their administration to supersede the government of their respective countries.

'It should also be borne in mind that the very extension of the activities in which we are engaged, and the variety of the communities which labour under divers forms of government so essentially different in their standards, policies, and methods, make it absolutely essential for all those who are the declared members of any one of these communities to avoid any action that might, by arousing the suspicion or exciting the antagonism of any one government, involve their brethren in fresh persecutions or complicate the nature of their task. How else, might I ask, could such a far-flung Faith, which transcends political and social boundaries, which includes within its pale so great a variety of races and nations, which will have to rely increasingly, as it forges ahead, on the good-will and support of the diversified and contending governments of the earth—how else could such a Faith succeed in preserving its unity, in safeguarding its interests, and in ensuring the steady and peaceful development of its institutions?

'Such an attitude, however, is not dictated by considerations of selfish expediency, but is actuated, first and foremost, by the broad principle that the followers of Bahá'u'lláh will, under no circumstances, suffer themselves to be involved, whether as individuals or in their collective capacities, in matters that would entail the slightest departure from the fundamental verities and ideals of their Faith. Neither the charges which the uninformed and the malicious may be led to bring against them, nor the allurements of honours and rewards, will ever induce them to surrender their trust or to deviate from their path. Let their words proclaim, and their conduct testify, that they who follow Bahá'u'lláh, in whatever land they reside, are actuated by no selfish ambition, that they

neither thirst for power, nor mind any wave of unpopularity, of distrust or criticism, which a strict adherence to their standards might provoke.'

And again: 'The Bahá'í Faith as it forges ahead throughout the western world and particularly in lands where the political machinery is corrupt and political passions and prejudices are dominant among the masses, should increasingly assert and demonstrate the fact that it is non-political in character, that it stands above the party, that it is neither apathetic to national interests nor opposed to any party or faction, and that it seeks through administrative channels, rather than through diplomatic and political posts to establish, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the capacity, the sane patriotism, the integrity and high-mindedness of its avowed adherents. This is the general and vital principle; it is for the National representatives to apply it with fidelity and vigour.'

These instructions raised the question whether Bahá'ís should vote in any public election. A Tablet revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Mr. Thornton Chase was sent to the Guardian, and the following reply was received, dated 26 January 1933:

'The Guardian fully recognizes the authenticity and controlling influence of this instruction from 'Abdu'l-Bahá upon the question. He, however, feels under the responsibility of stating that the attitude taken by the Master (that is, that American citizens are in duty bound to vote in public elections) implies certain reservations. He, therefore, lays it upon the individual conscience to see that in following the Master's instructions no Bahá'í vote for an officer nor Bahá'í participation in the affairs of the Republic shall involve acceptance by that individual of a programme or policy that contravenes any vital principle, spiritual or social, of the Faith.' The Guardian added to this letter the following postscript: 'I feel it incumbent upon me to clarify the above statement, written in my behalf, by stating that no vote cast, or office undertaken, by a Bahá'í should necessarily constitute acceptance, by the voter or office holder, of the entire programme of any political party. No Bahá'í can be regarded as either a Republican or Democrat, as such. He is, above all else, the supporter of the principles

¹ *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 64-67.

² *U.S. Bahá'í News*, December 1932.

enunciated by Bahá'u'lláh, with which, I am firmly convinced, the programme of no political party is completely harmonious.¹

In a letter dated 16 March 1933, the *Guardian* sent these further details:

'As regards the non-political character of the Bahá'í Faith, Shoghi Effendi feels that there is no contradiction whatsoever between the Tablet (to Thornton Chase, referred to above) and the reservations to which he has referred. The Master surely never desired the friends to use their influence towards the realization and promotion of policies contrary to any of the principles of the Faith. The friends may vote, if they can do it, without identifying themselves with one party or another. To enter the arena of party politics is surely detrimental to the best interests of the Faith and will harm the Cause. It remains for the individuals to so use their right to vote as to keep aloof from party politics, and always bear in mind that they are voting on the merits of the individual, rather than because he belongs to one party or another. The matter must be made perfectly clear to the individuals, who will be left free to exercise their discretion and judgement. But if a certain person does enter into party politics and labours for the ascendancy of one party over another, and continues to do it against the expressed appeals and warnings of the Assembly, then the Assembly has the right to refuse him the right to vote in Bahá'í elections.²

That this principle, as do all Bahá'í principles, has world-wide application is made clear by Shoghi Effendi in a letter dated 11 March 1936.

'The Faith of Bahá'u'lláh has assimilated, by virtue of its creative, its regulative and ennobling energies, the varied races, nationalities, creeds and classes that have sought its shadow, and have pledged unswerving fealty to its cause. It has changed the hearts of its adherents, burned away their prejudices, stilled their passions, exalted their conceptions, ennobled their motives, co-ordinated their efforts, and transformed their outlook. While preserving their patriotism and safeguarding their lesser loyalties, it has made them lovers of mankind, and the determined upholders of its best and truest interests. While maintaining intact their belief in the Divine origin of their respective religions, it

has enabled them to visualize the underlying purpose of these religions, to discover their merits, to recognize their sequence, their interdependence, their wholeness and unity and to acknowledge the bond that vitally links them to itself. This universal, this transcending love which the followers of the Bahá'í Faith feel for their fellow-men, of whatever race, creed, class or nation, is neither mysterious nor can it be said to have been artificially stimulated. It is both spontaneous and genuine. They whose hearts are warmed by the energizing influence of God's creative love cherish His creatures for His sake, and recognize in every human face a sign of His reflected glory.

'Of such men and women it may be truly said that to them "every foreign land is a fatherland, and every fatherland a foreign land." For their citizenship, it must be remembered, is in the Kingdom of Bahá'u'lláh. Though willing to share to the utmost the temporal benefits and the fleeting joys which this earthly life can confer, though eager to participate in whatever activity that conduces to the richness, the happiness and peace of that life, they can, at no time, forget that it constitutes no more than a transient, a very brief stage of their existence, that they who live it are but pilgrims and wayfarers whose goal is the Celestial City, and whose home the Country of never-failing joy and brightness.

'Though loyal to their respective governments, though profoundly interested in anything that affects their security and welfare, though anxious to share in whatever promotes their best interests, the Faith with which the followers of Bahá'u'lláh stand identified is one which they firmly believe God has raised high above the storms, the divisions, and controversies of the political arena. Their Faith they conceive to be essentially non-political, supranational in character, rigidly non-partisan, and entirely dissociated from nationalistic ambitions, pursuits and purposes. Such a Faith knows no division of class or of party. It subordinates, without hesitation or equivocation, every particularistic interest, be it personal, regional, or national to the paramount interests of humanity, firmly convinced that in a world of interdependent peoples and nations the advantage of the part is best to be reached by the advantage of the whole, and that no abiding benefit can be conferred upon the

¹ U.S. *Bahá'í News*, April 1933.

² *ibid.*, January 1934.

component parts if the general interests of the entity itself are ignored or neglected.¹

The unity of Bahá'í action throughout the world is further emphasized in a letter from Shoghi Effendi to the Bahá'ís of Vienna, written in 1947 through his secretary, in which he said in part:

'We Bahá'ís are *one* the world over; we are seeking to build up a new world order, divine in origin. How can we do this if every Bahá'í is a member of a different political party—some of them diametrically opposite to each other? Where is our unity then? We would be divided because of politics, against ourselves and this is the opposite of our purpose. Obviously if one Bahá'í in Austria is given freedom to choose a political party and join it, however good its aims may be, another Bahá'í in Japan or America, or India, has the right to do the same thing and he might belong to a party the very opposite in principle to that which the Austrian Bahá'í belongs to. Where would be the unity of the Faith then? These two spiritual brothers would be working against each other because of their political affiliations (as the Christians of Europe have been doing in so many fratricidal wars). The best way for a Bahá'í to serve his country and the world is to work for the establishment of Bahá'u'lláh's World Order, which will gradually unite all men and do away with divisive political systems and religious creeds . . .'²

In the *Will and Testament* of 'Abdu'l-Bahá the Bahá'ís are instructed to *obey and be the well-wishers of the governments of the land, regard disloyalty unto a just king as disloyalty to God Himself and wishing evil to the government a transgression of the Cause of God*.³ In explanation of this statement the Guardian wrote, in a letter dated 3 July 1948:

'Regarding your question about politics and the Master's Will: the attitude of the Bahá'ís must be twofold, complete obedience to the government of the country they reside in, and no interference *whatsoever* in political matters or questions. What the Master's statement really means is obedience to a duly constituted government, whatever that government may be in form. We are not the ones, as individual Bahá'ís, to judge our government as just or unjust—for each believer would be sure to hold

a different viewpoint, and within our own Bahá'í fold a hotbed of dissension would spring up and destroy our unity. We must build up our Bahá'í system, and leave the faulty systems of the world to go their way. We cannot change them through becoming involved in them; on the contrary, they will destroy us.'⁴

Another application of this principle concerns the right, propriety or usefulness of exerting Bahá'í influence for the enactment of legislative measures reflecting more or less the purpose of some Bahá'í principle or teaching. For example, should a Bahá'í community, local or national, lend the name of the Bahá'í Faith to support legislation which seeks to abolish race and religious discrimination in matters of industrial employment, or intervene when measures concerning military training of youth are before a legislature?

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States has stated that, 'as a general policy subject to the Guardian's specific direction in special cases, Bahá'ís and their administrative institutions should not feel obligated to adopt a "Bahá'í" attitude or course of action on matters of civil legislation. Our teachings and basic principles speak for themselves. These we can always declare and set forth with all possible energy whenever occasions arise. But a truth which is sundered from its sustaining spiritual Source, lifted out of its organic relationship to the Bahá'í community, broken off from the other truths, and made subject to the storm and stress of secular controversy, is no longer a truth with which we can usefully have concern. It has become an enactment to be carried out by institutions and groups committed to other enactments, other aims and purposes and methods not in conformity with the "Divine Polity" entrusted to those alone who give full loyalty to Bahá'u'lláh. Far better for us to strive to mirror forth radiantly the individual and community virtues of a new era than to hope others than believers will achieve the holy mission of the Faith. We Bahá'ís have in reality accepted a world order and not merely a new decalogue of truths or commands. On the other hand, obedience to civil government is an obligation laid by Bahá'u'lláh upon every Bahá'í.'⁵

Shoghi Effendi points out, as a guiding prin-

¹ *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 197–198.

² U.S. *Bahá'í News*, April 1949.

³ *Bahá'í Administration* (1960 ed.), p. 4.

⁴ U.S. *Bahá'í News*, January 1949.

⁵ *The Bahá'í World*, vol. X, pp. 278–279.

ciple of Bahá'í conduct, that 'in connection with their administrative activities, no matter how grievously interference with them might affect the course of the extension of the Movement, and the suspension of which does not constitute in itself a departure from the principle of loyalty to their Faith, the considered judgement and authoritative decrees issued by their responsible rulers must, if they be faithful to Bahá'u'lláh's and 'Abdu'l-Bahá's express injunctions, be thoroughly respected and loyally obeyed. In matters, however, that vitally affect the integrity and honour of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh and are tantamount to a recantation of their faith and repudiation of their innermost belief, they [the Bahá'ís] are convinced, and are unhesitatingly prepared to vindicate by their life-blood the sincerity of their conviction, that no power on earth, neither the arts of the most insidious adversary nor the bloody weapons of the most

tyrannical oppressor, can ever succeed in extorting from them a word or deed that might tend to stifle the voice of their conscience or tarnish the purity of their faith.'¹

'Small wonder if by the Pen of Bahá'u'lláh these pregnant words, written in anticipation of the present state of mankind, should have been revealed: *It is not for him to pride himself who loveth his own country, but rather for him who loveth the whole world. The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens. And again, That one indeed is a man who today dedicateth himself to the service of the entire human race. Through the power released by these exalted words, He explains, He hath lent a fresh impulse, and set a new direction, to the birds of men's hearts, and hath obliterated every trace of restriction and limitation from God's Holy Book.*'²

¹ *Bahá'í Administration* (1960 ed.), p. 162.

² *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 198.

VII

RELATIONSHIP TO GOVERNMENT

1. LOYALTY TO GOVERNMENT

*Statement Prepared by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís
of the United States of America*

WHEN a great social crisis sweeps through a civilization, moral values become impaired. In the crisis of our own time, members of the Bahá'í Faith go on record as firmly upholding the principle of loyalty to government.

Bahá'u'lláh Himself set forth this cardinal principle: *In every country or government where any of this community reside, they must behave toward that government with faithfulness, trustfulness, and truthfulness.*

Loyalty to government, in the Bahá'í view, is an essential spiritual and social principle. *We must obey and be the well-wishers of the government of the land . . . The essence of the Bahá'í spirit is that in order to establish a better social order and economic condition, there must be allegiance to the laws and principles of government.*

This allegiance is part of the strong emphasis on integrity of character found in the Bahá'í teaching: *Let integrity and uprightness distinguish all thine acts. Beautify your tongues, O people, with truthfulness, and adorn your souls with the ornament of honesty. Beware, O people, that ye deal not treacherously with any one. Be ye the trustees of God amongst His creatures, and the emblems of His generosity amidst His people.*

Without integrity of character in its citizens and without loyalty to government, a nation will find itself torn asunder and unable to function as an organic society. Not only do the Bahá'í teachings obligate members to be loyal to their government—they also specifically forbid them from taking any part in subversive political and social movements.

2. THE BAHÁ'Í VIEW OF PACIFISM

IN a letter published in U.S. *Bahá'í News*, January 1938, Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith wrote through his secretary:

'With reference to the absolute pacifists or conscientious objectors to war: their attitude, judged from the Bahá'í standpoint, is quite anti-social and due to its exaltation of the individual conscience leads inevitably to disorder and chaos in society. Extreme pacifists are thus very close to anarchists, in the sense that both of these groups lay an undue emphasis on the rights and merits of the individual. The Bahá'í conception of social life is essentially based on the subordination of the individual will to that of society. It neither suppresses the individual

nor does it exalt him to the point of making him an anti-social creature, a menace to society. As in everything, it follows the "golden mean." The only way society can function is for the minority to follow the will of the majority.

'The other main objection to the conscientious objectors is that their method of establishing peace is too negative. Noncooperation is too passive a philosophy to become an effective way for social reconstruction. Their refusal to bear arms can never establish peace. There should first be a spiritual revitalization which nothing, except the Cause of God, can effectively bring to every man's heart.'

3. THE BAHÁ'Í POSITION ON MILITARY SERVICE

*A Public Statement issued by the National Spiritual Assembly
of the Bahá'ís of the United States*

IN view of the increasing importance of a clear understanding of the details of the Bahá'í position on military service, the National Bahá'í Assembly presents the following statement of general principles for the information and guidance of the members of the Bahá'í Community in the United States and others who may have an interest in the Bahá'í viewpoint.

The Bahá'í teachings require that followers of the Faith obey the laws of the government under which they live, and this requirement includes the obligation for military service which rests upon all citizens. However, Bahá'ís are also required to apply for noncombatant service whenever the opportunity to do so is legally provided by their government on the basis of religious training and belief.

While the religious convictions of Bahá'ís require them to seek whatever exemption from combatant duty may be granted by their government on the grounds of religious belief,

they definitely are not pacifists in the sense of refusal to cooperate with and obey the laws of an established government. Thus Bahá'ís do not, on the grounds of religious conviction, seek to abandon their obligation as citizens in time of war or national emergency. Neither do they attempt to avoid the dangers and hardships which are inevitable in time of war, and to which all citizens of military age are liable.

Thus Bahá'ís who are citizens of the United States are able to reconcile their fundamental spiritual convictions and their civil obligations as citizens by applying for noncombatant service under the existing Selective Service law and regulations.

The members of the Bahá'í Faith make no reservations in claiming that they are fully obedient to all provisions of the laws of their country, including the constitutional right of the Federal government to raise armies and conscript citizens for military service.

4. SUMMARY OF THE GUARDIAN'S INSTRUCTIONS ON THE OBLIGATION OF BAHÁ'ÍS IN CONNECTION WITH MILITARY SERVICE

DURING World War II the Bahá'í position on military training and service, and the obligation of individual Bahá'ís to apply for and maintain a noncombatant status when this is possible under the laws of their country, were outlined specifically in a series of instructions and bulletins issued by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States.

Since 1945, two items on this subject have been published in *Bahá'í News*; one in the October 1946 issue (pp. 9–10), and the other in the September 1948 issue (p. 6). Both of these articles quoted the Guardian's instruction contained in a letter to the National Assembly dated 20 July 1946, written in reply to a question as to whether the existence of the United Nations in its present form should change the attitude of Bahá'ís toward military duties which might require the taking of human life. The Guardian's answer to this question is again quoted below:

'As there is neither an International Police Force nor any immediate prospect of one coming into being, the Bahá'ís should continue to

apply, under all circumstances, for exemption from any military duties that necessitate the taking of life. There is no justification for any change of attitude on our part at the present time.'

These words indicate that the Guardian still felt that a Bahá'í cannot voluntarily enter any form of combatant military duty, and must seek exemption from such service if this is possible under the laws of his country.

The instruction given in the 20 July 1946 letter was confirmed once again in a cable received from the Guardian by the National Assembly on 17 January 1951.

The Guardian, in these and earlier communications, has made it clear that it is obligatory and not an optional matter, for all Bahá'ís to apply for and maintain a noncombatant status if this is possible under the law. When such a law exists, as is the case in the United States, Bahá'ís cannot voluntarily enlist in any branch of the armed forces where they would be subject to orders to engage in the taking of human life.

VIII

BAHÁ'Í CALENDAR, FESTIVALS AND DATES OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

1. FOREWORD

Excerpt from Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era by Dr. J. E. Esslemont

AMONG different peoples and at different times many different methods have been adopted for the measurement of time and fixing of dates, and several different calendars are still in daily use, e.g., the Gregorian in Western Europe, the Julian in many countries of Eastern Europe, the Hebrew among the Jews and the Muḥammadan in Muslim countries.

The Báb signalized the importance of the dispensation which He came to herald, by inaugurating a new calendar. In this, as in the Gregorian Calendar, the lunar month is abandoned and the solar year is adopted.

The Bahá'í year consists of 19 months of 19 days each (i.e. 361 days), with the addition of certain 'intercalary days' (four in ordinary and five in leap years) between the eighteenth and nineteenth months in order to adjust the

calendar to the solar year. The Báb named the months after the attributes of God. The Bahá'í New Year, like the ancient Persian New Year, is astronomically fixed, commencing at the March equinox (21 March), and the Bahá'í era commences with the year of the Báb's declaration (i.e., 1844 A.D., 1260 A.H.).

In the not far distant future it will be necessary that all peoples in the world agree on a common calendar.

It seems, therefore, fitting that the new age of unity should have a new calendar free from the objections and associations which make each of the older calendars unacceptable to large sections of the world's population, and it is difficult to see how any other arrangement could exceed in simplicity and convenience that proposed by the Báb.

2. BAHÁ'Í FEASTS, ANNIVERSARIES AND DAYS OF FASTING

Feast of Riḡván (Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh), 21 April–2 May 1863.

Feast of Naw-Rúz (New Year), 21 March.

Declaration of the Báb, 23 May 1844.

The Day of the Covenant, 26 November.

Birth of Bahá'u'lláh, 12 November 1817.

Birth of the Báb, 20 October 1819.

Birth of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, 23 May 1844.

Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh, 29 May 1892.

Martyrdom of the Báb, 9 July 1850.

Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, 28 November 1921.

Fasting season lasts 19 days beginning with the first day of the month of 'Alá', 2 March—the Feast of Naw-Rúz follows immediately after.

3. BAHÁ'Í HOLY DAYS ON WHICH WORK SHOULD BE SUSPENDED

The first day of Riḍván,
 The ninth day of Riḍván,
 The twelfth day of Riḍván,
 The anniversary of the declaration of the Báb,
 The anniversary of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh,
 The anniversary of the birth of the Báb,
 The anniversary of the ascension of Bahá'u'lláh,
 The anniversary of the martyrdom of the Báb,
 The feast of Naw-Rúz.

NOTE: 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in one of His Tablets addressed to a believer of Nayríz, Persia, has written the following: *Nine days in the year have been appointed on which work is forbidden. Some of these days have been specifically mentioned in the Book. The rest follow as corollaries to the Text . . . Work on the Day of the Covenant (Fête Day of 'Abdu'l-Bahá), however, is not prohibited. Celebration of that day is left to the discretion of the friends. Its observation is not obligatory. The days pertaining to the Abhá Beauty (Bahá'u'lláh) and the Primal Point (the Báb), that is to say these nine days, are the only ones on which work connected with trade, commerce, industry and agriculture is not allowed. In like manner, work connected with any form of employment, whether governmental or otherwise, should be suspended.*

As a corollary of this Tablet it follows that the anniversaries of the birth and ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá are not to be regarded as days on which work is prohibited. The celebration of these two days, however, is obligatory.

Bahá'is in East and West, holding administrative positions, whether public or private, should exert the utmost effort to obtain special leave from their superiors to enable them to observe these nine holy days.

4. ADDITIONAL MATERIAL GLEANED FROM NABÍL'S NARRATIVE (VOL. II), REGARDING THE BAHÁ'Í CALENDAR

THE Badí' Calendar (Bahá'í Calendar) has been taken by me from the *Kitáb-i-Asmá'*, one of the works written by the Báb. As I have observed in these days that certain believers are inclined to regard the year in which Bahá'u'lláh departed from Baghdád to Constantinople as marking the beginning of the Badí' Calendar, I have requested Mirzá Áqá Ján, the amanuensis of Bahá'u'lláh, to ascertain His will and desire concerning this matter. Bahá'u'lláh answered and said: "The year sixty A.H. (1844 A.D.), the year of the Declaration of the Báb, must be

regarded as the beginning of the Badí' Calendar.' The Declaration of the Báb took place on the evening preceding the fifth day of Jamádiyü'l-Avval, of the year 1260 A.H. It has been ordained that the solar calendar be followed and that the vernal Equinox, the day of Naw-Rúz, be regarded as the New Year's Day of the Badí' Calendar. The year sixty, in which the fifth day of Jamádiyü'l-Avval coincided with the sixty-fifth day after Naw-Rúz, has accordingly been regarded as the first year of the Badí' Calendar. As in that year, the day of Naw-

Rúz, the vernal Equinox, preceded by sixty-six days the date of the Declaration of the Báb, I have therefore, throughout my history, regarded the Naw-Rúz of the year sixty-one A.H. (the Naw-Rúz immediately following the Declaration of the Báb) as the first Naw-Rúz of the Badí' Calendar. I have accordingly considered the Naw-Rúz of this present year, the year 1306 A.H., which is the 47th solar year after the Declaration of the Báb, as the 46th Naw-Rúz of the Badí' Calendar.

Soon after Bahá'u'lláh had left the fortress of 'Akká and was dwelling in the house of Malik, in that city, He commanded me to transcribe the text of the Badí' Calendar and to instruct the believers in its details. On the very day in which I received His command, I composed, in verse and prose, an exposition of the main features of that Calendar and presented it to Him. The versified copy, being now unavailable, I am herein transcribing the version in prose. The days of the week are named as follows:

<i>Days</i>	<i>Arabic Name</i>	<i>English Name</i>	<i>Translation</i>
1st	Jalál	Saturday	Glory
2nd	Jamál	Sunday	Beauty
3rd	Kamál	Monday	Perfection
4th	Fiḏál	Tuesday	Grace
5th	'Idál	Wednesday	Justice
6th	Istijlál	Thursday	Majesty
7th	Istiqlál	Friday	Independence

The names of the months, which are the same as the days of each month, are as follows:

<i>Month</i>	<i>Arabic Name</i>	<i>Translation</i>	<i>First Days</i>
1st	Bahá	Splendour	March 21
2nd	Jalál	Glory	April 9
3rd	Jamál	Beauty	April 28
4th	'Azamat	Grandeur	May 17
5th	Núr	Light	June 5
6th	Raḥmat	Mercy	June 24
7th	Kalimát	Words	July 13
8th	Kamál	Perfection	August 1
9th	Asmá'	Names	August 20
10th	'Izzat	Might	September 8
11th	Mashíyyat	Will	September 27
12th	'Ilm	Knowledge	October 16
13th	Qudrat	Power	November 4
14th	Qawl	Speech	November 23
15th	Masá'il	Questions	December 12
16th	Sharaf	Honour	December 31
17th	Sulṭán	Sovereignty	January 19
18th	Mulk	Dominion	February 7
19th	'Alá'	Loftiness	March 2

Ayyám-i-Há (Intercalary Days) 26 February to 1 March inclusive—
four in ordinary and five in leap years.

The first day of each month is thus the day of Bahá, and the last day of each month the day of 'Alá'.

The Báb has regarded the solar year, of 365 days, 5 hours, and fifty odd minutes, as consist-

ing of 19 months of 19 days each, with the addition of certain intercalary days. He has named the New Year's Day, which is the day of Naw-Rúz, the day of Bahá, of the month of Bahá. He has ordained the month of 'Alá' to be

the month of fasting, and has decreed that the day of Naw-Rúz should mark the termination of that period. As the Báb did not specifically define the place for the four days and the fraction of a day in the Badí' Calendar, the people of the *Bayán* were at a loss as to how they should regard them. The revelation of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* in the city of 'Akká resolved this problem and settled the issue. Bahá'u'lláh designated those days as the Ayyám-i-Há and ordained that they should immediately precede the month of 'Alá', which is the month of fasting. He enjoined upon His followers to devote these days to feasting, rejoicing, and charity. Immediately upon the termination of these intercalary days, Bahá'u'lláh ordained the month of fasting to begin. I have heard it stated that some of the people of the *Bayán*, the followers of Mírzá Yaḥyá, have regarded these intercalary days as coming immediately after the month of 'Alá', thus terminating their fast five days before the day of Naw-Rúz. This, notwithstanding the explicit text of the *Bayán* which states that the day of Naw-Rúz must needs be the first day of the month of Bahá, and must follow immediately after the last day of the month of 'Alá'. Others, aware of this contradiction, have started their fasting on the fifth day of the month of 'Alá', and included the intercalary days within the period of fasting.

Every fourth year the number of the intercalary days is raised from four to five. The day of Naw-Rúz falls on the 21st of March only if the vernal Equinox precedes the setting of the sun on that day. Should the vernal Equinox take place after sunset, Naw-Rúz will have to be celebrated on the following day.

The Báb has, moreover, in His writings, revealed in the Arabic tongue, divided the years following the date of His Revelation, into cycles of nineteen years each. The names of the years in each cycle are as follows:

1. Alif	A.
2. Bá'	B.
3. Ab	Father.
4. Dál	D.
5. Báb	Gate.
6. Váv	V.
7. Abad	Eternity.
8. Jád	Generosity.
9. Bahá	Splendour.
10. Ḥubb	Love.
11. Bahháj	Delightful.
12. Javáb	Answer.
13. Aḥad	Single.
14. Vahháb	Bountiful.
15. Vidád	Affection.
16. Badí'	Beginning.
17. Bahí	Luminous.
18. Abhá	Most Luminous.
19. Váḥid	Unity.

Each cycle of nineteen years is called Váḥid. Nineteen cycles constitute a period called Kull-i-Shay'. The numerical value of the word Váḥid is nineteen, that of Kull-i-Shay' is 361. Váḥid signifies unity, and is symbolic of the unity of God.

The Báb has, moreover, stated that this system of His is dependent upon the acceptance and good-pleasure of 'Him Whom God shall make manifest'. One word from Him would suffice either to establish it for all time, or to annul it forever.

For instance, the date of the 21st of April, 1930, which is the first day of Riḍván, and which according to the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* must coincide with the 'thirteenth day of the second Bahá'í month,' and which fell this year (1930) on Monday, would, according to the system of the Badí' Calendar, be described as follows:

'The day of Kamál, the day of Qudrat, of the month of Jalál, of the year Bahháj, of the fifth Váḥid, of the first Kull-i-Shay'.'

5. HISTORICAL DATA GLEANED FROM NABÍL'S NARRATIVE (VOL. II), REGARDING BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

A. BAGHDÁD	<i>Works Revealed During This Period</i>	<i>Houses Occupied During This Period</i>
<p>Arrival latter part Jamádiyu'th-Thání, 1269 A.H. 12 March—10 April 1853 A.D. Departure for Sulaymáníyyih on Wednesday, 10 April 1854 A.D.—Rajab 12, 1270 A.H.</p>	Kullu't-Ta'am	House of Hájí 'Alí-Madad (in old Baghdád) House of Sulaymán-i-Ghannám
<p>B. SULAYMÁNÍYYIH Before reaching Sulaymáníyyih, He lived for a time on the Sar-Galú mountain. During His absence from Baghdád His family transferred their residence from House of Hájí 'Alí-Madad to that of Sulaymán-i-Ghannám. Nabíl arrived at Baghdád 6 months after Bahá'u'lláh's departure for Sulaymáníyyih.</p>	Prayers Qaṣídiy-i-Varqá'íyyih Sáqí-Az-Ghayb-i-Baqá	
<p>C. BAGHDÁD Arrived from Sulaymáníyyih on Wednesday, 19 March 1856 A.D.—Rajab 12, 1272 A.H. Departure from Baghdád for Constantinople, Wednesday afternoon (first day of Riqván), 22 April 1863 A.D.—Dhi'l-Qa'dih 3, 1279 A.H. Short stay in Mazra'iy-i-Vashshásh during above period to celebrate Naw-Rúz ended with departure on Thursday, 26 March 1863 A.D.—Shavvál 5, 1279 A.H.</p>	Tafsír-i-Hurúfát-i-Muqaṭṭa'ih Ṣahífíy-i-Shaṭṭíyyih Haft-Vadí (Seven Valleys) Tafsír-i-Hú Lawḥ-i-Húriyyih Kitáb-i-Íqán Kalimát-i-Maknúnih (Hidden Words) Subhána-Rabbíya'l-A'lá Shikkar-Shikan-Shavand Húr-i-'Ujáb Halih-Halih-Yá Bishárat Ghulámu'l-Khuld Az-Bágh-i-Iláhí Báz-Áv-u-BídiH-Jámí Malláhu'l-Quds (Holy Mariner)	

C. BAGHDÁD— <i>continued</i>	<i>Works Revealed During This Period</i>	<i>Houses Occupied During This Period</i>
<p>Arrival at Garden of Najíbíyyih (Garden of Riḍván), 22 April 1863 A.D.—<u>Dhi'l-Qa'dih</u> 3, 1279 A.H.</p> <p>Arrival of Bahá'u'lláh's Family at Garden of Riḍván on eighth day after first of Riḍván.</p> <p>Departure from Garden of Riḍván for Constantinople last day of Riḍván at noon on Sunday, 3 May 1863 A.D.—<u>Dhi'l-Qa'dih</u> 14, 1279 A.H.</p> <p>Length of overland journey from Garden of Riḍván to Sámsún on Black Sea: 110 days.</p>	<p>Súriy-i-Şabr revealed on first day of Riḍván</p>	

Firayját (arrived early afternoon—stayed seven days) arrived on Sunday, 3 May 1863 A.D.—Dhi'l-Qa'dih 14, 1279 A.H. (Firayját is about 3 miles distant from Baghdád)

Judaydih,
Dilí-'Abbás,
Qarih-Tapih,
Saláhiyyih (stayed 2 nights),
Dúst-Khurmátú,
Táwuq,
Karkúk (stayed 2 days),
Irbíl,
Záb River,
Barṭallih,
Mosul (stayed 3 days),
Zákhú,
Jazirih,
Nişibín,

Hasan-Áqá,
Márdin,
Diyár-Bakr,
Ma'dan-Mis,
Khárpút (stayed 2 or 3 days),
Ma'dan-Nuqrih,
Dilík-Tásh,
Sívas,
Túqát,
Amasia (stayed 2 days),
Iláhiyyih (while approaching Sámsún, 'Lawḥ-i-Hawdaj' was revealed), (last day of overland journey),
Sámsún (stayed 7 days), Black Sea port; sailed in a Turkish steamer about sunset for Constantinople,
Sinope (arrived next day about noon),
Black Sea port: stayed few hours,
Anyábulí (arrived next day).

D. CONSTANTINOPLE	<i>Works Revealed During This Period</i>	<i>Houses Occupied During This Period</i>	<i>Duration</i>
<p>Arrival at noon on Sunday, 16 August 1863 A.D.—<u>Rabí'u'l-Avval</u> 1, 1280 A.H.</p>	<p>Subhánika-Yá-Hú Lawḥ-i-'Abdu'l-'Azíz Va-Vukalá</p>	<p>House of <u>Shamsí</u> Big (near the mosque of <u>Khirqiy-i-Sharíf</u>)</p>	<p>1 month</p>

D. CONSTANTINOPLE— <i>continued</i>	<i>Works Revealed During This Period</i>	<i>Houses Occupied During This Period</i>	<i>Duration</i>
Length of sea voyage from Samsún to Constantinople: 3 days.		House of Visí Páshá (3-storey, near Sulţán Muḥammad Mosque)	3 months
Length of journey from Constan- tinople to Adri- anople: 12 days.			

1. Kúchik-Chakmaçhih (3 hours from Constantinople—spent one night)
2. Búyúk-Chakmaçhih (arrived about noon)
3. Salvarí 4. Birkás 5. Bába-Iskí

E. ADRIANOPE	<i>Works Revealed During This Period</i>	<i>Houses Occupied During This Period</i>	<i>Duration</i>
Arrival on Saturday, 12 December 1863 A.D.—Rajab 1, 1280 A.H.	Súriy-i-Aşḥáb Lawḥ-i-Ḥajj I	1. <u>Khán</u> -i-'Aráb (caravanserai, two-storey, near house of 'Izzat-Áqá)	3 nights
Length of stay: 4 years, 8 months, 22 days.	Lawḥ-i-Ḥajj II		
Length of overland journey from Con- stantinople to Ad- rianople: 12 days.	Kitáb-i-Badí' Súriy-i-Mulúk (Tablet of the Kings)	2. House in Murádiy- yih quarter, near Takyiy-i-Mawlaví	1 week
Departure from Adri- anople on Wednes- day, 12 August 1868 A.D.—Rabí- 'u'th- <u>Tháni</u> 22, 1285 A.H.	Súriy-i-Amr Súriy-i-Damm Alváḥ-i-Laylatu'l- Quds Munájátháy-i-Şiyám (Prayers for Fasting)	3. House in Murádiy- yih quarter, near house 2 4. <u>Kháníy</u> -i-Amru'lláh (several storeys, near Sulţán-Salím Mosque)	6 months
	Lawḥ-i-Sayyáh Lawḥ-i-Nápulyún I (First Tablet to Napoleon III)	5. House of Riḍá Big 6. House of Amru'lláh (3-storey, north of Sulţán-Salím Mosque)	1 year 3 months?
	Lawḥ-i-Sulţán (Tablet to the <u>Sháh</u> of Persia) Lawḥ-i-Nuḩṭih	7. House of 'Izzat-Áqá	11 months

1. Uzún-Kuprí
2. Kashánih (arrived about noon. Lawḥ-i-Ra'ís [Tablet of Ra'ís] was revealed in this place)
3. Gallipoli (length of journey from Adrianople to Gallipoli about 4 days)
(after a few days' stay sailed before noon in Austrian steamer for Alexandria, Egypt)
4. Madellí (arrived about sunset—left at night)
5. Smyrna (stayed 2 days, left at night)
6. Alexandria (arrived in the morning, trans-shipped and left at night for Haifa)
7. Port Said (arrived morning, left the same day at night)
8. Jaffa (left at midnight)
9. Haifa (arrived in the morning, landed and after a few hours left on a sailing vessel for 'Akká)

F. 'AKKÁ	<i>Works Revealed During This Period</i>	<i>Houses Occupied During This Period</i>	<i>Duration</i>
Arrival on Monday, 31 August 1868 A.D.—Jamádíyu'l- Avval 12, 1285 A.H.	Kitáb-i-Aqdas Lawḥ-i-Nápulyún II (Second Tablet to Napoleon III)	1. Barracks	2 years, 2 months, 5 days
Purest Branch died on Thursday, 23 June 1870 A.D.—Rabí- 'u'l-Avval 23, 1287 A.H.	Lawḥ-i-Malíkih (Tablet to Queen Victoria) Lawḥ-i-Malik-i-Rús (Tablet to the Czar) Súriy-i-Haykal Lawḥ-i-Burhán Lawḥ-i-Ru'yá Lawḥ-i-Ibn-i-Dhi'b (Epistle to Son of the Wolf) Lawḥ-i-Páp (Tablet to the Pope)	2. House of Malik 3. House of Rábi'ih 4. House of Manşúr 5. House of 'Abbúd (where Kitáb-i- Aqdas was re- vealed) 6. Mazra'ih 7. Qaşr (Mansion, where He passed away)	3 months 2 or 3 months
Passed away 29 May 1892 A.D.			

6. DATES OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE IN THE RISE OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

Birth of Bahá'u'lláh	12 November 1817	Commencement of the construction of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of 'Ishqábád	
Birth of the Báb	20 October 1819	. . . . .	28 November 1902
Declaration of the Mission of the Báb in Shiráz	23 May 1844	Release of 'Abdu'l-Bahá from His incarceration	September 1908
Birth of 'Abdu'l-Bahá	23 May 1844	Interment of the Báb's remains on Mt. Carmel	21 March 1909
Departure of the Báb on His pilgrimage to Mecca	September 1844	Opening of the first American Bahá'í Con- vention	21 March 1909
Arrival of the Báb in Máh-Kú, Ádhirbáyján	Summer 1847	'Abdu'l-Bahá's departure from Egypt	September 1910
Incarceration of the Báb in Chihriq, Ádhir- báyján	April 1848	'Abdu'l-Bahá's arrival in London	4 September 1911
Conference of Badasht	June 1848	'Abdu'l-Bahá's arrival in America	11 April 1912
Interrogation of the Báb in Tabriz, Ádhir- báyján	July 1848	Laying of the corner-stone of the Mashriqu'l- Adhkár in Wilmette, Ill., by 'Abdu'l-Bahá	1 May 1912
Martyrdom of the Báb in Tabriz, Ádhir- báyján	9 July 1850	Second visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Europe and tour through the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Hungary and Austria	December 1912 to June 1913
Attempt on the life of Násiri'd-Din Sháh	15 August 1852	'Abdu'l-Bahá's return to the Holy Land	5 December 1913
Imprisonment of Bahá'u'lláh in the Síyáh-Chál of Tíhrán	August 1852	Unveiling of the Tablets of the Divine Plan	April 1919
Banishment of Bahá'u'lláh to Baghdád	12 January 1853	Passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá	28 November 1921
Withdrawal of Bahá'u'lláh to Kurdistán	10 April 1854	Verdict of the Islamic Court in Egypt pro- nouncing the Faith to be an independent religion	10 May 1925
Return of Bahá'u'lláh from Kurdistán	19 March 1856	Martha Root's first interview with Queen Marie of Romania	30 January 1926
Declaration of the Mission of Bahá'u'lláh	22 April 1863	Resolution of the Council of the League of Nations upholding the claim of the Bahá'í community to the House of Bahá'u'lláh in Baghdád	4 March 1929
Arrival of Bahá'u'lláh in Constantinople	16 August 1863	Passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf	July 1932
Arrival of Bahá'u'lláh in Adrianople	12 December 1863	Inception of the First American Seven-Year Plan	April 1937
Departure of Bahá'u'lláh from Adrianople	12 August 1868	Celebration of the Centenary of the Declaration of the Báb	23 May 1944
Arrival of Bahá'u'lláh in 'Akká	31 August 1868	Inception of the Second American Seven-Year Plan	April 1946
Death of the Purest Branch	23 June 1870	Centenary of the Martyrdom of the Báb	9 July 1950
Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh	29 May 1892	Completion of the Arcade and Parapet of the Shrine of the Báb on Mt. Carmel	9 July 1950
First public reference to the Faith in America	23 September 1893		
Establishment of the first Bahá'í centre in the West	February 1894		
Arrival of the first group of Western pilgrims in 'Akká	10 December 1898		
Arrival of the Báb's remains in the Holy Land	31 January 1899		
Reincarceration of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 'Akká	20 August 1901		

Inauguration of the Centenary Celebrations of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh's Prophetic Mission	October 1952	of the <i>Súriy-i-Mulúk</i>	September/October 1967
First Bahá'í Intercontinental Teaching Conference, Kampala, Uganda, Africa	12–18 February 1953	Opening of period of proclamation of the Cause, inaugurated by the presentation by the Universal House of Justice to 140 Heads of State of a special edition of <i>The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh</i>	October 1967
Inauguration of the Ten-Year International Bahá'í Teaching and Consolidation Plan	Riḍván 1953	The holding of six Intercontinental Conferences	October 1967
Bahá'í dedication of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Wilmette, Illinois	1 May 1953	Laying of the foundation stone of the Mother Temple of Latin America, Panama City	8 October 1967
Public dedication	2 May 1953	His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II, of Western Samoa, embraced the Faith	19 February 1968
All-American Bahá'í Intercontinental Teaching Conference, Chicago	3–6 May 1953	Establishment by the Universal House of Justice of the Continental Boards of Counsellors	21 June 1968
Third Bahá'í Intercontinental Teaching Conference, Stockholm, Sweden	21–26 July 1953	First Oceanic Conference, Palermo, Sicily	23–25 August 1968
Fourth Bahá'í Intercontinental Teaching Conference, New Delhi, India	7–15 October 1953	Commemoration of 100th anniversary of arrival of Bahá'u'lláh in the Holy Land	31 August 1968
Completion of the construction of the Shrine of the Báb	October 1953	The Bahá'í International Community accredited with consultative status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council	27 May 1970
Expansion of the Faith to 100 additional countries and islands by settlement of the Knights of Bahá'u'lláh	1953–1954	Commemoration of 100th anniversary of the death of Mírzá Mihdí, 'The Purest Branch'	23 June 1970
Completion of exterior of International Archives Building	1957	The holding of eight Oceanic and Continental Conferences	14 August 1970– 5 September 1971
Passing of Shoghi Effendi	4 November 1957	Commemoration of 50th anniversary of the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá	26–28 November 1971
The holding of five Intercontinental Teaching Conferences successively in Kampala, Sydney, Wilmette, Frankfurt, Djakarta/Singapore	1958	Completion of erection of Obelisk, Mt. Carmel	19 December 1971
First dependency of a Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, the Bahá'í Home for the Aged, opened in Wilmette, Illinois, U.S.A.	January 1959	Dedication of the Mother Temple of Latin America, Panama	29 April 1972
Dedication of the Mother Temple of Africa, Kampala, Uganda	14 January 1961	Adoption by the Universal House of Justice of its Constitution	26 November 1972
Dedication of the Mother Temple of the Antipodes, Sydney, Australia	16 September 1961	Publication by the Universal House of Justice of <i>A Synopsis and Codification of the Laws and Ordinances of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas</i>	Riḍván 1973
Completion of the Ten Year Crusade	Riḍván 1963	Establishment by the Universal House of Justice of the International Teaching Centre	5 June 1973
Election of the Universal House of Justice	21 April 1963	Extension and development of the gardens at Bahjí surrounding the Most Holy Shrine	1963–1976
Celebration of the Most Great Jubilee, in London	April 1963		
Launching of the Nine Year Plan	April 1964		
Dedication of the Mother Temple of Europe, near Frankfurt, Germany	4 July 1964		
Celebration of the Centenary of the Revelation			

PART FIVE
IN MEMORIAM

IN MEMORIAM

JOHN FERRABY

1914–1973

John Ferraby was born in Southsea, England, on 9 January 1914 and grew up there. He was educated at Malvern and at King's College, Cambridge, to which he won a major scholarship.

It was in 1941 that he was told about the Faith by a non-Bahá'í. Wanting to know more, he found Dr. Esslemont's book in a public library. He was by then living in London, so he started to look for the Bahá'ís there, but he had difficulty in finding them because during the blitz the Bahá'í Centre was empty most of the time. However, finally he found someone and after a couple of visits he wanted to be accepted as a member of the community. Almost immediately he began to work for the Faith, becoming in less than a year a member of the London Spiritual Assembly and of the National Spiritual Assembly. In 1943 he married a fellow member of the National Assembly, Dorothy Cansdale.

In 1946 he became secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly, working at first in his spare time and from 1950 as full-time secretary. This work he continued, living in the National Ḥazíratu'l-Quds in London from December 1954, until he went to serve in the Holy Land at the end of 1959. During a good deal of the time he was also manager of the British Bahá'í Publishing Trust, as well as being an active teacher and committee member. From 1951 to 1956 he was busily involved in the work of the Africa Committee and during the opening of the various territories in Africa, at that time mostly colonies or protectorates, he attended to most of the government relationship, acting in his capacity of national secretary. He attended the first Intercontinental Conference, held in Kampala, Uganda, in 1953, as well as the successive Intercontinental Conferences which were held in Europe.

In January 1955, he made the pilgrimage to the Holy Land and was in the presence of the



John Ferraby

Guardian, which deepened his already great devotion to Shoghi Effendi. This of course made a tremendous impression on him and it was in consequence of advice from Shoghi Effendi to write for the Faith that he produced his book *All Things Made New*. He seemed to have received some special stimulation and wrote at fever heat in every moment of his spare time until it was completed, as if he had been inspired and could not stop. The book has been widely used, running to one edition in the British Isles and three in the United States.

In 1957, in the last group of Hands of the Cause appointed by the Guardian, John Ferraby was included, and consequently he carried a big share of the work and responsibility for the arrangements when Shoghi Effendi died and was buried in London. After that he took part in the first sorrowful gathering of the Hands of the Cause in Haifa and stayed on there for over three months to help. In December 1959, John

went to live in Haifa as one of the Hands of the Cause resident in the Holy Land and remained there until Riḍván 1963. After that he returned to England and lived in Cambridge for the last ten years of his life, working for the first few years as one of the Hands of the Cause in the continent of Europe, dealing with their secretariat and travelling a good deal. Later it became no longer possible for him to serve in this way.

John's whole life as a Bahá'í was one of activity and intense devotion. From the moment of his declaration the Faith came absolutely first with him and nothing else mattered, and this was true until the end of his life, whatever his circumstances and condition.

DOROTHY FERRABY

VIOLET MCKINLEY

1882–1959

Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

Born on 25 May 1882 at Enfield, north of London, into the prosperous trading environment of the late Victorian epoch, Violet Jessie McKinley (*née* Watson) was blessed with two great spiritual advantages: an extremely delicate constitution, which kept the thought of the other world very close, and a persistently enquiring mind—she always wanted to know 'Why?' This condition was stimulated by an orthodox but solid education at home. Too frail to go to school, she had a Continental governess for eight years, with hard study of the nineteenth century romantics: Schiller, Goethe, Victor Hugo, Heine, Lamartine, etc. Her study was conducted all in German one week, all in French the other, and this, coupled with a deep religious sense that had been instilled in her by a very narrow but thoroughly sincere and right-minded nurse during her early childhood, developed a viewpoint totally unsympathetic to the shallow and materialistic background of her class and daily life.

Just before the first World War she left her family and went to live with friends where she could have freedom to act as she thought right. Always interested in ideas and intolerant of the narrow dogmatism offered to her as 'religion', she now studied what she could find of the other

beliefs of the world, coming into contact with the Theosophical Society which commended itself to her as being rather broadminded with regard to doctrine. It was while going to meetings at the Theosophical Lodge in Exeter, where she was living after the war, that she met Dr. McKinley, an Irish surgeon, who had abandoned operative medicine for osteopathy and dietetics. Like her, he was dissatisfied with orthodoxy, yet sure that there must be some master theme of life to put right the tortured world that had succeeded the armistice. They were married in 1922 and went to live in Oxford where their child, Hugh, was born two years later.

At a meeting of Theosophists in that city, soon after their arrival, they heard a Mr. H. Wooller give a talk on the Bahá'í Faith. They were deeply impressed and he lent them Dr. Esslemont's book *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*. They read this through together and on coming to the end they looked at each other and simultaneously said, 'This is it! This is what we've been looking for.' Although Bahá'ís were not formally registered in those days a number of people left the Theosophical Lodge at the same time as the McKinleys and thought of themselves as believing in the 'Bahá'í Movement'. (Subsequent enquiry has ascertained that Mr. Wooller himself did not become a declared believer in later years, though he spoke at Oxford as 'a member'.)

Almost immediately after hearing of and wholeheartedly accepting the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, Dr. McKinley was taken seriously ill. The family moved to Cornwall for his health but he passed away there in 1927, leaving Violet with a very young child to bring up and with extremely restricted means; naturally she had no commercial qualifications. She lived very quietly in that part of the world until 1932 when she and Hugh went for a holiday to London. While there she found out the address of the London Bahá'í Centre and wrote asking for an appointment to talk of the Faith with some of the friends. This was a wonderful meeting and she went back to Cornwall radiant and inspired, but still deprived of any but written contact with the believers. Lifelong friendships with Mrs. Isobel Slade, Miss Evelyn Baxter (who was to become the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for the Channel Islands) and Mrs. Routh date from that meeting.



Violet McKinley

Three years later Violet moved to Devonshire for Hugh's education. In 1936 she met Mark Tobey at Dartington Hall, Bernard Leach, Arnold van Ogtrop and also Charles and Helen Bishop who were then visiting Torquay from the Bahá'í International Bureau in Geneva. When the first Local Spiritual Assembly was established in Torquay, a little later on, she was one of the members, although living several miles out in the country; civic limits were not applied in those days.

On leaving school Hugh went to work on the land, and from the beginning of the second World War was 'frozen' in this occupation until 1946 when a providential road accident enabled him to be classified as a disabled person for the purposes of the Act. Forthwith Violet and he moved into Torquay town to assist in the work of the Cause there. The next year, after consultation, they made a pioneer move to Cardiff, and assisted in the formation of the first Local Spiritual Assembly there. Further pioneer moves to London and to Brighton took place in 1950 and 1952.

As soon as Violet and Hugh read the communication from Shoghi Effendi calling upon

the believers, at the onset of the Ten Year Crusade, to arise for the purpose of establishing the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh throughout the world they cabled the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles offering to go anywhere. A project was worked out in consultation, and confirmed at the subsequent intercontinental conference held in Stockholm, routing them to Cyprus, Hugh departing first, and Violet following in November 1953. Cyprus has a unique reputation in Bahá'í history as the place of exile of Mírzá Yahyá, the treacherous half-brother of Bahá'u'lláh, stigmatized by Shoghi Effendi in *God Passes By* as 'Arch-breaker of the Covenant of the Báb . . .' Tests and difficulties fell thick and fast for the pioneers who were labouring under conditions already made arduous because of a heated and militant political situation. They were sustained by their recollection of their pilgrimage to the Holy Land and the assurances given them on that occasion by Shoghi Effendi that whatever pool of negative force might have been left by Mírzá Yahyá, and however great the tests that would assuredly confront those who arose to offset this baleful influence, the ultimate victory would be, in proportion, overwhelming.

An influx of pioneers from America, the Netherlands and Írán, as well as the confirmation of local believers, resulted in the formation of a Local Spiritual Assembly in the capital, Nicosia, in 1956. Two years later the McKinleys were encouraged to move to Famagusta, the very place where Mírzá Yahyá had lived and died.

By this time Violet's health was entirely broken; too weak to stand, she could only lie in bed, occasionally getting up in her room. Amidst rabid communal strife and terrorism no organized teaching work could be initiated, but individually two or three people were attracted and their interest aroused. During the ten-day period of her final illness, books were placed in the library of the Army Educational Centre serving Eastern Cyprus.

Violet McKinley passed away shortly after dawn on 16 August 1959. Informed of her passing, the Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land, who were then serving as the custodians of the Faith in the interregnum before the election of the Universal House of Justice, cabled in terms that can only constitute her crowning epitaph:

GRIEVED PASSING DEVOTED SELFSACRIFICING
 KNIGHT BAHAULLAH VIOLET MCKINLEY
 HIGHLY ESTEEMED BY BELOVED GUARDIAN
 EXAMPLE PERSEVERANCE UNFORGETTABLE
 PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS SOUL
 REALMS BEYOND STOP FEEL IMPELLED BUILD
 HER GRAVE TRIBUTE HISTORIC SERVICES.

Violet's grave in the English Cemetery at Famagusta, is marked by a plain slab of Carrara marble bearing the nine-pointed star and a quotation from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, secured from Italy and put into place during the early 1960s. It has been visited by some of the Hands of the Cause and other distinguished Bahá'ís.

HUGH MCKINLEY

ALFRED JAMES LOFT

13 July 1908–22 May 1973

James (Jim) Loft, a Mohawk Indian, was born in Hiawatha, Ontario and spent his early years in Belleville and Oshawa. His parents were poor and at the age of twelve or thirteen Jim went to work. He did not like school because he felt discriminated against and, as a result, achieved little formal education; but he had a keen mind and was quick to learn and he read avidly. Although it did not show on the surface, he sought, from early childhood, for something that would enable him to feel equal to the rest of humanity. He was puzzled by, but took comfort in, his very earliest recollection: Jim was sitting on a fence as a small boy watching a train crossing the landscape. A man clothed in flowing white robes was on the train smiling and waving at the child who, in confusion and delight, toppled backwards. This childhood memory lingered vividly. When he found the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, Jim recognized the figure on the train as 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

In 1930 Jim married Melba Whetung, a beautiful Chippewa Indian from Curve Lake, near Peterborough, Ontario. They established a home in Detroit, Michigan where their two sons were born, James Gordon in 1933 and Arthur Edwin in 1934. Jim worked for Chrysler Corporation and was transferred to Marysville, Michi-

gan where their daughter, Evelyn Irene, was born in 1938. It was at this time that Melba, who was seeking explanations to the mysteries of life through religion, encountered and accepted the Bahá'í Faith. Although there were a few American Indian believers in the Southern United States by that date, Melba was the first Canadian Indian believer.

Jim was active in community life. He was a foreman at Chrysler Corporation. He acquired a comfortable home and became the first Indian in Michigan to be accepted into the Masonic Lodge. He enjoyed having a good time and appeared to have succeeded in putting to rest the spiritual questions which had troubled him in his youth. Melba quietly began a life of active Bahá'í service and Jim went his own way content in the knowledge that he provided well for his family and feeling that to live a good life was sufficient. He was not to become a Bahá'í for ten years. Eventually he grew curious about his wife's commitment to Bahá'í activities and began to call for her at meetings. He was impressed by the friendliness and sincerity of the Bahá'ís and in May 1948 he declared his belief in Bahá'u'lláh at the home of Mrs. Kettle in Marysville.



Alfred James Loft

'I was overjoyed that Jim had accepted the Faith and that we could now work together as a Bahá'í family', wrote Melba. 'But I knew that my life of ease and comfort was over, for I realized that Jim would not rest until he had found some way to serve the Faith that would bring happiness to the beloved Guardian for whom he had already conceived an overwhelming love.'

In September 1948 he wrote to Shoghi Effendi asking what service he could best render the Cause. The reply dated 14 October 1948 written on behalf of the Guardian by his secretary stated, in part: 'He would greatly welcome your returning to your own tribe, and giving them this great message you and your dear wife have accepted.' The acceptance of the Faith by the Indians of North America, the letter continued, represents the fulfillment of the hopes 'Abdu'l-Bahá held for them and 'marks an important step forward not only in the evolution of our Faith itself, but also in the history of the Indian peoples, for, through the universal teachings of our Faith, they will come to not only be loved as brothers by their compatriots of European origin, but also develop the potentialities God has endowed them with, and thus contribute their share to world progress and world unity.' The Lofts, in consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada, took immediate steps to return to their home reservation in Canada, Tyendinaga, in Ontario. It is perhaps significant that Tyendinaga is the birthplace of Deganawidah, the fifteenth century figure whom tradition regards as the founder of the Iroquois Confederacy. Regarded as a prophet by the Indian people, Deganawidah, who was Huron by birth and Mohawk by adoption, united various tribes under one law and devoted his life to establishing peace, righteousness and civil law.

Leaving their beautiful home the Loft family came to Canada in January 1949 in sub-zero temperature. The only accommodation available to them on the reservation was a small three-room house without doors, windows or plumbing. A small cookstove provided meagre heat and required to be refueled throughout the night. For some period they slept huddled in sleeping bags, the parents waking frequently to check on the children. Drinking water was carried from a school. To the physical and economic difficulties another burden was

added—their fellow Indians did not accept them. They were treated with suspicion and hostility and it was made clear to them that only church members could be buried in the consecrated ground of the reservation. It was an inauspicious beginning. The nearest Bahá'ís lived 120 miles distant and there was no one on whom they could call for help. The Lofts settled in to teach the Faith and continue the education of their children. The first fireside meetings held in their new home were conducted against the background of the sound of water dripping through the holes in the roof into pails on the floor.

Jim found work as a mechanic in Belleville, a few miles from the reservation, and in December 1949 one of his fellow workers, Bert Curtis, became a Bahá'í, together with his wife, Elizabeth. It was the beginning of a lifelong friendship. Not long after, Mr. and Mrs. Russell Hill and their seven children found themselves homeless. Jim offered them the use of some of his land on the reservation for the construction of a small dwelling. In September 1950 the Russell Hill family became Bahá'ís. They were the first Indian believers. Slowly the teaching work developed. Jim and Melba frequently drove long distances to Toronto, Ottawa and Kingston to support the teaching efforts and their humble home was a centre of activity, filled with laughter. Jim had a marvellous sense of humour and his love for all was felt. 'I feel that they inspired many of the pioneers who followed them', one friend writes. 'Some of their firesides were almost electrifying in intensity. One summer weekend there were approximately 25 believers at their home; some slept on the floor, and some outside under the stars. Simple but nourishing meals were provided and coffee was made in an open pan; everyone claimed that Melba's coffee was the best they ever tasted. Looking back, I realize that they were conducting a Bahá'í institute, long before the concept became generally accepted in Bahá'í communities.'

'The Lofts were partly instrumental in my becoming a Bahá'í,' Roger White, the first believer of Belleville contributes, 'and I attended my first Nineteen Day Feast in their home. I remember the bus ride to Tyendinaga, the long hike from the highway across the unlighted reservation, the warm welcome, the meal of potato gruel, the laughter, Melba moving with



Gravestone of Alfred James Loft

the dignity of a queen in the rude surroundings, and the great reverence with which the devotions were recited. I was a new Bahá'í and although enchanted with the prayers, I had not yet discovered the writings of Shoghi Effendi. Jim read aloud, and we discussed a recent communication from the Guardian. The love the Lofts felt for the Guardian was like a palpable force in the room and I suddenly yearned, too, to become his servant. Their love for him had the quality of that usually seen in those who had met Shoghi Effendi, though they never did.'

Tragedy touched the Lofts when, in 1954, their eldest son was killed in a motor accident leaving a young widow and three small daughters. Due to family circumstances which arose after the young man's death and his wife's remarriage, Jim and Melba adopted one of the children and raised, loved and educated her. Indeed, throughout the years many homeless children were brought into their home and became part of the Loft family. Jim and Melba loved children and many of those whom they helped to raise and educate became Bahá'ís, and all show great respect for the Bahá'í Faith. As the years passed the Lofts won increasing love and respect from the residents of Tyendinaga.

On 21 May 1973 after attending a happy gathering of friends and relatives held at the home of their daughter in Cobourg, the Lofts returned to Tyendinaga. Shortly after midnight Jim suffered a heart attack and passed into the Abhá kingdom. His wife was by his side. 'Promise me,' he asked as the end drew near, 'to remain in Tyendinaga. That is what the Guardian wanted.'

Although arrangements had been made for his burial off the reserve in order not to offend the people of Tyendinaga, the clergy and Indian Band Council requested that he be buried in a church cemetery on the reservation. His funeral was attended by hundreds of Indians and non-Indians from all walks of life. Bahá'í friends attended from as far away as Marysville, Michigan. The clergy from the churches of Tyendinaga reservation came and paid their respect and church bells tolled the passing of this servant of the Lord. His grave marker—within the shadow of the monument erected to the revered Deganawidah—bears the simple legend 'Alfred (Jim) Loft—Bahá'í Pioneer' and is engraved with the Indian thunderbird symbol and a nine-pointed star.

On 13 June 1973 the Universal House of Justice wrote to Mrs. Loft: 'Through a fellow Bahá'í we have learned of the passing to the Abhá Kingdom of your dear husband James who, with you and your children, has pioneered these long years in the Mohawk Indian Reserve. The work among the spiritually gifted indigenous groups of the American continent was dear to the heart of the beloved Guardian, whose summons to pioneering you both heeded more than a quarter of a century ago. We shall offer prayers at the Holy Shrines of our Faith that your husband's immortal soul will progress in the worlds of God, and that you may be enabled with high heart and unflinching devotion to continue your services in the vital teaching of the Indian peoples.'

EVELYN LOFT WATTS

CHARLES JARDINE

ISHRÁQÍYYIYH DHABÍH

1891-1973

GRIEVED PASSING DEVOTED MAIDSERVANT
ISHRAQIYYIYH DHABIH STOP HER LONG SUS-
TAINED SERVICES CAUSE GOD FIELDS TEACHING
PIONEERING EDUCATION DISTINGUISHED HER
AMONG WOMEN BAHAI COMMUNITY PERSIA
STOP SUPPLICATING DIVINE THRESHOLD
PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Universal House of Justice

This remarkable tribute from the Universal House of Justice is a striking testimony to the indomitable spirit that animated the soul of Ishráqíyyih Dhabíh whose passing plunged the entire Bahá'í community of Írán into profound sorrow and deprived it of an outstanding worker and faithful exemplar of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. Her life was a reflection to an eminent degree of His exhortation that knowledge and action must be wedded to each other. The admiration expressed for her conduct by both 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi attests this truth.

Ishráqíyyih Khánum's radiant countenance and charming smile will long remain in the memory of those who knew her and her countless services and selfless care for her fellow-beings will not be soon forgotten. Throughout her long life she was mindful never to cause grief or lay a burden on any soul. Her life was devoted to teaching the Cause and educating children in the capital and other towns and villages in Írán.

Miss Dhabíh was born in 1891 in Tíhrán. Her grandfather, Hájí Mírzá Ismá'íl Dhabíh, surnamed Anís (Companion) by Bahá'u'lláh, had the priceless privilege of acting as host to the Báb when He visited Káshán. Her father, Ghulám-'Alí, was a devoted believer who twice attained his cherished desire of entering the presence of Bahá'u'lláh. Ishráqíyyih was only an infant when her father died. Her mother, Nargis Khátún, a member of a distinguished Bahá'í family, was left destitute with three children to raise, a son and two daughters. Ishráqíyyih was the youngest child. She received her elementary education at home from her mother and subsequently attended the American missionary school.

The family lived in a home situated in the southern sector of Tíhrán, a home known in the neighbourhood as 'the Bábí house' because of



Ishráqíyyih Dhabíh

the constant coming and going of Bahá'ís through its portals. The sacred remains of the Báb had rested in that house and this invested it with a halo of sanctity and endeared it to the hearts of the friends. The Dhabíhs were not immune from the persecution to which Bahá'ís at that time were subject at the hands of their enemies. The members of the family were the objects of vile remarks and molestation on the streets and on retiring at night were never sure whether they would live to see the morning. Even their moving to another sector of the city with a large proportion of Bahá'í residents did not secure for them the immunity desired and in their new quarters they were often the target of attacks by rough characters. On one occasion a group of ruffians broke down their door and entered threatening to kill Ishráqíyyih's brother, Mírzá Jalál. Her interposition saved his life but the violence of this incident profoundly affected the family. In Ishráqíyyih it produced a strange reaction and revealed the beauty of her character which the early period of her life, replete with afflictions, had forged. As a result of a complaint lodged by her brother, backed by the support of a Bahá'í in high position, against the recent assailants, their ringleader was arrested

and sentenced to be flogged but Ishráqíyyih's intervention procured his release. Such was the generosity of her nature; such the kindness of her soul.

American missionaries at this time established a high school in Tihrán where Ishráqíyyih studied until her graduation in 1913. Not only did she resist attempts to convert her to the Christian faith but continued regularly attending Bahá'í teacher training courses. She qualified as a teacher of Bahá'í classes and was fired with new zeal and conviction.

At the American school prize-giving ceremony in her last year she was expected to appear unveiled. She asked 'Abdu'l-Bahá what she should do. His Tablet written in reply did not touch upon the subject at all! Instead He wrote that she should be thankful for having gained her objective, for having remained firm and steadfast in the Covenant and bade her 'rise then, now, to serve and teach the Cause.' With a heart brimming over with happiness she showed the friends this Tablet. She possessed two certificates now, she affirmed. One attested her secular knowledge (a creditable enough achievement for a woman of her circumstances in those days) and the other, the Tablet, much more highly prized, testifying to her faith and steadfastness.

Not for a moment after this did she seek rest. She obeyed the Master's behest. From her spiritual guide, Dr. Susan I. Moody,¹ she learned the way to contact and teach people and spread the Faith. The illustrious Dr. Moody showed her how to go about this with a smile on her lips and love in her heart.

Ishráqíyyih gave private tuition at home and took classes in the Tarbiyat Girls' School and all the while was mindful of imparting the Bahá'í principles in an indirect manner to all her students. On Fridays, the weekly holiday, she conducted character training classes for Bahá'í youth. At the suggestion of the friends she was appointed headmistress of the Ta'yíd Bahá'í School at Hamadán when she was only twenty-seven. Three years later she returned to the capital and was put in charge of the kindergarten section of the Tarbiyat School, newly introduced on Dr. Moody's recommendation. She supervised it until the school was closed by the Government. She later organized kindergar-

ten classes in a non-Bahá'í school until the death of her mother who had been in her care left her free to devote all her time to teaching the Cause. At the outset, she undertook the supervision and organization of the newly established 'Abbás-Ábád Bahá'í School situated near Tihrán. She would travel on a donkey or even on foot to the surrounding villages to teach the children as well as their illiterate mothers. Concurrently she established fireside meetings too but after a couple of years hostility by non-Bahá'ís put a stop to these.

Ishráqíyyih returned to Tihrán and subsequently went on teaching and training trips to Arák, Káshán, Najaf-Ábád, Sarvistán, Shiráz and Ishfáhán. In some places, the enemies of the Faith inflicted upon her shameful indignities of the kind suffered by the early believers. Once, during disturbances directed against the friends in Sarvistán, she was taken into custody and conveyed to Shiráz in a shameful and cruel manner. The humiliations heaped upon her did not crush her spirit nor curtail her activities in Shiráz, Ishfáhán and the adjacent areas.

She subsequently applied for a visa to India where she hoped to pioneer, but was unsuccessful, whereupon she donated to the Bahá'í Fund the entire sum she had reserved for this purpose. Then, at the direction of the Spiritual Assembly, she went to Bábul. Here, and in Sháhí and surrounding areas, she rendered noteworthy services, greatly appreciated by the National Spiritual Assembly. After some years she returned to Tihrán to tend her sick nephew, 'Izzatu'lláh Dhabíh.² After his death, she lived with another nephew for the last decade of her life in comparative seclusion due to her increasing weakness.

Even to the last her greatest joy lay in the visits of the friends. She died in June 1973 at the age of eighty-two. The large number of friends at her burial in the Tihrán Bahá'í Cemetery was a tangible indication of the esteem in which she was held.

It is appropriate to close this memorial with a reference to a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi in which, in effect, the Guardian assured Ishráqíyyih Dhabíh that her steadfastness and faithfulness were remembered and that he would pray that she might attain the good of this world and of the next.

¹ See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. VI, p. 483.

² See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, p. 390.

QUDRATU'LLÁH ÁZAMÍKHÁH

1911–1973

Qudratu'lláh Ázamíkháh was born in 1911 in 'Ishqábád where his father spent his last years in service at the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. When Qudratu'lláh was sixteen his mother and her children settled in Persia where Qudratu'lláh actively participated in Bahá'í community life and quickly distinguished himself as a result of his steadfast and devoted service.

In 1952 he pioneered to a number of difficult areas in Saudi Arabia where he assisted in the establishment of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Medina and the first Bahá'í group in Mecca, the chief spiritual centre of Islám. He was imprisoned for his beliefs and expelled from Saudi Arabia. The hardships he endured in so many difficult pioneering posts only increased his ardour and he constantly sought new areas of service. He was a member of the first Spiritual Assembly of Khartoum and when this community was securely established he pioneered to Port Sudan to build a Spiritual Assembly there. He was unable to find employment during the year and one-half he spent in the Sudan but he cheerfully accepted every vicissitude which befell him. Just as he found employment that would enable him to maintain himself in Sudan

there arose an urgent need for Bahá'í pioneers in Chad. Abandoning the financial security he had just been offered he moved to Chad but unfortunately he was unable to secure a residence visa and in October 1961 he went to the neighbouring Central African Republic, where he supported himself by repairing primus stoves and engaged in the great task of teaching and consolidating the Faith in that newly-opened country. He saw his efforts rewarded in the following year by the formation of the first Spiritual Assembly of Bangui. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Central African Republic has paid tribute in these words: 'Although there had been a few Bahá'ís in Bangui since 1956, Mr. Ázamíkháh was a catalyst to this young community. He actively taught the Faith and held evening meetings in his home. He quickly became known and respected for his knowledge of the Bible and the Qur'án. Although he was compelled to leave Bangui in May 1962, thanks to his efforts the first believers in the Central African Republic were well deepened in their knowledge of the Faith. He can really be called the instigator of the teaching work in the Central African Republic. His consecration, sacrifices and dynamism have been and will always be an inspiration graven upon our spirits.'

Unable to remain in Bangui, Qudratu'lláh chose Brazzaville, in the Congo, as his next post. Here he gathered together the first few early believers and began teaching the Cause. Due in part to his efforts the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Brazzaville was formed at Riqván 1964. Again he supported himself by repairing petroleum lamps, by which means he was brought into contact with many people. Soon the northern part of this country was also opened to the Faith.

During the eleven years he spent in the Congo, Mr. Ázamíkháh's home was a meeting place for the Bahá'ís and their friends. Despite his limited means he was generous to everyone and was able to provide for the education of a few African youth. He had no desire in the world but to further the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. It may be said that to a great extent the establishment of the National Spiritual Assembly of Congo (Brazzaville) and Gabon in 1971 (the following year to become the National Spiritual Assembly of the Congo Republic) was the fruit of his tireless services.



Qudratu'lláh Ázamíkháh

In 1971 he was appointed a member of the Auxiliary Board. This appointment increased his opportunities to travel and teach in neighbouring countries. Despite an ailing heart and diabetes his pace was not slowed until the end came on 25 July 1973. His passing was a deeply-felt loss to the friends in the Congo and many Bahá'ís and other friends participated in his funeral service. He is survived by his wife and three children. His unforgettable services were acknowledged by the Universal House of Justice in its cable of 26 July 1973:

DEEPLY GRIEVED SUDDEN PASSING OUTSTANDING SERVANT FAITH QUDRATULLAH AZAMIKHAH HIS SERVICES VARIOUS TERRITORIES AFRICA UNFORGETTABLE ASSURE RELATIVES FRIENDS FERVENT PRAYERS SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM STOP ADVISE HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS BAHAI CENTRES CONGO.

'IZZATU'LLÁH TA'ÍD

ANNA KUNZ

1889-1973

Anna Kunz, the eldest of ten children of the Reverend Adolph Bolliger, a prominent clergyman of the Reformed Church, was born in the parsonage in Ober Entfelden, Aargau, Switzerland on 13 July 1889. Soon thereafter the Reverend Bolliger was named Professor of Theology at the University of Basel and in time became its president; thus it was in Basel that Anna spent her school years. Under the guidance of her conscientious and serious parents she received excellent spiritual and moral training which served as the foundation of her character throughout her life. After graduation from high school, she longed to enter the university, but her father insisted that she study in a home economics seminary in Berne, on whose faculty she later became a teacher.

At twenty-four years of age she married Dr. Jakob Kunz, a distinguished Swiss physicist who was a research professor at the University of Illinois in Urbana, Illinois. Thus she moved far away from her homeland, across the Atlantic Ocean, to the new world. Instantly she fell in love with America and throughout her life she loved to relate stories of the great kindness

showered upon her as a bride in the midwestern university town of Urbana which became her home for thirty-five years. The hospitality, openness and magnanimity of the Americans overwhelmed her. With her conservative, traditional Swiss background, she gradually learned a new life style. Her two daughters, Annamarie Kunz Honnold and Margaret Kunz Ruhe, were born and raised in Urbana. Dr. Kunz gained recognition for his invention of the Kunz cell and, among other things, collaborated on the first sound-on-film developments.

Dr. and Mrs. Kunz, active members of the Methodist Church, were serious and religious in their bent. Dr. Kunz, who was endowed with a deeply searching mind, was prompted in 1914 or 1915 to attend a lecture about the Bahá'í Faith, accompanied by his wife and their good friends, Edwin and Annie Mattoon. They soon found themselves regular students in a class on the tenets of the Bahá'í Faith given by Unitarian minister, Albert Vail, an eloquent and inspired teacher of comparative religions. Mrs. Kunz almost at once recognized Bahá'u'lláh as the Manifestation of God for this day and became one of the founders of the Urbana Bahá'í community which served as the seed-bed for many teachers of the Faith.

Despite ill health, timidity, the burdens of tending small children and the emotional conflicts resulting from life in a new culture, Anna Kunz quickly showed signs of leadership, administrative ability, firmness and steadfastness in the Faith. She studied the Bahá'í Writings assiduously and resolved to live her life according to those teachings. Beauty of spirit radiated from her and was felt by those around her.

In 1921 Dr. and Mrs. Kunz made their pilgrimage to the Holy Shrines in Haifa and 'Akká and attained the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá; this was the pinnacle of Mrs. Kunz's life. She adored 'Abdu'l-Bahá; He became her Exemplar and her Master. In an article published in *Star of the West*, vol. 13, No. 6, September 1922, she wrote about her pilgrimage. Of her first meeting with 'Abdu'l-Bahá on 27 March 1921 in a hotel at Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee where 'Abdu'l-Bahá used to go for rest and change of air she stated: 'It was a bright and luminous Easter morning when the Master called us into His room . . . Though I feared to approach Him, after His loving words of welcome this fear vanished. Here we sat



Anna Kunz

before our Master, in a little room, with only the most necessary furnishings, on top of the hotel, with a view of that blessed lake. His look seems to go into one's very heart. Yes, he knows His children and their need. As I think of Him now, I always love to think, first of His great simplicity, His marvellous humility which knows of no self-existence, and last . . . of His boundless love. To us His outward appearance seemed similar to that of the old Hebrew prophets; His humility, His simplicity and love were like the Christ. This boundless love conquered the hearts at once. 'Abdu'l-Bahá talked to us with a ringing, piercing voice which will forever sound in my ears.'

On Monday, 28 March, 'Abdu'l-Bahá looked at the picture of their two daughters for a long while and He said: 'They have bright faces. They will be real Bahá'ís because they will have a Bahá'í education. They will become good Bahá'ís.' Later, He revealed a wonderful prayer for them which is recorded in *Star of the West*.

In the afternoon of that day He spoke these words: 'This lake is very blessed. His Holiness Christ and the other prophets walked along its shore and were in communion with God all the time and spreading the divine teachings. Now, praise be to God that you reached this land

safely and we met one another on the shore of this same lake! You will receive great results from this visit afterwards. You will become the cause of the illumination of the world of humanity. You will release the hearts of the people from the intense darkness of different prejudices, so that each soul may love all the people of the world, without distinction. Just like a shepherd who is affectionate to all his sheep, without preference or distinction, you should be affectionate to all. You should not look at their shortcomings. Consider that they are all created by God who loves them all.'

Returning to Urbana with renewed zeal, Mrs. Kunz served for long years on the Local Spiritual Assembly of that city. Much of the time she served as chairman. She also worked diligently on many committees, and for years she was elected delegate to the National Convention. At the age of fifty she studied typing in order to increase her ability to serve her beloved Faith.

The Kunz home was a haven of peace, rest, beauty and hospitality for all who came there. Dr. Kunz entertained Rabindranath Tagore and other philosophers and scientists. Not only were Bahá'í classes and meetings held in the home but also a steady stream of Bahá'í teachers spent the night there.

Mrs. Kunz was thoughtful of people in small and large ways; she took time to listen to them and was perceptive of their inner needs and aspirations. She liked to remember others with flowers, home-baked cookies, small gifts. At the age of forty-three she learned to drive a car, and one of her services was to drive about Urbana gathering the Bahá'ís and their friends for the meetings. In the personal and intimate details of her life she was a complete Bahá'í: cleanliness, neatness, frugality and meticulousness were her hallmark. Her person was immaculate, and her house was shinningly clean. Her spirit, humble and pure, knew the power of prayer. Her prayer book was always at her side. She prayed many times each day and loved to share the prayers with her family and friends. 'May we have a prayer together?' she would say.

After the death of her husband Mrs. Kunz was free to pioneer and, having offered her services to the beloved Guardian, she sailed from New York in July 1947 at the age of fifty-eight, returning as a pioneer to her native Switzerland, thus beginning a whole new phase of her life. She settled in Berne, one of the goal

cities of the second Seven Year Plan, where Shoghi Effendi wrote to her as follows:

'I welcome your arrival in Europe and particularly in Switzerland where, I feel, your work will be of the utmost value. You will surely be blessed and sustained in your historic task, and I look forward to the day when through your exertion and those of your devoted collaborators the first Spiritual Assembly will be established in that land. Persevere in your magnificent mission.' She worked tirelessly towards the establishment of the Berne Local Spiritual Assembly. After this goal was accomplished, she returned to Urbana in 1949, feeling that she was needed there. Shoghi Effendi wrote to her as follows:

'The services you have rendered the Faith are truly remarkable and deserve the highest praise. I feel truly proud of your achievements, and am grateful for the spirit that so powerfully animates you in the service of our glorious Faith. I will pray ardently on your behalf, that the Beloved may abundantly reward you for your accomplishments, and enable you, in the years to come, to enrich the splendid record of your services to His Faith and its institutions.'

The pioneering spirit had taken hold, and when news reached her in Urbana of the urgent needs in Switzerland, Mrs. Kunz felt restless and torn. To be near her children and grandchildren was her personal longing and wish. She again wrote to Shoghi Effendi seeking his advice. For a long time there was no answer. She was relieved. Then came the stunning reply—proceed as quickly as possible to Switzerland. She was crushed, but in October 1952 she valiantly set forth once again, this time locating in Zurich, a goal city. In the spring of 1953 she was elected a member of the newly-formed National Spiritual Assembly of Italy and Switzerland and to her consternation was elected secretary of this historic twelfth National Spiritual Assembly, which post she held for nine years. Now she understood why in mid-life she had been prompted to take up typing! At the request of Shoghi Effendi she moved back to Berne, though by personal wish she would have chosen to remain in her splendid apartment in Zurich. At Riqdán 1962 the National Spiritual Assembly of Switzerland was formed and she was again elected secretary for one year. She continued to serve on the National Assembly until 1969 when, once again elected, she asked

to be relieved as she was approaching her eightieth birthday and her health was not the best.

In 1957 she flew to London—her first flight—for the funeral of Shoghi Effendi. Like many others she had always harboured the wish to be in his presence, but alas, she had waited too long; now his sudden passing was a terrible blow.

In 1963, forty-two years after attaining the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, she returned to the Holy Land, this time to fulfill the historic mission of being an elector of the first Universal House of Justice. How Haifa and 'Akká had changed! But the same spirit of power and love emanated from the Holy Shrines as she knelt in prayers of gratitude and adoration at the Holy Thresholds.

Her later years were plagued with a series of illnesses, but her spirit was ever radiant and bright. She gave up her loved apartment and later moved to a nursing home in the suburbs of Berne where she died peacefully in her sleep on 10 August 1973. The Universal House of Justice cabled, in part:

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING ANNA KUNZ STEAD-
FAST DISTINGUISHED HANDMAID BAHAUULLAH
HER ASSOCIATIONS BELOVED MASTER DEVOTED
PIONEERING SERVICES EUROPE OVER EXTENDED
PERIOD UNFORGETTABLE . . .

MARGARET KUNZ RUHE

ISAAC EZIUKWU

1934-1973

Isaac Eziukwu was one of the first believers to accept the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in Bangui, Central African Republic. He was a Nigerian, born at Umuokehi village near Umuahia, and had come as a trader to Bangui several years before encountering the Faith. He was active in his own church as a lay preacher. One evening in 1956, on the threshold of the home of a friend, he chanced to hear a Bahá'í prayer being read in English. The prayer so moved and attracted him that he asked to borrow the prayer book. After only a few days he returned it to the Bahá'í to whom it belonged saying, 'I am convinced that I



Isaac Eziukwu

am wasting my time with other religions. As from today I must be a Bahá'í.' He spent much time with his new friend, an English-speaking Cameroonian who was the first Bahá'í to come to Bangui. Isaac eagerly accepted the new Revelation and immediately arose in its service with a devotion and enthusiasm that never failed. After his friend returned to Cameroon in 1960, it was Isaac who held aloft the standard of the Faith in Bangui until the arrival of Qudratu'lláh Ázamíkháh¹ who came there as a pioneer in October 1961. Isaac, athirst for greater knowledge and understanding of the Cause, welcomed the new pioneer and eagerly worked to establish the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Bangui which was formed at Riḍván 1962. When Mr. Ázamíkháh was compelled to leave shortly thereafter, Isaac was again the mainspring of the small community, continually offering encouragement to the other believers.

When the Universal House of Justice called for pioneers at the beginning of the Nine Year Plan, Isaac left as soon as possible for Gabon and arrived in Libreville in June 1964. Behind the market-place in Libreville he worked as a

repairer of kerosene lamps, a skill taught to him by Mr. Ázamíkháh, and gradually was able to teach the Faith and gather together the first believers. In April 1966 the first Local Spiritual Assembly was formed in Libreville.

Greatly encouraged by visiting Bahá'ís, Isaac began to teach the Faith in localities near Libreville and later visited areas far inland. With the help of another pioneer the Local Spiritual Assembly of Mounana was established, and so the Faith began to spread to various parts of Gabon.

Beginning in 1971, Isaac devoted himself to the task of gaining recognition of the Bahá'í Faith in Gabon. The by-laws of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Libreville were prepared and submitted to the proper authorities and Isaac was hopeful of success. However, to his deep disappointment, months and finally years went by without result. In July 1973 he heard of the passing of his dear friend and fellow pioneer Mr. Ázamíkháh who had settled in Brazzaville. He was heard to say, after reading some prayers, 'If it please Bahá'u'lláh to take my own life and let the Faith be recognized here in Gabon, I will be grateful.'

Shortly after this it became evident that Isaac was not well. His condition worsened rapidly and in October 1973, with his wife and infant son, he returned to Nigeria where he died on 23 October. He is buried near his father's house in his home village.

It may be truly said of Isaac that he was a lover of Bahá'u'lláh. From the time he was first attracted to the Faith until his passing, he lived for the Cause and the task he set himself, to raise the call of the Kingdom.

On learning of Isaac's death the Universal House of Justice wrote in a letter dated 6 December 1973 to the Local Spiritual Assembly of Libreville:

'... the sad news of the passing of Mr. Isaac Eziukwu was received and it brought deep sorrow to our hearts. This devoted and steadfast believer was a sincere promoter of the Cause, and a true lover of the Blessed Beauty. He spent his days in detachment and service, and set an example of dedication to his fellow-believers wherever he was. We assure you of our fervent prayers at the Holy Shrines for the continued progress of his noble soul in the Abhá Kingdom ...'

¹ See 'In Memoriam', p. 519.

KAREN BARE

1942-1974

Karen (Stamper) Bare was born on 5 May 1942 in Cheyenne, Wyoming. She was in Hawaii in 1968 waiting for news of her husband, William Bare, an officer of the United States Air Force who had been reported missing in action, when she became attracted to the Bahá'í Faith. She immediately identified herself with the Cause and became a member of the Bahá'í community of Hawaii where she was supremely happy. A year later, in response to a call for pioneers to Africa, she volunteered to serve in the United Republic of Cameroon. Within a few weeks she arrived at her post, serving first in Douala and later in Victoria. Her activities as a pioneer were varied. She served as a member of the National Spiritual Assembly and on a number of national committees, was elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly of Victoria, devoted considerable time to travelling as a teacher of the Faith and offered friendship and hospitality to believers and visitors.

Mrs. Bare was killed in an automobile accident on 4 January 1974 while visiting her family in the United States. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Cameroon Republic wrote, in part:

'The tragic news of the death of our dearly-loved young Bahá'í sister, . . . (an) ardent promoter and protector of the Bahá'í Faith, came as a great blow to our Bahá'í community. The friends in Cameroon are grief-stricken and . . . memorial meetings have been held in a number of places.

'Karen Bare was especially loved by the Cameroonian women and children, on whom she poured her love. She forgot ease and comfort and even during the Fast in the heat of the day would walk several miles to visit villages around Victoria for teaching and deepening.

'Her home was the home of all visitors and pioneers who came to Victoria. The Persians are famous for their hospitality but several remarked that they had seen none to equal hers.

'When the Bahá'ís of Cameroon read the cabled message from the Universal House of Justice, they will feel some comfort for their sorrowing hearts. We hope that the youth both here and in her motherland will be inspired by her devoted service (in the) pioneer field (and) splendid example.'

A friend has written: 'Karen had a deep love for the Faith, a sound knowledge of Bahá'í administration and a strong sense of justice. Her loyalty to the Universal House of Justice was truly ardent. Her life held many tragedies and disappointments, but her devotion to the Faith was the source of her strength.'

A fellow pioneer to Africa, Mr. Jean-Christophe Casu, paid tribute to the memory of Karen Bare in a poem from which the following excerpt is taken:

'Angel is dead, she is in the Kingdom now!
Oh joie spirituelle tu distribuais la force
aimante pour la Cause primordiale,



Karen Bare

l'accomplissement divin. Source tu prodigieuse,
l'eau merveilleuse régénératrice de l'humanité
entière,
toi frêle femme jusqu'à épuisement, jusqu'au
bout!

Angel is dead, she is in the Kingdom now!
Tu vis parmi nous semence prodigieuse,
toujours en symbiose avec
nos âmes qui prient et nos oreilles palpitantes
entendent,
entendront éternellement ton 'Alláh-u-
Abhá'!

Aimable, fraternelle, généreuse pour tout le peuple de Bahá.

Angel is dead, she is in the Kingdom now!

Karen's Bahá'í books were presented to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United Republic of Cameroon by her mother, Mrs. Stamper, and they will form the nucleus of the Karen Bare Memorial Library.

On 10 January 1974 the Universal House of Justice cabled:

DEEPLY GRIEVED UNTIMELY DEATH VALIANT
DEDICATED MUCH LOVED MAIDSERVANT
BAHAULLAH KAREN BARE STOP HER DEVOTED
SERVICE PIONEER FIELD SPLENDID EXAMPLE
OTHER YOUTHFUL BELIEVERS STOP ADVISE
HOLD MEMORIAL SERVICES STOP PRAYING
SACRED THRESHOLD RICH REWARDS BLESSINGS
ABHA KINGDOM.

PHILIP A. MARANGELLA

1895–1974

'A native returns . . .' These words were written in the summer of 1973 on the occasion of the visit to Potenza, Italy by my father, Philip Antonio (Amalfi) Marangella, who was present there for the Italian Bahá'í Youth Conference, held for the first time in the province of Italy where he was born on 18 October 1895. Although my father was a naturalized American citizen and loved America deeply, he always retained a special love for the land of his birth and it was a particular pleasure for him to make one last trip to Italy during the last summer of his life. In the summer of 1973 he had been a Bahá'í for fifty-two years and it seemed very significant to him to be visiting his birthplace.

My parents first went to Green Acre, Eliot, Maine in July 1921 and attended their first Bahá'í meeting at Fellowship House. The speaker was the renowned Bahá'í teacher Jináb-i-Fáḡíl who spoke on the subject, 'The Liberators of Mankind'. This was Professor Fáḡíl's last lecture in America and he left the following day for New York to take the ship back to Haifa to report to 'Abdu'l-Bahá on his one year trip. The chairman of the meeting was Mr. William H. Randall of Boston, a member of the United States Shipping Board of which my father was

an employee, but Dad did not know of Mr. Randall's connection with the Faith at that time. Following their visit to Green Acre, my parents became Bahá'ís.

A few years later we moved to Portsmouth, New Hampshire in order to be near Green Acre. Each summer many wonderful Bahá'í teachers came to share their knowledge with others. It was at Green Acre that my father derived the inspiration and the desire to devote his life to teaching and spreading the Faith. He became a deep student of the Writings and developed capacities as a public speaker. Being blessed with a beautiful speaking voice and a deep reservoir of enthusiasm, the result was a dynamic presentation. However, most of his desire to teach and pioneer came as a result of his love for and devotion to Shoghi Effendi, the beloved Guardian of the Faith. Although my father did not have the bounty of meeting the Guardian, he frequently wrote to Shoghi Effendi and, in turn, received many letters from him encouraging my father in his efforts to teach the Cause.

My father's travels on behalf of the Faith are too numerous to mention but some stand out as being of special interest at the time because he wrote to Shoghi Effendi about them and received replies. In 1932 my father sent to Shoghi Effendi an account of his teaching trip through the southern United States and the Guardian replied through his secretary, adding the following note in his own hand:

'Dear and valued co-worker: I have read your splendid report and I am thrilled by the news it conveyed. You have certainly rendered a service which deserves to be ranked as one of the most outstanding achievements in recent years in the teaching field. May the Beloved bless, sustain and guide your efforts and enable you to render still greater services in the days to come. Persevere, and rest assured that my prayers will continue to be offered in your behalf. Your true and grateful brother, Shoghi.'

In 1933 my father was still very active with inter-racial work and in response to a report the Guardian's secretary wrote on his behalf: 'The news of your splendid activities in connection with inter-racial work greatly cheered his heart and confirmed his hopes for the future of your efforts for the promotion of racial unity and peace in America. May your selfless endeavors along this line be increasingly blessed and

become a means whereby many eager and sincere souls can be led to accept the Teachings.'

Another way in which my father spread the Teachings was through his original poetry, some of which he sent to the Holy Land. In a postscript to a letter dated 6 August 1933 the *Guardian* wrote: 'Your poem dedicated to Nabil deeply touched me. I urge you to revise it and put it into final form and send to me a copy of it for inclusion in the next issue of *The Bahá'í World* . . . I would also welcome any other poems from your gifted pen on any phase or episode recounted in Nabil's immortal narrative. You are rendering the Cause unique and notable services. Be happy and persevere in your high endeavours.' The poem entitled 'Nabil' appeared in *The Bahá'í World*, vol. V, on page 673. His poem entitled 'Zanjan' appeared on page 674 of the same volume. Two poems he composed in memory of Keith Ransom-Kehler were acknowledged by the secretary of Shoghi Effendi who wrote on 27 February 1934 stating that the *Guardian* hoped that the poems would enable both Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís to 'better appreciate the magnificent services which that devoted servant of the Cause has rendered it during her long and active career of service to the Faith'.

For a long time my father had a great desire to go to a Spanish-speaking country or island to teach the Faith. He wrote of this desire to the *Guardian* whose secretary responded in a letter of 30 September 1937 stating on the *Guardian's* behalf that it would be preferable for my father to 'travel to Cuba and to endeavor while there to establish a group of believers who could be able to carry on the work after your departure'.

My father made a trip to Cuba, remaining there nine days. He sent a report of this to Shoghi Effendi which was acknowledged by his secretary on 24 March 1939. In his own hand the *Guardian* penned: 'Your letter and enclosures rejoiced my heart. I feel proud of the spirit that so powerfully animates you . . .' Later in 1939 my father was situated as a pioneer in Cuba where he remained for a year.

By the year 1947, however, my father was pioneering in Italy and he wrote, as always, reporting his activities to Shoghi Effendi. To a letter dated 23 August 1947 Shoghi Effendi appended the following postscript: 'I deeply appreciate your magnificent and historic services. I will supplicate for you, from the depths



Philip A. Marangella

of my heart, the Master's richest blessings. You are often in my thoughts and prayers, and I feel confident that the Beloved is well pleased with you, and will reinforce your meritorious and high endeavors.'

Father remained as a pioneer in Italy for a year and in 1948 he returned to the United States where he spent the years until 1953, broken briefly by an extended trip to Jamaica where he visited Bahá'í communities. He left the United States in October 1953 and settled as a pioneer in Japan where he spent the next twenty years. The last two years of his life were spent pioneering in Hong Kong where he passed away on 31 January 1974.

In this last period of his life my father devoted his teaching efforts to the East, travelling throughout Japan from its northernmost island of Hokkaido to the southernmost island of Kyushu. He also visited Korea, Taiwan, the Pescadores Islands, Okinawa, Macao, Vietnam and India. He was elected as a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Northeast Asia for ten successive years, serving in various capacities.

In addition to his teaching work in Japan, Hong Kong and adjacent areas, father had the experience of making several very outstanding journeys of a wider nature. He attended the Jubilee celebration in London in 1963 and had

the bounty of being a delegate to the second International Convention in Haifa in 1968. He obtained permission to make a pilgrimage at the end of 1970 while on a round-the-world teaching trip. This tour was of more than six months' duration and took him to numerous countries of Europe and Asia as well as to the United States. In 1971 the Universal House of Justice asked him to visit the seats of twenty established and four newly-formed National Spiritual Assemblies. This was a travel teaching programme, but it utilized his many years of experience as an accountant and auditor and he was asked to prepare a handbook for National Assembly treasurers. In 1973 he attended the third International Convention to which he was a delegate.

During the more than thirty years since my marriage, I kept in close contact with Dad through correspondence, and we met for brief visits in London, Paris, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, Venice, Vienna and other places. The most memorable, however, were his lengthy stays at our home in Zweibrücken, Germany during the last three summers before his passing. Although he felt an urge to retire finally and be with us for his remaining years, he felt the even greater call to fulfill the ever-burning desire to spread the Bahá'í teachings and help consolidate the victories won, so he remained at his pioneer post in Hong Kong to the very end.

The most appreciated tribute to his long years of devotion to the Faith was accorded him in a cablegram from the Universal House of Justice to the National Spiritual Assembly of North-east Asia on the occasion of his passing:

DEEPLY GRIEVED LEARN PASSING PHILIP
MARANGELLA DEVOTED SERVANT BAHAUULLAH
STEADFAST SUPPORTER COVENANT HIS PIONEER
SERVICES TIRELESS WORLDWIDE TRAVELS
BEHALF FAITH MOST PRAISEWORTHY PRAYING
SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM
ADVISE HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL SERVICE.

AYNED LOUISE McCOMB

DAOUD TOEG

1897-1974

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING FAITHFUL OUT-
STANDING PROMOTER FAITH DAOUD TOEG HIS

RECORD DEVOTED SERVICES FAITH IRAQ UN-
FORGETTABLE ADVISE HOLD MEMORIAL
GATHERING NATIONAL HAZIRATULQUDS STOP
CONVEY FAMILY LOVING CONDOLENCES ASSUR-
ANCE PRAYERS SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL . . .
Universal House of Justice

On 1 February 1974 Mr. Daoud Toeg, a staunch and faithful servant of Bahá'u'lláh, passed away in Hull, Quebec where he had been a pioneer for almost three years.

Mr. Toeg was born in Baghdád, 'Íráq, of a wealthy, well-educated and devout Jewish family. He received an excellent education and mastered seven languages but grew dissatisfied with the Jewish Faith and became an atheist. Eventually he met Mr. Ezra Sofer, a Bahá'í of Jewish background, and became attracted to his ideas and the solutions he proposed to the problems of individuals and nations. Knowing that Mr. Sofer was not highly educated, he always wondered what might be the source of his ideas. The night Mr. Sofer told him of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh they talked in a coffee shop until morning came and when they separated Mr. Toeg rushed to a library and obtained all the available Bahá'í books. He studied the Bahá'í Writings for the next three years and in 1927 declared his belief in Bahá'u'lláh. In this period it was customary for those who accepted the Faith to send a written declaration of acceptance directly to the beloved Guardian, but Mr. Toeg waited until he had enrolled eight other believers before he sent his and the other letters of declaration to the Guardian. All these believers remained steadfast and served faithfully on local and national administrative bodies in 'Íráq and elsewhere. They also raised children who became dedicated servants of the Cause.

In the early 1930s Mr. Toeg pioneered to Italy for about a year and a half. On his return to 'Íráq he served on the first National Spiritual Assembly of that country. He was elected to that body for twenty-five years and was many times its chairman.

Mr. Toeg was a hardworking merchant of substantial means and an adviser to the branch director of a well-known British trading company established in London. Mr. Toeg and his wife, Latifa, were married in 1942 and had three sons, Jamál, Kamál and Jalál, who assisted him in the teaching work and other Bahá'í activities.

Mr. Toeg had the bounty of making his pilgrimage to the Holy Land twice. On his first pilgrimage, the Guardian was temporarily absent from Haifa, but he met the Greatest Holy Leaf on this occasion. On his second pilgrimage, in 1935, Mr. Toeg spent twenty days in the Holy Land and attained the presence of Shoghi Effendi on many occasions. Four years earlier, at the behest of the Guardian, Mr. Toeg had learned the Persian language which aided him greatly in deepening his understanding of the Faith and further increased his capacity and effectiveness as a Bahá'í teacher.

In 1954 Mr. Toeg was appointed an Auxiliary Board member for 'Íráq on the first Auxiliary Board of Asia. He served the Faith in this capacity for sixteen years.

One of Mr. Toeg's outstanding services to the Faith in his homeland was the supervision of the construction of the National Ḥazíratu'l-Quds in Baghdád, for which purpose he abandoned his job for six months. The Guardian was very satisfied with the design of the building and the way in which the work was carried out. Mr. Toeg was also helpful in securing land for the Temple in 'Íráq, a goal of the Ten Year Crusade.

For twenty years of his life in 'Íráq, besides serving the national community, Mr. Toeg rendered valuable services to the Guardian in channelling communications between the Holy Land and the Persian community at a time when there was no direct means of communication. Correspondence, Tablets revealed by the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, relics associated with the Holy Family and the heroes and martyrs of the Faith, contributions to Bahá'í funds, Ḥuqúqu'lláh payments—all these passed through Mr. Toeg's hands on their journey from Persia to the Holy Land. He also received from the Guardian his messages for transmittal to Persia. The Guardian, in appreciation of this vital service, sent Mr. Toeg approximately fifty letters of encouragement, assuring him of his continued prayers and blessings. Mr. Toeg also served as representative of the Ḥuqúqu'lláh fund for the believers in 'Íráq.

Mr. Toeg was involved in other spheres of Bahá'í activity, some of which are of great historical importance. He was in the vanguard of those who located and visited the caves of Sar-Galú in Sulaymáníyyih, Kurdistán, which are associated with Bahá'u'lláh's two-year solitary retreat and meditation in the wilderness,

from 1854 to 1856. Mr. Toeg took a number of photographs and was able to interview several local inhabitants who had seen Bahá'u'lláh. He sent an album of photographs to the Guardian with his report, documentation which the Guardian declared would be invaluable to future historians of the Faith. On one of his three visits to Turkey, Mr. Toeg was able, with the assistance of local friends, to determine the exact location of the house which Bahá'u'lláh had occupied in Constantinople, and on another visit was able to locate the houses or the sites of the dwellings where Bahá'u'lláh was kept prisoner.

During the Ten Year Crusade, the Toeg family pioneered to Kirkuk in north-eastern 'Íráq where they spent seven years until they were requested by the National Spiritual Assembly to return to Baghdád in order to give support and encouragement to the Bahá'í community.

In 1970 circumstances forced the Toeg family to leave 'Íráq, and in the early part of 1971 they settled in Canada. At the request of the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly they pioneered to Hull, Quebec, where they helped to re-establish the Spiritual Assembly which had fallen below strength. Mr. Toeg was a member of that Spiritual Assembly until the time of his



Daoud Toeg

passing. The home of the Toeg family in Hull became well known throughout the Ottawa Valley for its weekly fireside meetings. These were regularly conducted by Mr. Toeg and Bahá'ís and their friends were always assured of a most warm welcome.

The stresses and strains which Mr. Toeg endured in his latter years sapped his strength. The evening before his passing, he stayed up until after midnight, talking and joking with his family. The following day his heart failed and he passed away in the early evening. He had the distinction of being the first Bahá'í to be buried in Hull. At the commemoration service held on 3 February 1974 and the funeral service the following day, Bahá'ís from the Ottawa Valley, Montreal and Quebec City were present.

'INÁYATU'LLÁH AḤMADPŪR

1890–1974

'Ináyatu'lláh Aḥmadpūr was born in the Persian province of Milán, the home of many outstanding Bahá'í scholars, calligraphers, teachers and pioneers. His father, Ḥájí Aḥmad Milání, was a prominent silk merchant who was among the first to support and promulgate the teachings of *Shaykh-Aḥmad-i-Aḥsá'í* and Siyyid Kázim-i-Rashṭí, the 'twin resplendent lights' who heralded the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, and the family became followers of the Báb when His Revelation was brought to Milán by the Letter of the Living, Mullá Yúsif-i-Ardibílí.

On 11 July 1850, two days after the Báb was martyred in Tabríz, His remains were wrapped in a cloak and secretly removed to the silk factory of Ḥájí Aḥmad Milání where they were deposited in a small wooden casket.¹ This was the first of a long succession of places of concealment before the remains of the Báb were befittingly interred on Mt. Carmel.

'Ináyatu'lláh's father died while the boy was quite young and he was cared for by his mother and older brothers who surrounded him with such love that in later life he often remarked that he did not feel that he had lost his father. Once as a small child he was attacked and throttled on the street by a cruel and antagonistic butcher who fled at the approach of one of the believers,

leaving the child fainting. When his brothers established a commercial centre in Tabríz, 'Ináyatu'lláh went to work for them. He became a very studious believer and participated in all the Bahá'í activities.

As a young man he made the pilgrimage twice during the lifetime of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and twice again during the lifetime of Shoghi Effendi. One of his treasured memories of the time spent in the presence of the Master was the procession of believers who in spiritual exultation transported to Bahjí the beautiful carpet which one of the friends had presented as a gift for use in the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh. He often spoke of the joy of that day when the friends sang songs in the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Throughout his life he strove to follow the example of the Master, and his loving nature, his thoughtfulness and generosity, won him the appellation 'Uncle', a title of affection and respect by which he was known throughout his life not only by the Bahá'ís but by some Government officials.

'Ináyatu'lláh left a touching written account of his pilgrimages in the time of the Guardian, recording that Shoghi Effendi asked him various questions about what 'Abdu'l-Bahá had said when 'Ináyatu'lláh was in His presence. The Guardian treated him with much love and kindness, enquired after his family and commented that 'Ináyatu'lláh should be grateful that the members of his family were devout, steadfast and veteran believers. He said that 'Ináyatu'lláh had been twice confirmed in his service to the Cause; that he had been confirmed in the days of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and had continued to render outstanding services after His passing. The Guardian requested that 'Ináyatu'lláh chant the verses of the Báb on his behalf when he visited *Chihriq*.

After being elected a member of the first National Spiritual Assembly of Írán, 'Ináyatu'lláh transferred his residence from Tabríz to Tihrán. His house in Tihrán gradually became a centre for the gatherings of the friends and a haven for the believers who poured into the capital from the provinces.

At a time when the believers in a village in the mountains of *Ádhirbáyján* were about to be engulfed by tribulations instigated by a fanatical element, the Guardian asked him to go to the village immediately and make plans to protect the Bahá'ís. 'Ináyatu'lláh obeyed and upon his arrival approached the chief instigator of the

¹ Shoghi Effendi, *Information Statistical and Comparative 1844–1952*, p. 20.



'Ináyatu'lláh Ahmadpúr

revolt against the Bahá'ís. As a result of the sincerity, bravery and purity of love displayed by 'Ináyatu'lláh the man softened and not only prevented an uprising but opened his heart to listen to the fundamental verities of the Cause. In a later period, again at the request of Shoghi Effendi, 'Ináyatu'lláh settled in Chihriq where he built a house and lived alone for a very long time, developing friendships with the Kurds, the townspeople and the government officers which no doubt contributed to the safeguarding of the Bahá'í historic sites in that area.

Eventually he had a heart attack which resulted in partial paralysis but did not prevent him from continuing his services to the Faith he defended so valiantly, loved so abundantly and supported so generously. He drew much happiness from the knowledge that his own children were dispersed as pioneers throughout the world in Asia, Europe and Africa.

The physical temple gradually gave way. With his passing in Tíhrán in February 1974, the Persian friends lost a kind and loving 'Uncle' whose services were extolled by the Universal House of Justice in a cable dated 21 February:

HEARTS GRIEVED PASSING DEDICATED
STAUNCH PROMOTER CAUSE INAYATULLAH
AHMADPUR STOP HIS PERSEVERANCE LOYALTY

LONG RECORD SERVICE LOVINGLY REMEM-
BERED PRAYING SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL
CONVEY WARMEST SYMPATHY RELATIVES AD-
VISE HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL GATHERINGS
THROUGHOUT COUNTRY

A. Q. FAIZÍ

MARY ASHLEY ELSTON

1898-1974

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING DEVOTED HANDMAID
BAHAULLAH STEADFAST PIONEER HIS CAUSE
VARIOUS LANDS MARY ELSTON ASSURE DEAR
ALLEN RELATIVES PROFOUND SYMPATHY LOV-
ING PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HER
SOUL. *Universal House of Justice*

Mary Ashley Elston was born in Albion, Michigan on 23 November 1898 of an English father and an American mother. Her father, John P. Ashley, was President of Albion College in Michigan. Mary attended Albion College and then Grove Schools in California.

I first met Mary and her four children in 1951 when she was married to Raymond Farwell who became a Bahá'í in that year. Mary had embraced the Faith a year or so earlier. It was in their home that I accepted the Faith.

Shortly after becoming a Bahá'í, when I was in Alaska, I learned of Raymond Farwell's death. Future events led to my marriage to Mary and our decision to pioneer. Mary told me that it had always been in her heart to perform some mission for God and asked me to consider pioneering some place with her. Little did she know that this was my intention when I became a Bahá'í. We wrote to the Guardian for instructions in response to which his secretary wrote on his behalf drawing attention to the great need for pioneers in Africa and Europe.

We left Seattle, Washington in November 1952 and attended the Intercontinental Conference held in Kampala, Uganda, in February 1953, the first of the four Bahá'í Intercontinental Conferences held in observance of the centenary of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh's mission. We decided to remain in Kampala as pioneers.

Mary was always in the thick of things and was very much loved by the African believers



Mary Ashley Elston

and other Bahá'í friends everywhere. During her fourteen years in East Africa, Mary made five major moves to places in that territory within the countries of Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. During this time she helped to establish many Local Spiritual Assemblies and for twelve years served as secretary of various Local Assemblies. Mary enjoyed reasonably good health for the first ten years even though she contracted the dreaded tick-typhus the first year. In 1954 her doctors recommended that she move to a lower altitude, preferably the sea-coast, but she laboured on undeterred. Only the last eight years of her pioneering efforts were spent by the sea in Tanga, Tanzania. In that period she served on the Tanga Local Spiritual Assembly as secretary and, in 1964 when the National Spiritual Assembly of Tanzania came into being, she served as secretary. In 1965 she again was elected to the same office.

During the last eight years of our pioneering efforts in Africa I noticed a decline in her ability to perform her secretarial duties, a burden she had carried cheerfully, without criticism or complaint. Parkinson's disease had been slowly taking its toll and in the winter of 1965 I insisted that we return to the United States. Mary finally agreed and we left for Florida where we lived for a year. Mary served on the Local Spiritual

Assembly of Fort Myers for the first part of 1966 until we moved to Marco Island where a Bahá'í group was formed. My work at Marco Island ended in May 1967.

We promptly made the last move in our Bahá'í activities to Kailua-Kona, Hawaii. Mary was elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly of Kailua-Kona and again took on the responsibilities of secretary. She had to relinquish her duties after the first year and over the next five years she slowly deteriorated and eventually became completely immobile. She passed away on 3 March 1974.

I was with her when she died and saw her buried in the very beautiful Bahá'í plot at the Hawaiian Memorial Park. The green rolling hills surrounded by the cathedral-like cliffs bordering Nuuanu and Kalihi Valleys, a small pond close by populated with swimming mallard that Mary loved so well—this is my earthly idea of what Mary would be very happy with.

Mary and I made our pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1954. During the ten days which were spent in the presence of the beloved Guardian he infused us with a spirit that caused us both never to fear again.

ALLEN ELSTON

MARY OLGA KATHERINE MILLS

1882–1974

Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

Olga Mills was born on 24 October 1882 in Grimma, in what was then the German State of Saxony. Her mother was Katherine Swinburne Biemann of Northumberland, England and her father was Ferdinand Biemann, a German lawyer. Olga married Halford Percival Mills, an Englishman, while she was working in the United States. Possessed of an enquiring mind and an adventurous spirit, Olga began to travel widely at the age of twenty-two. She visited many European countries and through the assistance of her brother, an officer in the German Navy, she visited China, Manchuria, Japan and Russia. Until the end of her life she was able to tell fascinating stories of her travels and particularly of her visit to the grave of Confucius in China, an experience which thrilled her.

Olga's broad experience with the people of other religions led her along the path of search

until she found the Bahá'í Faith. Although the exact date she visited the Holy Land is not known, it occurred some time before 1930; she remained there for a month at the request of the beloved Guardian to be companion to Effie Baker who was preparing to leave for Persia to photograph the Bahá'í holy sites. Olga would vividly describe her first meeting with the Greatest Holy Leaf; she ran to her and flung herself on the ground at the feet of Bahá'íyyih Khánúm 'sobbing her heart out'.

The only record we have from those days is a letter written on behalf of the beloved Guardian, dated 12 July 1931, which refers to one she had written to him exactly a month earlier. The letter refers to Olga's 'last visit to the Holy Shrines' and her subsequent visit to the Bahá'ís in Leipzig and Berlin and the talks she gave there. An interesting reference is made in this letter to 'our zealous and competent Bahá'í teacher, Mr. Benke,¹ who had gone to Sofia in order to help Miss Jack'.² Apparently Olga had befriended George Adam Benke and, during World War II when she found herself stranded in Leipzig with her brother, she maintained close contact with Lina Benke, the widow of Mr. Benke. During the 'time of prohibition' in Germany, these two devoted ladies met several times a week for study and prayer and even when Mrs. Benke went to Neckargemünd (about May 1944) they kept in touch by correspondence which continued after Mrs. Mills left Germany.

On 4 July 1947, Olga wrote again to Shoghi Effendi and mentioned the possibility of her moving to England. Through his secretary, the Guardian expressed happiness that she had 'survived the terrible ordeal of the war' and in his letter to her of 2 August 1947 he encouraged her to seek the advice of the British National Spiritual Assembly.

Olga arrived in England during the period when the believers in the British Isles were engaged in the Six Year Plan which extended from 1944 to 1950 and which was described by Shoghi Effendi as 'the first collective enterprise undertaken by them for the spread of the Faith



Mary Olga Katherine Mills

and the consolidation of its divinely appointed institutions' and 'one of the most significant undertakings embarked upon by members of the Bahá'í National Assemblies during the opening years of the second Bahá'í century'.³ In the service of this teaching plan Olga began to stand out as a spiritual giant. She was of small build, was apparently affected by the privations she had suffered in Germany and was quiet by nature; but she was widely read, possessed a great sense of humour and was immediately welcome in any society. She served as a travelling teacher in England and in early 1948, even though she had reached her sixty-sixth year, she pioneered to Nottingham. In March of that year she wrote to the Guardian about her experiences as a pioneer and her efforts to teach and become self-supporting. He graciously replied on 11 April assuring her of his 'loving and fervent prayers'. In October 1948 she again pioneered, this time to Belfast. Within the next year she pioneered to Edinburgh and St. Ives. By February 1950 we read of her moving to Brighton and, in the concluding months of the Six Year Plan, she moved into Bournemouth. Six pioneer moves to three countries in just over

¹ George Adam Benke, 'first European martyr for the Faith'; letter dated 21 June 1956, written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany. 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. V, p. 416.

² Marion Jack, 'immortal heroine', 'shining example to pioneers'; Shoghi Effendi, cablegram dated 29 March 1954. 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XII, p. 674.

³ *The Bahá'í World*, vol. X, p. 53.

two years on the part of a gentle lady in her late sixties who always sought to be self-supporting, is service of the highest order! Yet on 4 August 1950 she again wrote to the Guardian offering to pioneer overseas. The Guardian's secretary replied on his behalf 'It does not seem to him you could very well undertake service outside the British Isles . . .' but Shoghi Effendi added in his own handwriting, 'May the Almighty bless, guide and protect you, aid you to extend the range of your activities, remove all obstacles from your path, and enable you to win great victories for His Faith and its institutions . . .'

That was sufficient for Olga. When the Ten Year Crusade was launched in 1953 she begged him to allow her to move to another country. In July of that year he responded urging her to 'leave as promptly as possible for either Malta or Cyprus, preferably Malta, and there engage yourself with all your powers in teaching the Faith'. In a postscript in his own hand Shoghi Effendi expressed the hope that she would be rewarded 'for your valour' and enabled 'to win innumerable victories in the service of His glorious Faith'.

Within three months this indomitable, indefatigable stalwart of the Faith wrote to the Guardian stating that she had joined the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for Malta, Miss Una Townshend, at her post. The Guardian added Olga's name to the Roll of Honour and his secretary wrote on his behalf, 'He is praying for you both and urges you to persevere and never lose heart.'

By July 1954 Olga was able to write to the Guardian that she had been joined by Dr. John Mitchell who had resigned as treasurer of the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles to pioneer to Malta and for whom she was acting as housekeeper. In one of her many reports to the European and Asian Teaching Committee, this faithful soul, as zealous as ever in her seventy-second year, wrote that she had met '... an old lady who knew Professor Browne⁴ and his family in Oxford, and seemed alert . . .!'

Malta proved to be a difficult pioneer post to maintain. Miss Townshend had to leave; Mr. Mitchell returned home due to an illness from which he never recovered; pioneers tried to settle but were unable to stay for long; conditions for teaching were difficult and progress

was minimal. In 1956 the Guardian's secretary wrote on his behalf: '... He advises you, if the situation should become worse, to try your utmost to remain at your post, which he knows is the deep desire of your heart, also. He greatly appreciates your constancy and your spirit.' In a letter written in March 1957 she again received encouragement which gave her renewed strength: 'He is happy to see that, although your local resources have been depleted . . . you nevertheless are remaining to "hold the fort", a service to which he attaches the greatest importance . . .' The letter invited her to take comfort in the knowledge that eventually receptivity to the Faith would increase and the Cause would become firmly established in Malta. This was the last letter she received from the beloved Guardian and she was to sustain many vicissitudes before witnessing her greatest triumph.

At the end of the Ten Year Plan she spent some time in hospital because of a fractured wrist but even during her convalescence she wrote regular reports to the Teaching Committee. A letter written in June 1963 and which took three days to write describes the deformity of her right wrist and fingers: '... It is suggested I should have my wrist broken again and re-set, which is risky at my age. I do not feel the courage to go through another four months like the last . . .' But a month later one of the pioneers wrote that Olga had visited her to commemorate a Bahá'í Holy Day and that '... she seems much her old self again, though her wrist tires easily'.

Ten years were to pass before the exciting, long-awaited day arrived and this dear soul was able to witness the establishment of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Malta, in the spring of 1973. In the photographs taken of this first Spiritual Assembly and of the subsequent visit to Malta of the Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery we have our last glimpses of Olga Mills, ninety-one years of age, happy and triumphant, her constancy rewarded. Gilian Adamson who pioneered to Malta shortly before Olga's death has written: 'Everyone was filled with love for her . . . Those few days we had the honour of visiting her in hospital had a powerful and lasting effect on us. Her very being seemed to sing, "Teach for Bahá'u'lláh!" One of the friends said that the beloved Guardian had told her to remain in Malta "until the wind blows you away". For twenty-one years she has

⁴ Edward Granville Browne.

lived in Malta . . . we will always be grateful for her devotion and her smile which inspires us to proclaim His Cause.'

On 2 May 1974, in her ninety-second year, after twenty-seven years of dedicated pioneering in four territories, Olga passed away. The Universal House of Justice cabled:

PASSING NOBLE SOUL OLGA MILLS GRIEVOUS
LOSS BRITISH BAHAI COMMUNITY STOP HER
LONG STEADFAST DEVOTION BAHAUULLAH
SHEDS LUSTRE ANNALS FAITH THAT COM-
MUNITY STOP ISLAND MALTA HISTORICALLY
FAMOUS CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN ISLAMIC ERAS
RECIPIENT NEW SPIRITUAL POTENTIALITIES
THROUGH HEROIC SERVICE KNIGHT
BAHAULLAH DEDICATED BAND PIONEERS STOP
EXPRESS FRIENDS RELATIVES LOVING SYMPATHY
ASSURE ARDENT PRAYERS PROGRESS SOUL.

PHILIP HAINSWORTH

PRUDENCE GEORGE

1896-1974

Prudence George became a Bahá'í in St. Lambert, Quebec, Canada in 1941. Her first pioneer move was from St. Lambert to Moncton, New Brunswick in answer to a call for pioneers during the first Seven Year Plan of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada, which ended in 1944. In response to the Guardian's appeal for pioneers to Europe, in 1946 Prudence moved, with her daughter, Patricia, to Blackburn, England, thus returning to the country she had left in 1928 to live in Canada. She pioneered to many places during the Six Year Plan in response to requests from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles, including Norwich and Bournemouth and, in the years that followed 1950, Edinburgh and Portsmouth. In 1959 she settled in Luxembourg, filling a number of pioneer posts during her four-year stay. At the beginning of the Nine Year Plan she reopened to the Faith Guernsey in the Channel Islands. During her stay there her health began to deteriorate and she moved once more to fill a pioneer post in opening Chelmsford in Essex. Pioneers were needed to help open virgin territory in the Canary Islands and, once more, Prudence responded and

moved to fill a pioneer goal in one of the islands.

In 1969 she returned to the United Kingdom to pioneer in Hereford, and then St. Austell in Cornwall. Due to health problems it became necessary for her to move into the Birmingham community to be with her family, which she did in early 1971. Her health improved and as soon as she began to feel better she insisted on responding to the call from the Universal House of Justice for pioneers to the Canary Islands. She returned there in 1972 and at Riḍván 1974 she helped to form the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Arucas, Canary Islands. However, her physical condition had worsened and in May 1974 she was forced to return to the United Kingdom. Although mentally and spiritually still active, her health continued to deteriorate and she passed peacefully to the Abhá Kingdom on 12 July 1974, in her seventy-eighth year. Her resting place is at the Brandwood End Cemetery, Birmingham. Thus ended a pioneer service that spanned thirty years and covered three continents. At all times Prudence George was truly dedicated to the teaching of the Cause and would seldom let a day pass when she did not find an opportunity to mention the Faith to someone, an acquaintance made in a music appreciation group or a stranger in a bus queue.

In order to support herself during her many pioneer moves she had a wide variety of employment, often as a saleswoman. She particularly enjoyed her venture in Scotland selling pressure cookers from door to door. It was later discovered that she had spent more time teaching the Faith than extolling the virtues of the merchandise; 'The soul is more important than the body,' she said.

Her utter faith in the power of the Greatest Name was illustrated during her stay in the Canary Islands. On one occasion a youth attempted to snatch her handbag and her immediate reaction was to call out in a loud voice, 'Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá!' whereupon the lad stopped in his tracks, dropped the handbag and ran. Prudence was left calling him back with open arms in order to give him the benefits of the Message of Bahá'u'lláh. Prudence felt that no one was too high or too low to receive this great teaching. On becoming a Bahá'í in Canada, having been a very devout Christian, her first desire was to pass on this precious gift to the Anglican Bishop of Montreal and she was utterly amazed when he rejected it.



Prudence George

There must be many Bahá'ís in all parts of the world who have their own particular memories of Prudence George but common to all must be a recognition of her exemplary dedication to the service of the Bahá'í Cause and her deep love of Bahá'u'lláh.

Informed of the passing of Prudence George the Universal House of Justice wrote to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United Kingdom on 25 July 1974:

'This ardent servant of Bahá'u'lláh rendered devoted service to His Cause in the pioneering field and we are confident that she now has her reward. Please convey to her daughter and relatives the expression of our loving sympathy; they may derive great comfort from the memory of her constant services and the fact that she passed away in her daughter's home and not in some remote and lonely outpost.'

LAURA CLIFFORD DREYFUS-BARNEY

1879-1974

ASCENSION DISTINGUISHED MAIDSERVANT
LAURA DREYFUS BARNEY FURTHER DEPLETES
SMALL BAND PROMOTERS FAITH HEROIC AGE

STOP MEMBER FIRST HISTORIC GROUP PARIS
TAUGHT BY MAY MAXWELL SHE ACHIEVED
IMMORTAL FAME THROUGH COMPILATION SOME
ANSWERED QUESTIONS UNIQUE ENTIRE FIELD
RELIGIOUS HISTORY STOP OFFERING ARDENT
PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD PROGRESS HER
SOUL ABHA KINGDOM URGE ALL COMMUNITIES
FRANCE HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS GRATI-
TUDE OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT. *Universal
House of Justice*

Laura Barney was born into a family of scholars and artists in the United States of America. She completed her education in France during the last decade of the nineteenth century. With her keen intelligence, logical mind and investigating nature, she devoted her whole life, from adolescence, to improving human relations, bringing together peoples of different races, classes and nations. She was a brilliant speaker and made several trips around the world lecturing on the impelling necessity of a united world. She was a true pioneer in this field of activity at a time when the world was still geographically and politically divided and quite insensible to the call of spiritual unity. Her enthusiasm for this ideal never lessened. Those who had the rare privilege of knowing her over a period of many decades can testify that her undaunted zeal for the objective of the brotherhood of man remained alive and glowing to the very last day of her life on earth.

She became acquainted with the Bahá'í Revelation through May Ellis Bolles (Maxwell) in Paris *circa* 1900. Laura Barney's encounter with the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh proved to be the spark that ignited a fire never to be quenched. Her ideals and aspirations found fulfilment in her activities in the service of the Bahá'í Faith, services that were joyfully rendered, with steadfastness and perseverance, for nearly four score years. Of the early pilgrims from the West who visited 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the Holy Land toward the end of the last century and in the opening years of the present one, she emerges as one of the most dedicated and active followers of Bahá'u'lláh. The writer recalls her vivid description of her first meeting with 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the expression of rapture and wonderment with which, from time to time, she related many details of her various visits to His household and the devoted services she was able to render.

As her visits to the Holy Land became more frequent, she was privileged to spend long periods of time with the Master and His immediate family. She met Shoghi Effendi when he was a small boy and wrote of that first meeting: 'Shoghi Effendi! How well I remember the first time I saw him in the Holy Land. He was then a little boy of five or six years of age, clothed in a brown Persian garment, chanting a prayer in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's presence; his earnest eyes, his firm mouth looked predestined.'¹ Her recollections of that extraordinary child were vivid and authentic. She became aware of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's plan to provide for His grandson an education in English literature. At the time of one of her visits, Shoghi Effendi had an Italian governess. Laura Barney was able to secure the services of a refined and cultured English lady who proved to be a great asset in the education of that gifted child in the study of the English language, a study which he joyfully pursued and which led him to master that idiom to perfection in the years that followed. Laura Barney's affection for the child grew into an ever deepening sense of admiration and respect.

Visits to 'Abdu'l-Bahá became the centre of Laura Barney's life and inspiration. On a month-long visit in 1905 she was accompanied by her mother, Mrs Alice Barney,² who had become a Bahá'í. Mrs. Alice Barney was a poet, a painter, a musician and an architect. Her paintings even now can be seen in the National Museum of Washington, D.C. In 1903 she had painted a portrait of the celebrated Bahá'í teacher, Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl, during his visit to Washington.

Among Laura Barney's many achievements and services in the Faith the most outstanding is the one that has immortalized her name the world over—the compilation of the renowned volume *Some Answered Questions*. Unique in all religious literature, the book consists of 'table talks' given by the Master in response to the questions of Laura Barney. *I have given you my tired moments*, Laura Barney records the Master as saying as He arose from the table after answering one of her questions. These informal discussions took place in the period from 1904 to 1906 described by Shoghi Effendi as the most troublous and dramatic of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's ministry when He was still confined to 'Akká as a



Laura Clifford Dreyfus-Barney

prisoner of the Turkish government and permitted to receive only a few visitors. 'It was at this juncture,' states Shoghi Effendi in *God Passes By*, 'that that celebrated compilation of His table talks, published under the title *Some Answered Questions*, was made, talks given during the brief time He was able to spare, in the course of which certain fundamental aspects of His Father's Faith were elucidated, traditional and rational proofs of its validity adduced, and a great variety of subjects regarding the Christian Dispensation, the Prophets of God, Biblical prophecies, the origin and condition of man and other kindred themes authoritatively explained.' The work was first published in London in 1908.

The existence of such a remarkable manuscript prompted the distinguished French scholar, Hippolyte Dreyfus,³ the first French believer, whose acceptance of the Faith dated from 1901, to offer to translate the document into French. M. Dreyfus and Laura Barney collaborated on the translation and, as she later related, it was during this undertaking that they discovered how well they could work together. They were married in 1911, but the intervening years were filled with many activities undertaken jointly, including travels, at the

³ See Shoghi Effendi's tribute to Hippolyte Dreyfus-Barney, letter of 21 December 1928, published in *Bahá'í Administration*, pp. 157-159, and in *The Bahá'í World*, vol. III, p. 210.

¹ 'Only a Word', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. V, p. 667.

² See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. V, p. 419.

request of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, to Máh-Kú and other parts of Persia, to *Ishqábád*, Russian Turkistán, where the construction of the first Bahá'í House of Worship was being completed, and to Indo-China and other regions of eastern Asia.

After the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, but fortunately before the beginning of the second World War, the original Persian text of *Some Answered Questions* as well as some important and precious Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá addressed to Laura Barney and to a close friend, Mrs. Tewksbury Jackson, were transmitted to the Guardian through a trusted person.

Laura's abiding devotion to the Master, the Greatest Holy Leaf and Munirih *Khánum*, the wife of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, was repaid with trust, love and gratitude. 'Abdu'l-Bahá extolled the variety of her services in many Tablets, and the ladies of the household presented her with many gifts, mostly pieces of jewellery, which were entrusted to this writer and delivered by him to the Universal House of Justice a few years ago.

At the request of Mrs. Tewksbury Jackson who on one occasion accompanied her to the Holy Land, Laura Barney helped in the project of purchasing the land and of constructing a suitable home for 'Abdu'l-Bahá and His family at No. 7 Haparsim (Persian) Street, Haifa.¹ In relating this episode to the writer later, Mme Dreyfus-Barney said: 'For some time, therefore, and meeting with many obstacles, I was occupied with purchasing the land, having a design for the house made—of course with the approval of the Master—and seeing that its construction was carried out efficiently and promptly. All this kept me occupied for some time.'

To recount in chronological order the Bahá'í services of Laura Dreyfus-Barney in America, Europe and other parts of the world is beyond the scope of these few pages but mention should be made of some of her humanitarian and social activities in her work for world peace.² During World War I she served in Paris in the American Ambulance Corps, took part in the establishment of the first children's hospital in Avignon, and worked in a hospital with war refugees. At the end of that global conflict she placed her

faith in the League of Nations and represented the International Council of Women in that body, playing an important role in cultural exchange. She was the only woman named by the League Council to sit on the Sub-Committee of Experts on Education, a post which she held for many years, beginning in 1926. On 23 July 1925 she was appointed *Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur*. In that same year she formed under the aegis of the League of Nations the 'Liaison Committee of Major International Organizations to promote through Education better Understanding between Peoples and Classes' and became a permanent member of the committee as well as its liaison officer. In 1934 she became a member of the Advisory Committee of the League of Nations on Teaching; she was also a member of the French Committee on Intellectual Co-operation.

Her services with international organizations were indeed extensive. She became the convener of the Cinematographic and Broadcasting Committee of the International Council of Women, and in 1931 she organized, under the auspices of the International Institute of Educational Cinematography of the League of Nations, the first congress for women, held in Rome in 1934, specializing in the dissemination of educational material for peace by means of motion pictures. At this Congress she was elected one of the six vice-presidents, the only woman chosen. In 1937 she was appointed, by the French Minister of Commerce, a member of the cinema section of the International Exposition. In the same year she was elevated to the rank of *Officier de la Légion d'Honneur* by a decree dated 31 January, having been elected president of the Peace and Arbitration Commission of the International Council of Women.

After the death of her husband in December 1928, she tried to overcome her loneliness by intensifying her efforts for the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh and the cause of peace. In 1941 she was a member of the American delegation to the Conference on Cultural Co-operation held in Havana, Cuba. In May 1944, at the request of the Guardian, she attended the celebration in Wilmette of the first centenary of the birth of the Bahá'í Faith, although the second World War was raging in almost every continent of the globe. She gave, on that special occasion, a moving address that recalled her early days in 'Akká, and a review of forty years of

¹ See 'The House of the Master', *Bahá'í Holy Places at the World Centre, The Universal House of Justice*, 1968; pp. 54-57.

² For a full account see *Who's Who in America*, vol. 29.

developments in the Faith in which she mentioned the names of many Bahá'ís who, like her, had laboured to spread the fragrances of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation in many parts of the world.

During the period of the second World War, Laura Dreyfus-Barney was the delegate of the French National Committee of Women to the Commission on Racial Affairs. At the end of the war, with the birth of the United Nations, she became an officer of the Commission of the Council of Women for the Control and Reduction of Armaments, located in Geneva. During the years that followed she was very active in the work of the Economic and Social Council of United Nations in that city. As this writer had been appointed Observer for the International Bahá'í Community, we frequently met at United Nations gatherings. When the Food and Agriculture Organization moved from Washington to Rome, early in 1950, she often visited Rome and was a welcome guest in our home. Those were unique opportunities to listen to the reminiscences of her dedicated Bahá'í life and to hear at first hand many episodes and facts from her personal experiences with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, His family, Shoghi Effendi, and her much loved husband, Hippolyte. After my wife and I returned to Europe from America in 1969, we called on Mme Dreyfus-Barney whenever we were in Paris and there spoke joyfully of all that was dear to our hearts.

For the last few years of her life she remained at her home, seeing some friends occasionally and living with the memories of her active and fruitful life. Although her body was handicapped by rheumatism, her mind was as alert and brilliant as ever. Her beautiful earthly life came to an end on 18 August 1974, five years before the centenary of her birth. She is buried in the Passy Cemetery of Paris.

(Excerpts from an English translation of 'Laura Clifford Dreyfus-Barney—An Appreciation' by Ugo R. Giachery, published in *La Pensée Bahá'íe*, No. 56, June 1976.)

MATILDA (BETTY) BECKER

1887–1974

ASSURE PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS
SOUL BETTY BECKER VALIANT SERVANT FAITH

PIONEER ALASKA PUNTA ARENAS CHILE MADE
VITAL CONTRIBUTION ROOTS CAUSE NORTH
SOUTH AMERICA STOP SUGGEST MEMORIAL
MEETING YOUR COMMUNITY. *Universal House
of Justice*

Betty Becker was born into a German Mennonite family and was raised on a farm in Kansas, U.S.A. where she learned to love the good and simple things of life. Her quest for spiritual truth was triggered by a childhood experience of which she later wrote: 'I remember when my brother, who was a few years older than I, was baptized. The first thing I did was rush him to my room and ask him whether he felt changed and had received the Holy Spirit. He replied in no uncertain terms: "No, I did not. And don't you ever go up there in front of everyone and make a fool of yourself." This confused me very profoundly and marked the start of my search for truth.'

The search for a religion to which she could commit herself continued even after Betty completed her university education and business training and began to work for an insurance company in Kansas City, Missouri. She maintained an open outlook towards all religions, seeking one that would answer her needs. She attended many churches, sang in their choirs and listened to the clergy but still was left unsatisfied. In 1933 she attended a lecture by Mrs. Orcella Rexford¹ (Louise Cutts-Powell) and through her learned about the Bahá'í Faith which she accepted in November of that year. Betty's love of life and people, coupled with her serious study of the teachings, qualified her as a radiant and attractive teacher. She welcomed a constant flow of guests to her home to hear the message of Bahá'u'lláh. When a Local Spiritual Assembly was formed in Kansas City in 1935 she was elected its chairman.

Betty said that all her life she had felt a desire to go to Alaska or to South America, or both. When the Guardian mentioned Alaska in his cablegram of 26 January 1939 encouraging pioneers to settle in nine specific unsettled goal areas in North America under the first United States Seven Year Teaching Plan (1937–1944), Betty responded. She left Kansas City on 11 July 1939, attended the Bahá'í Summer School in Geyserville, California, sailed from Seattle,

¹ See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XI, p. 495.

Washington a few days later and arrived in Juneau, Alaska on 1 August. Her efforts to settle in Juneau and Sitka proving fruitless, she joined Honor Kempton in Anchorage where she became permanently established in March 1941 and was a stable member of an ever-changing Bahá'í community for the next eighteen and a half years. In 1943 when the first Local Spiritual Assembly in Alaska was formed in Anchorage, Betty was elected recording secretary and served on that body for many years.

Betty was active in the U.S.O. (United Services Organization) in Anchorage from its inception and throughout World War II was a senior social hostess. She also sponsored recreational activities for civil servants and military personnel and contributed the money she earned in this way to support the construction of the Bahá'í House of Worship in Wilmette. She also helped to establish the Anchorage United Nations Association and was one of its officers. As a Welcome Wagon hostess she helped newcomers become acquainted with Anchorage and assisted them in finding housing accommodation during the scarcity of the war years. Her Sunday morning waffle breakfasts held on a regular basis she described as her most fertile teaching activity. These were always well attended and many enquirers became Bahá'ís as a result of these informal and friendly gatherings.

At the age of seventy-two, after spending twenty years in Alaska, Betty sought a new field of service, confident that she was leaving behind in her adopted and much loved land a firm foundation for the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. She offered her services to the International Teaching Committee of the United States and was assigned to Chile. On 8 October 1959 she arrived in Santiago and within three weeks took up residence in Valdivia, a city with a large German-speaking population. Betty's fluency in German enabled her to begin immediately teaching the Faith even as she began a study of Spanish.

On 12 May 1960—only nine days before a devastating earthquake hit Valdivia—Betty opened the final chapter in her physical life by pioneering to Punta Arenas, Chile, the southernmost outpost of the Faith in the world, a city greatly praised and often mentioned by our beloved Guardian. The Local Spiritual Assembly of Punta Arenas was formed in 1945,



Matilda (Betty) Becker

one of the first in South America. Betty tirelessly served as a member of this assembly for fourteen years.

Despite the difficult climate of this austral region and the apathy and indifference she encountered, Betty's radiant nature overcame these obstacles and she served the Faith with a vitality and vibrancy of spirit which belied her years. She displayed great generosity and kindness and during the course of her never-ceasing activities she greatly widened her social contacts. Impatient with her weakening physical condition she continued—in her own words—to recharge daily her spiritual and mental batteries, to keep on going and not despair. Although her eyesight began to fail she was able to attend the great Bahá'í World Congress held in London in 1963 and to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1970. She also travelled to various centres in Chile to attend conferences and conventions.

For fourteen years Betty sowed the seeds of the Faith in Punta Arenas. Perhaps it was during this constant struggle that a dream was born in her soul, the establishment of a permanent Bahá'í Centre in Punta Arenas, a goal toward which she contributed sacrificially until her death.

In April 1973 Betty suffered a stroke which kept her bedridden. One year and five months later she contracted pneumonia which proved fatal to an already thin and frail body. On this same day the deed to the Punta Arenas Bahá'í Centre, the first local Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Chile, was placed in her hands. Seven days later, in her eighty-seventh year, she passed to the Abhá realm, on 27 September 1974.

From Anchorage to Punta Arenas this valiant handmaiden truly lived these Words of Bahá'u'lláh, forever inscribed above her resting place:

Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind.

MAḤBÚBIH NA'ÍMÍ

1899–1974

GRIEVED NEWS PASSING DEVOTED HANDMAID
BAHAULLAH MAHBUBI H NAIMI HER LONG REC-
ORD SERVICES TEACHING PIONEERING FIELDS
UNFORGETTABLE SUPPLICATING HOLY SHRINES
RICHEST REWARDS PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA
KINGDOM CONVEY MEMBERS FAMILY LOVING
SYMPATHY. *Universal House of Justice*

Any survey of outstanding Bahá'í women in the Formative Age of our beloved Faith should prominently include the dear name of Maḥbúbih Na'ímí. Generations yet unborn will derive encouragement and inspiration from contemplation of her feats, her self-sacrificial efforts, her dedication and heroism. She was a distinguished promoter of the Cause and achieved signal victories in the teaching and pioneering fields. At a time when their share in Bahá'í community activities was minimal, Maḥbúbih Na'ímí was a source of inspiration and provided much-needed spiritual leadership to the Bahá'í women of Persia. The predominant passion of her life was teaching the Bahá'í Faith, a love she must have learned from her immortal, devoted and radiant father, the late Jináb-i-Na'ím, one of the greatest teachers and poets of the early days of the Cause in Persia.

Maḥbúbih Khánum was born in 1899 in Ṭíhrán, in a district where Bahá'ís lived, and studied at a small Bahá'í school. Her learned father tutored her in Persian and Arabic litera-

ture and she became an eloquent speaker and fluent writer. She later studied in the American School for Girls where she learned English. She married Jináb-i-Shaykh Muḥsin who, immediately after declaring himself a Bahá'í as a result of the teaching efforts of Jináb-i-Fáḍil Mázandirání, sold all his possessions including his collection of precious and rare old books and made his way to the Holy Land to enter the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The Master called him 'Dabír Mu'ayyad', meaning 'confirmed writer'; he became an erudite and dedicated exponent of the Faith.

Mrs. Na'ímí and her husband were asked by the Spiritual Assembly of Hamadán to go to that thriving Bahá'í community and assume responsibility for the management and the teaching of classes of the Ta'íd and Maḥabbat Bahá'í schools. Maḥbúbih Khánum became seriously ill when in Hamadán and everyone despaired of her life. At this time she dreamed of the Master Who ordered her to arise. She humbly replied in that vision that she was unable to do so because of illness. Again the Master repeated His command and concluded by exclaiming that this is the day of arising. The memory of this experience stayed vividly with Maḥbúbih throughout her life and the Master's words everlastingly inspired her responses to the needs of the Cause. When, after many years, she reached the shores of Africa as a pioneer, she told the friends of her dream and emphasized the significance of arising to pioneer, teach and dedicate one's life to the service of the Cause of God in this day.

For many years Maḥbúbih Khánum actively served on local and national teaching committees including teaching committees for youth and women, the Nineteen Day Feast Committee of Ṭíhrán, and taught Bahá'í children's classes. She was instrumental in winning many people to the Faith and in deepening their knowledge of the teachings. She lovingly attended to the needs of her family and the education of her children but always gave unstintingly of her time and energy to the promotion of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

After the death of her husband when her children were scattered in many different parts of the world, Maḥbúbih Khánum left her home and possessions and began her service as an international pioneer. She first settled in Zanzibar and helped in the formation of its first Bahá'í community. Later she moved to Tan-

zania and opened the town of Morogoro to the Faith. When the Local Spiritual Assembly of Dar-es-Salaam requested her to go to Mwanza for the formation of the first Local Spiritual Assembly she immediately moved there, arriving on the eve of the first day of Riḍvān, and was met at the railway station by many Bahá'ís and their guests. The large and joyous reception accorded the arrival of this seemingly insignificant and unassuming Persian woman created some suspicion on the part of the Police Department. Becoming aware of this, Maḥbúbih Khánum visited the Chief of Police, introduced herself, and explained the situation; in this way the Cause became well known to the officials, the Bahá'ís continued to teach the Faith without obstruction and the Local Spiritual Assembly of Mwanza was formed. 'When we arise to serve,' she wrote at this time, 'we receive the promised confirmations and we actually behold the angels who help us. We also will be privileged to discover the hidden treasures of God . . . individuals who are soon ignited by the love of God and ignite others.'

Instructed to settle in Morogoro again, she launched this time a full-scale teaching programme. Alone and unaided, she travelled to the neighbouring villages, walking many miles in sun or rain to bring the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh

to new centres or to visit her spiritual children in their homes. Her hospitable home in Morogoro was open to the Bahá'ís and their friends; all were received with kindness and love. Although she was sometimes ill and weak she continued to conduct deepening classes for new Bahá'ís and enquirers and persisted in her efforts to carry the Faith to the villages of the Uluguru mountains.

After years of service in Tanzania she returned to Persia to attend to some personal matters and shortly after was asked by the National Spiritual Assembly of Persia to move to Holland where pioneers were much needed. She settled in Haarlem for the formation of its first Local Spiritual Assembly and after approximately a year, in response to a message that her spiritual children in Africa missed her keenly, she returned to Morogoro where, after considerable effort, she was successful in having the education authorities accede to her request to have included in the curriculum of an African agricultural school an hour of Bahá'í religious study. Twice weekly she walked to this class which bore considerable fruit. From early morning until late at night students and enquirers would call at her home for further discussion of the Bahá'í Faith. Her house was a port of call for all Bahá'ís travelling in the area and her hospitality was limitless.

She served for many years on the National Spiritual Assembly of Tanzania and various national and local committees and remained at her post until her health broke down and she sought a more moderate climate. She returned to Haarlem and later pioneered to Lübeck, Germany to assist in the formation of the first Local Spiritual Assembly. Her last years were spent in Hamburg where she served on the Spiritual Assembly, instituted classes for children, conducted deepening classes for youth and devoted her rapidly diminishing strength to the teaching work.

Maḥbúbih Na'ímí had the privilege of making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land three times and attained the presence of the beloved Guardian twice. To the last breath she remembered her African children and continued to pray for them. Two days before her sudden passing on 2 October 1974 a letter came from Africa: 'Come back to us, dear mother, we need you so much.' Alas, this time she could not respond.



Maḥbúbih Na'ímí

HÚSHANG NA'ÍMÍ

SEYMOUR MALKIN

1923-1974

Seymour was born in Chicago, Illinois, on 19 June 1923. His mother, Leona Luber, was of Romanian descent. His father, Jacob Malkin, was born in Russia and came to the United States while still in his teens, shortly before World War I, to escape the religious persecutions of that time. Seymour was raised by his father and paternal grandmother. His grandmother was a devoted and saintly follower of the Jewish Faith and to her Seymour attributed all his spiritual guidance during his childhood.

At the age of nineteen, Seymour enlisted in the United States Air Force and served for three years in the Philippines and Australia. His duties were in radio and special services to uplift the morale of the servicemen through entertainment and radio programmes. Upon his discharge in 1945, he settled in California and studied theatre arts and drama. He did some acting and later opened his own school of drama in Hollywood where he coached aspiring theatre, cinema and television actors. Shortly before hearing about the Bahá'í Faith, Seymour abruptly closed his school, informing his students that he was going to search for God. He felt that life was the true theatre and his specific goal was to find the real purpose of existence. Although he had explored many avenues of religious thought, he had never found the spiritual satisfaction he sought.

Soon after closing his school in 1954, Seymour heard the word 'Bahá'í' from one of his former students. In the home of Sando Berger he saw a copy of *The Hidden Words* by Bahá'u'lláh and knew at once that it was an inspired book. He attended firesides and within a few weeks, after an intense study of the Bahá'í Writings, Seymour wholeheartedly accepted Bahá'u'lláh and decided to dedicate his life to Him. Jesma Herbert was one of his most beloved spiritual teachers and he named his daughter for her.

Seymour began his Bahá'í life as a pioneer, first settling in various goal cities near Los Angeles and then, in 1958, in Guadalajara, Mexico. At Ridván of that year he attended the national convention of the National Spiritual Assembly of Central America in Guatemala City where he met Margot Miessler. They decided on their future together at that convention. Seymour soon moved to Tegucigalpa, Honduras



Seymour Malkin

where Margot had been pioneering for four years and on 12 November 1958 they were married there. Their honeymoon was spent teaching in the Juan Fernández Islands off the coast of Chile where they remained for about four months. They then went to Campinas, Brazil to help form the first Local Spiritual Assembly of that city. Here, Jesma Layli, their daughter, was born in 1959. A year later he took his family back to the United States and settled in Kokomo, Indiana to help establish its first Local Spiritual Assembly in 1961. Their son, Edmund Jacob was born there. In 1962 they settled in Muncie, Indiana to assist the struggling Bahá'í group there. Within a few months he received a call from the Hand of the Cause Dhikru'lláh Khádem asking if he were willing to go to Chile immediately. Seymour's response was always immediate and wholehearted. He arrived in Chile within three weeks and was met and assisted by the Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizí. Seymour's family joined him shortly after and they settled in Temuco. During this period Seymour was named an Auxiliary Board member and collaborated with the Hand of the Cause Jalál Kházeh in the work of the protection of the Faith. Although he was unable to fulfil his longstanding desire to attend

the London Congress in 1963, Seymour felt spiritually compensated by being able to witness the beginning of mass teaching in Chile and the acceptance of the Faith by the first Mapuche Indians.

The Malkins returned to the United States and served in various centres between 1964 and 1970. A third child, Vali, was born in 1964. They returned to South America in 1970 in response to an appeal from the International Goals Committee of the United States and settled in Santo Amaro, Brazil where they helped form the first Local Spiritual Assembly the following year.

From the day Seymour accepted it, the Faith became the dominating passion of his life. Wherever he lived there was a weekly fireside held in his home. At the last Nineteen Day Feast he attended before his death he had the happy experience of welcoming his daughter, Jesma Layli, as a declared Bahá'í.

During the last month of his life he often referred to his readiness to enter the next world, when called. The family attended a beautiful gathering commemorating the birth of the Báb on 20 October. At this meeting one beautiful spiritual quality was attributed to each of the Bahá'ís to demonstrate the beauty and power of the Bahá'í human flower garden of the São Paulo/Campinas areas. Seymour was called 'Elegance' and Margot 'Courage'. He brought home the love felt by all at the gathering and bestowed it on his wife and children all evening. His heart became overwhelmed in its task of keeping him here any longer; at about 2.00 a.m., with the words 'I'm going', his soul was freed.

The Universal House of Justice cabled on 24 October 1974:

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING PIONEER SEYMOUR
MALKIN DEVOTED FAITHFUL SERVANT
BAHAULLAH STOP ASSURE MARGOT OTHER
MEMBERS FAMILY ARDENT LOVING PRAYERS
PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

MARGOT MALKIN

'ABBÁS IḤSĀN BAGHDĀDĪ

1915–1975

'Abbás received his primary and secondary education in 'Irāq and pursued his higher studies in Europe, first in Berlin and then in

Bern where, in 1951, he obtained his doctorate in geology.

In 1947, while in Switzerland, 'Abbás was directed and encouraged by Shoghi Effendi to work closely for the spread of the Cause with the members of the European Teaching Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States.

Commencing in the 1960s, 'Abbás taught geology at the University of Baghdád. In the autumn of 1971 he was invited by the Government of Morocco to serve on the faculty of the University of Rabat. Arriving in Rabat he learned to his surprise and disappointment that he was expected to teach in French rather than English. He communicated with the University of Baghdád about this unexpected situation and, meanwhile, complied with the wishes of the National Spiritual Assembly of North West Africa by visiting a number of Bahá'í centres under its jurisdiction, imparting spiritual joy to all those with whom he came in contact. In this period he also visited Bahá'í communities in France and Spain and had the opportunity of visiting the resting place of the beloved Guardian.

'Abbás had been requested by a number of believers in Morocco to consider settling there. He referred the question to the Universal House of Justice and received a reply stating that it would be highly meritorious if he were to remain at his post in Baghdád in the vicinity of the House of Bahá'u'lláh however great a sacrifice this might represent. He wrote again offering to lay down his life as a spiritual ransom for the sublime purpose of hastening the redemption and restoration of the House of Bahá'u'lláh. In reply the Universal House of Justice expressed appreciation of this indication of his dedication to the Cause and assured him of its prayers for the attainment of all his aspirations in service to the Faith.

'Abbás resumed his work as professor of geology at the University of Baghdád for a year or two. The decree of the 'Irāqí Government disbanding all Bahá'í institutions and banning all Bahá'í activities was by then in force and resulted in considerable hardship for the believers in that country. Whenever it was necessary, 'Abbás called upon the authorities concerned, stating the Bahá'í position with courage and dignity, especially during the few months preceding his own imprisonment.



'Abbás Ihsán Baghdádi

On 27 December 1973 'Abbás was arrested and badly treated by security men on the ground that he was an active Bahá'í. He was sentenced to life imprisonment. When he displayed symptoms of a lung condition he was transferred to a jail hospital. After giving him thirty injections for his condition which was diagnosed as tuberculosis his doctors discovered that he was suffering from cancer.

Writing from the hospital in October 1974 'Abbás told of his fast deteriorating health and of his total resignation to the will of God. He felt that the end was quickly approaching and expressed the hope that his humble services to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh and his prolonged suffering would be acceptable in the sight of the Universal House of Justice. He was released from this world on the morning of 20 January 1975.

On 24 January 1975 the Universal House of Justice cabled:

SADDENED NEWS PASSING DEVOTED STEADFAST
SELFLESS SERVANT BHAULLAH DOCTOR ABBAS
BAGHDADI WHOSE OUTSTANDING SERVICES
SHED LUSTRE ANNALS HISTORY FAITH MIDDLE
EAST STOP HIS SACRIFICES WILL NOT BE IN VAIN
STOP SUPPLICATING DIVINE THRESHOLD PRO-

GRESS HIS BLESSED SOUL REALM ON HIGH STOP
CONVEY RELATIVES FRIENDS DEEPEST SYM-
PATHY.

HASAN ŞAFÁ

FAWZÍ ZAYNU'L-'ÁBIDIN

1911–1975

Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING KNIGHT BHAULLAH
FAWZI ZAYNUL ABIDIN HIS SELFLESS SERVICES
TEACHING PIONEERING FIELDS LOVINGLY RE-
MEMBERED CONVEY MEMBERS FAMILY WARM-
EST SYMPATHY FERVENTLY PRAYING SHRINES
PROGRESS HIS RADIANT SOUL. *Universal House
of Justice*

Two words from the message of sympathy of the Universal House of Justice capture the essence of a life consecrated to the Faith of God, for Mr. Fawzī Zaynu'l-'Ábidin was truly a 'radiant soul'. He and his wife and children were honoured by the beloved Guardian by being named Knights of Bahá'u'lláh for service in the pioneering field in the virgin area of Spanish Morocco.

Fawzī Zaynu'l-'Ábidin, also known as 'Zayn', was born in Cairo, Egypt on 28 January 1911. His father Zaynu'l-'Ábidin Ismá'íl, surnamed by the Master 'Zaynu'l-Mukhlisín' (the adorning of the sincere ones), was a native of Hamadán, Írán, who became illuminated by his belief in Bahá'u'lláh; while in Egypt, 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke in his home. His mother, Ḥamídiḥ Khánum-Áqá, was a native of Shiráz who embraced the Faith in her youth.

In a childhood blessed with an aura of spirituality stood an unforgettable memory: for a very brief moment in Port Said, Fawzī Zaynu'l-'Ábidin saw 'Abdu'l-Bahá walking in the distance.

The young man was a solace to his parents, and a loving and generous soul towards his brothers and sisters, all faithful Bahá'ís. At the early age of twenty he embarked on an artistic career, first as a highly respected teacher and then as Inspector of Technical Art Schools in Egypt. In an international competition he ranked first for his unsurpassed watercolour rendition of a celebrated mosque.

A humble and devoted Bahá'í, he exemplified high standards of hospitality and courtesy and served on the Local Spiritual Assemblies of Cairo, Port Said and Tanta. His design for a monument¹ in the Bahá'í cemetery of Cairo, honouring Lua Getsinger and Mirzá Abu'l-Faql, was approved by the Guardian.

In 1946 he married Bahíyyih 'Alí Sa'd'id-Dín, daughter of a devoted Lebanese believer who, in obedience to 'Abdu'l-Bahá's wishes, came to Egypt where he married 'Ishmat 'Alí Effendi, the daughter of the first Egyptian Bahá'í.

Following an inspiring appeal for pioneers, voiced by the Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, Mrs. Zayn challenged the family to arise as pioneers. From that moment, Fawzí Zayn and his wife became an inseparable, spiritually unified couple, dedicated to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. With their two sons, Kamál and Sharíf, they arrived in Tetuán, Morocco at the onset of the World Crusade, on 11 October 1953. The seemingly insurmountable difficulties of language, material resources and permission to remain in their adopted home beyond the fifteen days for which their visa was originally issued, simply vanished; they had received assurances through the Guardian's secretary of Shoghi Effendi's appreciation and prayers.

The years that followed were years of miracles and victories. Mr. Zayn's reputation as an artist and his impeccable character inspired the respect of students and high officials, Moroccan and Spanish. He became a member of the faculty of the Fine Arts School of Tetuán and was asked to exhibit his work locally, then in Rabat, and won resounding praise from dignitaries and the press. From the beginning, friendships were established that were instrumental in enabling the family to acquire permanent residence and in facilitating discreet yet successful Bahá'í teaching. A family photograph with the first two believers 'deeply impressed' the Guardian who extended 'a hearty welcome into the Faith to the new Bahá'ís'. Mr. Zayn's profound knowledge of the Writings, his deep spiritual insights, his very sensitive approach to the needs of his hearers and his warm eloquence in his native Arabic attracted the hearts of many youth who joyously accepted the Faith and shouldered in turn the responsibility of spreading the message of Bahá'u'lláh. A Local Spirit-



Fawzí Zaynū'l-'Ábidín

tual Assembly was thus elected and came to be exclusively formed by Moroccan Bahá'ís. For nine years the Zayn home was the focal point of an expanding community that gave birth to Bahá'í groups in northern Morocco.

In 1961 some of the believers were imprisoned for their beliefs, yet the staunch faith of these youth, some of whom were under sentence of death, became the mark of distinction of that community. At the beginning of this turmoil, which was to end miraculously a year later, Mr. Zayn who in the eyes of the authorities was responsible for introducing the Faith, was asked not to associate with fellow Bahá'ís and was dismissed from his job. Great was the sadness of separation felt by the believers and unspeakable the sorrow of this sensitive soul who, by the force of events, had to leave a country where the best of his spiritual life in this world had taken place.

In Morocco, Mr. Zayn was the secretary of the National Teaching Committee and in Tunis, Tunisia, from 1962 to 1966, he served on the Local Spiritual Assembly with undiminished enthusiasm. From 1966 to 1975 he served on the Local Spiritual Assemblies of Glendale, Arizona; West Hollywood; and Glendale, California.

¹ See *The Bahá'í World*, vol. X, p. 23; vol. XI, p. 196.

His contribution to Tunisian art is attested by the high esteem in which he was held by his superiors in the Arts and Crafts section of the Government. Of his several exhibits in the United States, the most noteworthy was presented in the Brand Library of Glendale, California. His delicate masterpieces, from Iranian miniatures and landscapes to ceramic compositions and Arabic calligraphy, convey a peacefulness that speaks of his Faith. An artist of the soul who painted to glorify the beauty of God's creation, such was the life of this true believer, enamoured with the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, and detached from worldly desires and ambitions.

He passed away in Glendale, California on 23 March 1975. His last words were a plea to the friends to deepen their knowledge of Bahá'u'lláh's Writings, 'because,' he said, 'this is the only thing that remains in the heart.' Many will thank this gentle father for having led their steps towards the majestic shores of the ocean of Bahá'u'lláh's utterance.

I ask of Thee by the splendour of the orb of Thy revelation, mercifully to accept from him that which he hath achieved in Thy days. Grant then that he may be invested with the glory of Thy good pleasure and adorned with Thy acceptance.

KAMÁL (ZAYN) ZEIN

CHRISTOPHER V. KUHLASE

1937-1975

O Son of Spirit! My first counsel is this: Possess a pure, kindly and radiant heart that thine may be a sovereignty ancient, imperishable and everlasting. Bahá'u'lláh

These words of Bahá'u'lláh were the lodestar of the life of Christopher Vikelizizwe Kuhlase. His 'pure, kindly and radiant heart' won for him friends of all ages and from all walks of life. Just seeing his beaming smile, one would say 'he is unquestionably a Bahá'í.'

Christopher was one of the early Bahá'ís of Swaziland who, as a youth, accepted the Faith when he was a student at the Swazi National High School at Matsapa. He was born in the rural area of Nhlangano, Swaziland in 1937, the

oldest in a family of four brothers and one sister. His brother, Samuel, was high in his praise of Christopher who, he said, had to make a tremendous effort to obtain an education. In an environment that discouraged children from attending school, and with no money to pay school fees, a child really had to display great determination to persist in his schooling. It was necessary for a sincere student to persuade the Department of Education to give him a bursary and then to measure up to a high standard of achievement; no second chance was given if a child failed a course.

When Christopher was attending Matsapa High School the acting Principal learned that Chris had become a member of a strange religion called 'Bahá'í' and was spreading its teachings among his fellow students. The acting Principal threatened him with expulsion if he continued to spread what were considered false ideas. Chris pointed out that Matsapa was a Government school and that the Government stood for freedom of religion. The acting Principal still tried to intimidate him but did not take the step to expel the youth, as Chris asked for a written reason for his dismissal. It took great courage on his part not to recant his belief in the Bahá'í Faith, although refusing to do so could have resulted in Christopher's being deprived of a higher education after working so hard to gain entry into the only school that could qualify him for this.

After graduating from Matsapa High School he entered Pope Pius II College at Roma, Basutoland (now Lesotho) and qualified for a junior secondary teacher's diploma in 1963. From college, he entered the teaching profession and quickly rose to the rank of Headmaster of the Bhunya Primary School which has a student body of 1,000 pupils. His success in raising the standard of education there resulted in his appointment to the position of Headmaster at the Secondary School of Lobamba in the heart and administrative centre of the Swazi nation.

During these years Christopher was exceedingly active in his service to the Bahá'í Faith. He was on various national and local committees and was a member of the first National Spiritual Assembly of Swaziland, Lesotho and Mozambique which was elected in 1967. He served as assistant secretary to this body until he was assigned overseas duties by the Swazi nation.



Christopher V. Kuhlase

He was a brilliant and convincing speaker and travelled to many parts of Swaziland giving the message of Bahá'u'lláh.

Swaziland gained its independence in 1968 and those of talent and recognized capacity were called upon to assist the developing nation. Christopher was selected by His Majesty King Sobhuza II to serve on the staff of the Embassy of Swaziland in Washington, D.C. He also served as an alternate member of the delegation representing Swaziland at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

When he returned from the United States in 1969, Christopher joined the Department of Establishment and Training as Assistant Secretary and later was appointed Secretary of the Public Service Commission. He then became Under-Secretary in the Ministry of Works, Power and Communications. In 1972 he was transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Under-Secretary, the position he held until the time of his fatal accident.

During his travels in his capacity as an employee of the Swaziland Government, both in the United States and in various countries which he visited as a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he met many Bahá'ís and gained a deep knowledge of the

Faith and an appreciation of its capacity to solve the complex problems of the world, and he was able to impart that knowledge to many outstanding people whom he met from diverse nations of the world.

His death, even as his life, was given in service to his beloved Bahá'u'lláh. Shortly before the untimely automobile accident which took his life on 29 March 1975, Christopher had instructed his wife that he must be given a Bahá'í burial, little knowing how soon the occasion would arise. His funeral was conducted from the Leroy Ioas National Bahá'í Centre in Mbabane, Swaziland and was attended by between 400 and 500 mourners. The procession of cars which slowly made its way to the immaculate and beautiful gardens of the Bahá'í Centre was over a mile in length. Many of his friends from Government service attended the funeral and spoke most lovingly of his services to the Government and to the people of Swaziland; they expressed the hope that another of his calibre of integrity, honesty and brilliance would arise in the service of the nation. No event the Bahá'í community could have arranged could have afforded an opportunity for a more eloquent proclamation of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

BENJAMIN N. DLAMINI
VALERA F. ALLEN

RÚḤÍ ARBÁB

1914-1975

Rúḥí Arbáb was born into a distinguished Bahá'í family in 'Ishqábád, Russian Turkistán where his forebears had emigrated from Írán. He was a bright and capable child and had an exceptionally good memory. He studied in the Bahá'í primary school in 'Ishqábád and then entered the State intermediate school. He acquired an extensive knowledge of the Faith from notable Bahá'í scholars including Muḥammad-'Alí Qá'íní, Siyyid Mihdí Gulpáygání and 'Alí-Akbar Furútan. He enjoyed literature and was encouraged to write articles and stories about the Faith.

Rúḥí was among those youth who were expelled from the University of Leningrad and exiled to Persia because of their affiliation with the

Faith. The young men submitted the details of their case to Shoghi Effendi from whom they received a loving reply exhorting them not to be saddened or grieved by the event and stating that if it were the will of God their exile and banishment might be the source of attracting divine confirmations in large measure. If love of God and turning to Him be accounted a crime, the Guardian wrote in effect, what can be better than that; and were steadfastness and firmness, servitude and selflessness to rank as a sin, what can excel it?

Rúhí's father, Naşru'lláh, had nothing to offer him for the expenses of his journey but a gold watch he had saved. This he gave to his seventeen year old son as a parting gift with his blessing when Rúhí left for Persia. His mother could add only a scarf and her tear-laden kisses.

For a time, Rúhí lived in Mashhad. Then he sold his watch to obtain funds with which to travel to Tíhrán. The sensitive young man, already gravely affected by the enforced interruption of his schooling, now suffered further ordeals. Illness, privation, discomfort and solitude contributed their share to making his lot almost unbearable. Other misfortunes now befell him: the imprisonment of his father in 'Ishqábád, followed by his death; the exile of his brother and his disappearance; and the banishment of his mother and his brother's family to Írán. When informed of the death of Rúhí's father, the beloved Guardian whose gracious kindness sustained Rúhí throughout this dark period, in a letter written on his behalf by his secretary, consoled the young man with the thought that whatever had befallen the sore-tried and faithful Arbáb family had been in the path of service to the Beloved.

Rúhí secured a job in a newspaper office and later worked in the Finance Ministry. His youth in Tíhrán was spent in service to the Cause and the sterling qualities of his character endeared him to his friends, Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í. He married in 1941 and continued his services to the Faith in such a manner as to evoke the appreciation of Shoghi Effendi.

Laying great stress upon the education of his children, Rúhí and his wife Furúgh agreed that she would reduce her Bahá'í activities and he would increase his in like ratio. Accordingly, he devoted only one-half the day to earning a livelihood and the other half to Bahá'í work. In order to increase his knowledge of the Faith he



Rúhí Arbáb

spent three years studying under such eminent teachers as Fádíl-i-Mázandarání and Jináb-i-Sulaymání. He also devoted some time to a study of Islám acquiring as much knowledge of the subject as he considered requisite for teaching the Cause. He then broadened the scope of his service by conducting teacher-training and character-forming classes for Bahá'í youth and children. After an unsuccessful attempt to serve as a home-front pioneer in 1943, Rúhí returned to Tíhrán and played a conspicuous part in teaching Bahá'í youth and motivating them to arise and serve the Faith. In 1955 he was elected to membership of the Local Spiritual Assembly and served as its secretary until the outburst of turbulence in that year which resulted in the demolition of the dome of the National Házíratu'l-Quds and the curtailment of all Bahá'í administrative activities.¹

During this upheaval, Rúhí was like a rock for the persecuted friends who repaired to his home for advice and help. To discharge the duties devolving upon him in increasing measure under such circumstances proved to be a burden that taxed his health. After spending a brief period in the United States, Rúhí returned to Tíhrán and was again elected secretary of the

¹ See 'The Bahá'í International Community and the United Nations', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 789.

Local Spiritual Assembly. Later he served as a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Írán and on various committees. In 1968 he was elected secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly and served in that capacity until his death.

When he was himself a father of two children, he decided to study law. He obtained a law degree in 1950 and then studied Russian in the university. He served in the Ministry of Agriculture and the Veterinary College. He was next transferred to the secretariat of the university and thence to the Ministry of Water and Power. His services attracted the favourable attention of the authorities, chiefly because of the honesty and integrity which characterized all his work.

When his services at one of the national colleges in Tíhrán were terminated because he was a Bahá'í, he devoted his time to translating valuable books into Persian; here he met with the same success as in the Bahá'í sphere. He also produced a general book for children consisting of stories from different sources from various countries translated into Persian and offered to his countrymen. He translated for the benefit of youth biographies of some of the world's great men. Some of his translations were put to use by members of the teaching profession. He made a significant contribution to the Bahá'í community of Persia by producing a work in five volumes for Bahá'í children under the title of *Stories of the Faith*.

With the close of the National Convention at Rídván 1975 it seemed that Rúhí Arbáb's work on earth had terminated. His body could no longer bear the strain it had endured over the years. He was taken to hospital where he died on 5 May. Though his passing was tragic, it seemed a fitting climax to a life devoted to serving the Cause of God with no thought of self, rest or comfort.

Informed of his passing, the Universal House of Justice cabled:

PROFOUNDLY SADDENED GRIEVOUS LOSS
STEADFAST DEVOTED SERVANT PROMOTER
FAITH RUHI ARBAB STOP HIS TREMENDOUS
EFFORTS TEACHING ADMINISTRATIVE FIELDS
CULMINATING IN HIS OUTSTANDING SERVICES
AS SECRETARY NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
UNFORGETTABLE HIGHLY MERITORIOUS . . .

FURÚGH ARBÁB

(Translated from Persian by Rustom Sabit)

ROBERT HENRY PATTERSON

1925-1975

Robert Henry Patterson was born in Greenock on the west coast of Scotland on 19 September 1925. He worked as an accountant until his departure for Australia in 1949. After travelling around Australia for several years he eventually settled in Brisbane, Queensland and it was here, in 1956, that he learned of the Bahá'í Faith and embraced it.

From the beginning, Bob played an active role in the Bahá'í community and his selfless devotion was greatly admired by all with whom he came in contact. He pioneered to Ipswich to assist in the formation of the Local Spiritual Assembly and he was also a founding member of the Queensland University Bahá'í Society.

During the Nine Year Plan he responded to the call of the Universal House of Justice for pioneers to the Pacific islands, and in April 1968 arrived in Apia, Western Samoa, where he worked as chief accountant for one of the largest firms of general merchants in the Pacific. His home was always open to both Bahá'ís and their friends, and weekly firesides were held. Regular teaching trips were made to villages outside Apia and on many occasions he was



Robert Henry Patterson

joined by Mr. Sam Ale Ale, a devoted Samoan believer, who acted as his translator.

Bob was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of Samoa when it was formed in 1970 and served as national treasurer. He also served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Apia until the last months of his life when his severe illness precluded active participation. In the same year he had the bounty of making his pilgrimage to the Holy Land and on the journey visited his family in Scotland for the first time since 1949.

Early in 1971 Bob married Miss Peleiupu Lesā, a non-Bahá'í, of a well-known family in Apia and became integrated into the social fabric of the island. The birth of their daughter, Mary Elizabeth, brought them much joy.

During 1974 Bob was stricken by a severe illness which terminated in his death on 19 May 1975. He was the first Bahá'í pioneer of Samoa to give up his life at his post.

At Bob's request, the National Spiritual Assembly of Samoa consulted with his wife and her family regarding his funeral and in deference to their Christian background and because of the love and devotion which they had always showered upon him, it was agreed that prior to the Bahá'í service a few prayers and words of eulogy would be spoken in the family church. On the day of his burial, as a sign of respect, the firm for which he had worked flew its flag at half mast. The many non-Bahá'ís who attended the funeral at the National Centre and the burial in the Bahá'í cemetery were deeply moved by the Bahá'í readings and prayers and many lingered to ask questions about the Faith.

On learning of the passing of Robert Patterson the Universal House of Justice cabled on 21 May 1975:

DEEPLY GRIEVED LEARN UNTIMELY PASSING
DEVOTED PIONEER SAMOA ROBERT PATTERSON
PRAYING HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL
ABHA KINGDOM PLEASE CONVEY LOVING SYM-
PATHY MEMBERS FAMILY.

Robert Henry Patterson lies with his fellow believers in Magiagi Cemetery. The melodies and words of many Bahá'í songs waft over their graves when the friends gather at the National Centre a short distance away. Bob will always be remembered in the hearts of many for his loving spirit with its kind and gentle qualities.

A few months after the passing of her be-

loved husband, Peleiupu (Pele) Patterson informed her family that she wished to be a Bahá'í and carry on his work. Since then she has become active in the Bahá'í community following in the footsteps of her husband.

Centre your energies in the propagation of the Faith of God. Whoso is worthy of so high a calling, let him arise and promote it.

Bahá'u'lláh

BLANCA VICTORIA MEJIA

1911-1975

Blanca Victoria Mejia was the first Bahá'í of Nicaragua. She learned of the Faith through Mathew Kaszab,¹ one of the first pioneers to Central America, who settled in Nicaragua in 1939. Blanca enrolled in the Faith on 21 April 1941 and was unceasingly firm and devoted to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. Her dearest wish was to leave this world on the anniversary of the declaration of the Báb or Bahá'u'lláh. She died on 23 May 1975.

Blanca was born on 3 December 1911 in León, Nicaragua of very educated and cultured parents. At the age of three she was struck by poliomyelitis which left her with a crippled left foot and paralyzed her right hand. Although her speech was also affected and she stammered and slurred her words, this did not hinder her from studying and teaching the Bahá'í Faith. She completed high school and an advanced course in the university, then taught school for thirty years. Never married, she was retired and receiving a pension at the time of her death. She wrote many stories and poems which were published in newspapers and magazines.

The growth of the Faith in Nicaragua is due largely to the labours of Blanca. She taught many prominent people about the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh and some have become active in the Faith. In spite of her delicate health her free time was spent in visiting the Bahá'ís and their friends. People from many different backgrounds sought her friendship because she was loving, amiable, kind and sincere to everyone. When Mathew Kaszab was imprisoned by the

¹ See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. IX, p. 614; *The Bahá'í Centenary 1844-1944*, p. 196.



Blanca Victoria Mejia

Nicaraguan government for his Bahá'í activities¹ she never failed to visit him and bring him food and persisted in her fruitless attempts to obtain his release. When one of the Bahá'ís met with an accident and was in hospital, Blanca recited many times daily the *Tablet of Ahmad* until the believer recovered and returned to his home. This man is now a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Nicaragua. These incidents serve to show how highly spiritual she was, and how loving to the Bahá'ís.

Through the generosity of some Bahá'í friends, Blanca attended the centenary celebration of the Bahá'ís of the United States held in Wilmette, Illinois in 1944. She was always very proud to show the photograph taken during that centenary convention. She can be seen standing in the right-hand corner of the picture which appears in vol. X of *The Bahá'í World*. Unfortunately her copy of the photograph was buried during the earthquake which struck Managua in 1972. Blanca escaped uninjured and moved to León to live with one of her nieces. One day she fell, breaking her right thigh, and died two days later, fulfilling her wish to leave this earth on the anniversary of the

declaration of one of the Founders of the Faith. She was a member of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of León, and is buried there. Her place in the history of the Cause in Central America is assured, for the Universal House of Justice cabled:

SADDENED LEARN PASSING BLANCA MEJIA
FIRST RECORDED BELIEVER NICARAGUA HER
DEVOTED SERVICE CAUSE FOR OVER THREE
DECADES LENDS LUSTRE ANNALS FAITH CEN-
TRAL AMERICA PRAYING HOLY THRESHOLD
PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

ROSE T. MANGAPIS

JAMES HENRY ISAAC BEETON

1907–1975

James Beeton, the first Cape Barren Islander to become a follower of Bahá'u'lláh, was born on 15 April 1907 on Cape Barren Island, the second largest island in the Furneaux group, north-east of Tasmania. Jim, as he was known to his family and friends, spent his early years on the island and when he grew up he raised sheep. Later he moved to the Tasmanian mainland to manage a farm in partnership with his two brothers.

In April 1970 Jim retired to live in Glenorchy, near Hobart, Tasmania's capital city. Here Jim and his wife, Eliza, came into contact with the Bahá'í Faith through Mr. and Mrs. Harry Penrith. Harry is a full-blood Australian Aboriginal and his wife, Leone, a white Australian. It was a rare and beautiful experience for the Cape Barren Island people in the Hobart area to meet an interracial couple and they listened with respect to the Bahá'í teachings on the unity of the human race. At that time the Cape Barren Islanders regarded themselves as a separate race and tended to associate only with other Cape Barren Islanders, holding themselves aloof from the white and Aboriginal population.

The fiftieth anniversary of the Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá was marked by a public service held on 27 November 1971 at Hobart Town Hall with approximately forty people in attendance, three-quarters of them Cape Barren Islanders, friends of Mr. and Mrs. Penrith. Jim Beeton who had never before attended a Bahá'í meeting was in the audience. A brief intro-

¹ *The Bahá'í World*, vol. IX, p. 616.



James Henry Isaac Beeton

duction to the Faith was presented and excerpts were read from a compilation of the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The service was followed by a dinner and informal Bahá'í gathering. The Cape Barren guests who have scant social life expressed their delight at being in a gathering of people of many races and listened with interest to the remarks of Miss Thelma Perks of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Australasia who described her travels in various regions of the Pacific and spoke of the uniting influence of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. During the evening Jim Beeton expressed his desire to be a Bahá'í. A humble and loving soul, he at first hesitantly said that he felt he was 'too old and uneducated to become a Bahá'í,' but his shining eyes betrayed that he had already accepted the Faith in his heart.

Shortly after declaring his acceptance of the Cause, Mr. Beeton became seriously ill with diabetes. Despite the restrictions this imposed upon him he participated in Bahá'í community activities to the extent he could and served on the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Glenorchy. On the evening of 24 May 1975 he passed into a coma and left this world. He was laid to rest in Launceston, only yards from the resting place of

two Knights of Bahá'u'lláh, Miss Gretta Lamp-rill,¹ the first Bahá'í in Tasmania, and Miss Gladys Parke,² the first Bahá'í in Northern Tasmania.

SIYYID AMÍR-SHÁH MUJÁHID

1936-1975

Siyyid Amír-Sháh Mujáhid was born in a village in the Province of Maydán, Afghánistán in 1936. His father being a religious man encouraged him from childhood to study theology. Amír-Sháh from an early age displayed a great talent for acquiring knowledge. He soon excelled in Persian and Arabic and showed a keen interest in religious subjects. He went to Kabul, the capital of the country, to complete his studies with a famous 'ulamá and while still a young man became a mullá entitled to teach classes in theology. Although Mr. Mujáhid was a member of the Shí'ih sect of Islám he was open-minded. He studied Sunní literature and without any hesitation had contact with Sunní priests. Such was his integrity and character that he had the confidence and respect of the 'ulamás of both sects. He won great popularity and respect by denouncing from the pulpit those who, in the guise of priests, sought material gain and worldly acclaim. He was a pious and highly-principled man. When a friend presented him with funds to enable him to make a pilgrimage to Mecca he refused the gift explaining to his friend that if his intention were sincere the money should be distributed among the poor. He lived modestly in a very humble dwelling.

How Mr. Mujáhid became interested in the Bahá'í Faith is an interesting story. Two Bahá'ís independently dreamed that 'Abdu'l-Bahá told them to give the message of God to Siyyid Amír-Sháh Mujáhid, and they did so. After a very brief investigation of the teachings and a perusal of the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, Mr. Mujáhid was confirmed in the Bahá'í Faith, exclaiming that what he had read could only have been the revealed Word of God. Although he was advised that a man in his position might not relinquish his duties as a mullá too soon, he did not agree, and he refused immediately to con-

¹ See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, p. 534.

² See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, p. 457.



Siyyid Amír Sháh Mujáhid

tinue giving lessons in Islamic theology, stating that it was dishonest to waste the time of his students on subjects which he now knew were of no importance to the advancement of their souls. However, because of popular demand, he continued for some time to preach from the pulpit.

As a Bahá'í, Mr. Mujáhid travelled to various Provinces and was instrumental in bringing a number of people into the Faith. He wrote two little booklets, one being an outline of the proofs of the Bahá'í Faith and the other a dissertation on the laws of Bahá'u'lláh.

Unfortunately, his life as a Bahá'í was very short and he died on 19 June 1975 after a brief illness. A number of famous 'ulamás attended his funeral and praised him publicly as one who loved the truth and who was courageous in following the right path at all times.

ELIZABETH ANN (ANNA) ASHEN

1895–1975

Elizabeth Anna Jessuren Ashen was born on 19 October 1895 and served the Bahá'í Faith with

dedication for thirty-five years. She died at her pioneering post in the Canary Islands on 10 June 1975.

One knows a great deal about the spirit of Ann Ashen after reading the pioneer application which she filled out in January 1961 at the age of sixty-six. In the area reserved for preferred pioneering location, Mrs. Ashen checked Europe, Central America, South America, Asia and Africa. At that time she was not in good health and her resources were limited to a small Social Security cheque. In spite of this she began a period of renewed service as an overseas pioneer, completing fifteen years in European goals before her passing. She represented her beloved Faith in Finland, in Luxembourg and, at the very end of her life, in the Canary Islands.

The Bahá'í friends in Las Palmas, calling for her to take her to a prayer meeting, found her lying on the floor, her hip broken as a result of a fall. She was operated on in the local hospital the following day, 10 June. When a number of Bahá'ís, including Virginia Orbison, called to see her after the surgery, they were told that she had died just as they arrived. One later reported, 'She looked as if she were seeing something wonderful!' Burial took place in the Bahá'í cemetery the following day and a memorial gathering was held that evening.

Miss Orbison, recalling the passing of Mrs. Ashen, has written: 'Her stay, and her passing in the hospital, provided opportunities for speaking about the Faith. She did the best she could without knowledge of the language. The supervisor, who was with her at the end, had been extremely kind and attentive; she spoke English well and received the Message of Bahá'u'lláh with great interest . . . I am thankful for having had the bounty of seeing Ann on . . . my first visit to the Canary Islands. It was a very moving experience. All the believers were deeply touched, as they loved and admired Ann . . . Just two weeks before her fall, she had spoken to the friends in a meeting and all mentioned her radiance and the wisdom of her talk. Surely her soul is soaring into the heights of the Abhá kingdom.'

Mrs. Ashen spoke very little about her early years, but she did mention that her parents had emigrated from Holland to the United States, and that she had had the opportunity to study German in school. After graduating from high school in 1915 she worked first as a bookkeeper



Elizabeth Ann (Anna) Ashen

and later became a licensed practical nurse. She embraced the Bahá'í Faith in 1940 and from that time onward her efforts were directed towards the goals of the Bahá'í teaching plans. As early as 1945 she wrote to Shoghi Effendi about her desire to pioneer to Mexico. Eventually her homefront pioneering led her to Alaska, where she served in Ketchikan. At the time that she applied for overseas pioneering, the National Spiritual Assembly of Alaska referred to her as a 'diligent and ceaseless worker'. Exactly two months after she volunteered to pioneer abroad, she arrived at her post in Lahti, Finland and wrote to the European Teaching Committee: 'The friends here are very delightful and I am sure that we will be able to do great things . . . I spent Thursday and Friday in Stockholm at the Ḥazíratu'l-Quds and then went to Turku where I had a long visit with Mildred Clark and Loyce Lawrence and the Turku friends . . . There is such a wonderful Bahá'í spirit here and such love that the Faith cannot help but grow.'

At the end of the Ten Year Crusade, Mrs. Ashen offered to remain in Europe and, after making pilgrimage to the Holy Land early in 1964, she relocated in Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxem-

bourg. In its farewell letter the National Spiritual Assembly of Finland wrote: 'We are very grateful for your devoted services always in helping our country to reach her Crusade goals . . . May our Beloved Bahá'u'lláh richly bless your efforts wherever you toil in the work of establishing His Kingdom on this earth of ours.'

After serving for some time in Esch-sur-Alzette, Mrs. Ashen settled in Lamadelaine; here, her dreams of assisting the youth were realized, with many attending her numerous fireside and social gatherings. Mrs. Ashen was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of Luxembourg at the 1964 convention and served on that body for one year. By the time her failing health prompted her to leave the unfavourable climate of Luxembourg and pioneer to the Canary Islands, a Local Spiritual Assembly had been established in Lamadelaine.

Informed by the National Spiritual Assembly of Spain of the passing of this devoted servant of Bahá'u'lláh, the Universal House of Justice wrote on 8 July 1975: 'We were profoundly sorry to learn of the passing of Ann Ashen whose devoted services in the pioneering field will long be remembered. That she has laid her mortal dust to rest in the soil of the Canary Islands is a crown to her pioneering achievements which will assuredly be abundantly blessed in the Abhá kingdom. It is our prayer at the Sacred Threshold that the believers in the Canary Islands will be inspired by her example to win great victories for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.'

BETH MCKENTY

ISFANDÍYÁR BAKHTÍYÁRÍ

1895–1975

Isfandíyár Khudádád Bahrám Bakhtíyári was born in Nirsi-ábád, Yazd, Irán in 1895. He received little education and after completing elementary school he took up the family occupation of farming. Hardworking and quick to learn, he became adept at his work. Isfandíyár's family were zealous Zoroastrians and as a young man he clung to his beliefs fanatically and held a deep-rooted prejudice towards the teachings of other Faiths. He loathed to hear the Mu'adhhdhin raise the call to prayer and he hated Isfandíyár Ardshír, a Bahá'í teacher of



Isfandíyár Bakhtíyári

Yazd, joining with other youths in harassing him. In 1914 he married Sarvar Khánum, the daughter of Rustam Jamshíd of Maryamábád.

The turning point came for Isfandíyár Bakhtíyári a year or so later when he met Burzú Isfandíyár, a nephew of a noted Bahá'í, at a memorial gathering held at the home of a relative. The Bahá'í refrained from drinking wine which is a part of the Zoroastrian ceremonial for the departed, and read extracts from Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh which so impressed the young Bakhtíyári that he began to investigate the Bahá'í Faith. As soon as he became attracted he turned to Isfandíyár Ardshír whom he had so vehemently opposed, was lovingly forgiven and, under his tutelage, began a serious study of the Bahá'í Cause which he soon wholeheartedly espoused. This declaration on the part of one so orthodox gave rise to a battalion of sorrows for Bakhtíyári. Relatives and friends deserted him and it became impossible for him to continue farming. Disgusted by the blindly dogmatic activity surrounding him he disposed of his land and in 1917–1918 with his young wife he sailed for Bombay where he became a part of the active community of Bahá'ís and eventually established himself as a partner in a hotel. He

wrote a letter to 'Abdu'l-Bahá which he signed 'Isfandíyár Khudádád' and was favoured by a Tablet in reply in which the Master addressed him as 'Isfandíyár Khudádád, known as Bakhtíyári' (literally, befriended by good fortune or destiny). From that day forward he adopted the name Bakhtíyári and even applied for his identity card under this name.

In 1920 he attained the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the Holy Land. The pilgrimage brought him contentment, joy and a firmer belief in the Cause of God. A brighter future dawned for him and he acquired increased devotion and some measure of economic security. In 1921 he and his wife pioneered to Karachi, then a small developing city. He served successively on the National Spiritual Assembly of India and Burma which came into being in 1923 and on the National Spiritual Assembly of India, Pakistan and Burma which was formed in 1947, and in 1957 when an independent National Spiritual Assembly was established in Pakistan he was its first chairman. In the half century during which he served on these bodies he often held the office of chairman or treasurer. He did not relish being called treasurer and would style himself the trustee of the Bahá'í funds. Although he professed himself ignorant of accounting procedures, he was of the highest integrity and was well suited to his service. He continued to be elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of Pakistan until he was appointed to serve as a member of the Auxiliary Board.

Bakhtíyári radiated love and affection, a capacity which attracted hundreds to him and won many friends for the Faith. He established friendly and enduring relationships with municipal officials, Government officers and leaders of the business community. The elite of the city considered it their privilege to serve the Bahá'í community.

During the half century of his Bahá'í service Bakhtíyári travelled extensively in the subcontinent and in Burma, Ceylon and Bangladesh. The teaching tour on which he accompanied the Hand of the Cause Martha Root¹ in 1938 was a landmark in the history of the Faith in southern Asia. They visited many centres and had audiences with several outstanding figures including the Maharaja of Travancore and Dr. Rabin-dranath Tagore. On another occasion he also

¹ See 'International Survey of Current Bahá'í Activities', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. VII, pp. 95–98.

accompanied the renowned Bahá'í scholar, the Hand of the Cause Ṭarázu'lláh Samandarí, in his travels in India. His own teaching excursions took him from Kashmir to Cape Comorin and from Karachi to Rangoon. The second World War had ravaged Burma. He undertook long and tiring visits to the Bahá'í communities there to encourage the friends who had suffered and to revisit the resting-place of the Hand of the Cause Muṣṭafá Rúmí at Daidanaw. Travelling and teaching became for him a way of life. For months on end and sometimes for intervals of up to six months he would be away from home teaching the Cause here, consolidating a centre there and encouraging the friends wherever he went. His travels were facilitated by the full co-operation of his understanding wife whose loneliness can only be imagined, for the couple had no issue. She passed her days in prayer, content that her husband was engaged in the service of God. Bakhtiyári's business partners, too, consented to his travels so he was able to move about with a light heart in serving his beloved Cause.

Mr. and Mrs. Bakhtiyári were twice able to visit the Holy Land and attain the presence of Shoghi Effendi. In 1963, Isfandíyár again went to the Holy Land to participate in the first election of the Universal House of Justice.

Bakhtiyári's devotion to the Guardian may be measured by his dedicated implementation of Shoghi Effendi's advice to shift the national headquarters of the Bahá'í community of India from Poona to New Delhi. As treasurer of the National Spiritual Assembly he spearheaded a drive for funds during the course of which he travelled thousands of miles, and successfully negotiated the purchase of the present National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds of India. He was also responsible, with the help of various friends, for the purchase of a site on which was constructed the first Bahá'í endowment in the Indian subcontinent, a structure which became the present National Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds of Pakistan. He also acquired two adjacent lots which he donated to the Faith and on one of which a building was placed which he named 'The Happy Home' and for which he settled a trust for a future Bahá'í kindergarten.

The last two decades of his life were spent in pioneering to difficult areas in northern Pakistan, first to Sargodha and then to Murree, a hill station. In the spring of 1975, in relation to his

duties as an Auxiliary Board member, he began a tour of Frontier Province, an area inhabited mostly by the Pathans. Here the laity tend to be orthodox and the mullás prejudiced. He based himself at the Bahá'í Centre in Rawalpindi and began his work but his extensive travels and age took their toll at last and he fell ill. During his illness his indomitable spirit prevailed and in an attitude of prayerfulness he breathed his last on 24 June. He was buried in the Karachi Bahá'í cemetery, in land which he had struggled to acquire from the municipality.

On 24 June 1975 the Universal House of Justice cabled:

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING VALIANT SELFLESS
STEADFAST PROMOTER FAITH ISFANDIYAR
BAKHTIYARI STOP HIS LIFELONG SERVICES SHED
LUSTRE ANNALS FAITH ENTIRE SUBCONTINENT
STOP ADVISE HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL MEET-
INGS STOP SUPPLICATING DIVINE THRESHOLD
RICH REWARD HIS LONG DEVOTED SERVICES
CAUSE GOD.

JAMES VASSAL FACEY

1896–1975

James Vassal Facey passed to the Abhá kingdom on 9 July 1975. He lived an exemplary Bahá'í life, one that was completely dedicated to Bahá'u'lláh's service. His goal was total commitment to the Cause he loved so dearly and to which he contributed his utmost for thirty years.

Jim and his wife Gladys—called Maisie by her friends—accepted the Bahá'í Faith in June 1945 and were among the first harvest of souls who responded to the teaching efforts of Cora Oliver and Louise Caswell who opened Panama to the Faith in 1939. Mr. and Mrs. Facey shared the distinction of appearing on the membership roll of Panama's earliest believers and were among the first five privileged to promote the Cause of God in Panama.

Born in Jamaica on 8 August 1896, James Facey came as a boy to Colón, the ancient Atlantic seaport of Panama, with his widowed mother. While she worked to support herself and her son, Jim lived in the home of an Anglican priest, Father Edward Cooper, and

went to school. As a youth, he served as acolyte in the church of which Father Cooper was pastor. As Jim grew to manhood, both Father Cooper and his mother encouraged him to study for the ministry. At first Jim accepted training for this vocation but he became increasingly dissatisfied with doctrinal teachings and finally was convinced that the ministry was not for him. He stopped attending school and feeling that under the circumstances he could no longer accept the hospitality of Father Cooper he left the parsonage and found employment in the Colón Import and Export Company where he remained as accountant for over fifty years.

In 1924 he met and married a young Colón secretary, Gladys Abrahams, who was also a free thinker in matters of religion. They agreed that they would not affiliate with any church and, for the next twenty years, they practised no formal religion, though a high moral standard of conduct was practised in the home and their four children, Cedric, Kathleen, Alicia and Betty, were exhorted to achieve an education.

In the early 1940s, Maisie met the two pioneers who were then living in Colón, Cora and Louise, and became attracted to the Bahá'í teachings. After a course of serious study it did not take the Faceys long to realize that they were Bahá'ís and they applied for membership. One other student who was attending the class, Iola Edwards, was accepted formally as a member with the Faceys, and thus was formed the first Bahá'í group in Colón, the second largest city in Panama.

When the first Local Spiritual Assembly was formed in Colón, *circa* 1950, both Jim and Maisie were members. Jim was elected as treasurer, a service he rendered all the rest of his life. Their daughter, Kathleen, declared her faith in 1953 and their daughter, Alicia, the following year. The girls were in their early twenties and both served on the Local Assembly.

Jim was a member of the regional National Spiritual Assembly of Central America and the Antilles which came into being in 1951 and served as treasurer of that body until 1957 when the regional National Spiritual Assembly of Central America was formed. When an independent National Spiritual Assembly was established in Panama in 1961 he was again elected as treasurer and in this office continued to render faithful and dedicated service until 1968. The National Spiritual Assembly of



James Vassal Facey

Panama was assigned the groundwork responsibility, under the guidance of the Universal House of Justice, for the acquisition of a site and the subsequent construction of the Mother Temple of Latin America. His dedication to the work relating to the construction of the first Bahá'í House of Worship on the soil of Panama knew no bounds. When he was appointed as one of the readers at the dedication of the Temple in April 1972, his gratitude for this bounty was immeasurable.

Jim's total commitment to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh was readily apparent to all those who came into contact with him. To him, the Cause was like an ocean, and he was a fish swimming in this ocean. He taught the Faith for thirty years with a steadfastness which was as natural as breathing. The stranger sitting beside him on a public park bench, his fellow passenger on a bus, train or plane, within seconds would hear, however briefly, of the Bahá'í Faith. His ever-burning zeal to present to others the verities of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings was perhaps his greatest weakness in that his patience with anyone reluctant to recognize or accept was often thin. Being so totally convinced himself, he could not understand how anyone could fail

to see the truth. He avidly supported extension teaching projects on the national and local levels and he placed into circulation countless Bahá'í books and pamphlets. He would never write a letter to a non-Bahá'í which did not contain some reference to the Faith.

Jim had a keen grasp of the administrative principles of the Faith. He studied this aspect of the Faith avidly and applied the principles in his relationship to his fellow Bahá'ís as members of institutions or on a personal plane. Always an outstanding example of loyalty to these divinely inspired guidelines, he expected the same loyalty from others. As his service to the Colón Import and Export Company lengthened, he was increasingly able to arrange his vacations to coincide with Bahá'í conferences and institutes, both in Panama and abroad, and made an effort to attend as many as possible, it giving him much satisfaction that he was able to finance his own travelling expenses thereby saving the struggling national fund thousands of dollars. In 1952 he was privileged to witness the dedication of the Mother Temple of the West in Wilmette, Illinois and he was also present at the All-America Intercontinental Teaching Conference in Chicago in 1953 when the Ten Year Crusade was launched. He attended the International Convention in Haifa in 1963 for the first election of the Universal House of Justice and served as a teller during that epoch-making event.

When the Faceys embraced the Bahá'í Faith they became targets for taunts and ridicule from friends and members of the clergy who prophesied that their allegiance to this 'strange cult' was destined to be short lived, that they would soon abandon it in disillusion. Jim's faith was exposed to yet another test when the beloved Guardian announced that Bahá'ís should resign their membership in secret organizations including Freemasonry. A prominent member of the Masonic Lodge for years, Jim unhesitatingly dissociated himself from this fraternal tie. For him, there could be no other course; the Bahá'í Faith was the most important thing in his life.

Five years before his final illness, Jim retired from business and built a new home at Puerto Pilon, a suburb of Colón, where he laid out and planted an extensive garden. He remained interested, active and in good health until his late seventies, continuing to carry on his Local

Assembly duties and private teaching and making an occasional trip.

He was ill for only three months before his death and passed away quietly with Maisie sitting beside him. We know that when the history of the Bahá'í Faith in Panama is written, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá's prophecy about Panama's role in the development of the Faith shall have been fulfilled, James Facey's contributions to its earliest stages will merit singular recognition.

... ye must give great attention to the Republic of Panama . . . That place will become very important in the future. The teachings, once established there, will unite the East and West, the North and South.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of the Divine Plan

FRED GRAHAM

1913-1975

Two weeks before his passing, Fred Graham attended the conference at Wilmette in 1975 that brought together the two great branches of the Administrative Order, on both of which he had served for many years. The Universal House of Justice had called together all the 'high ranking officers' and 'senior administrative bodies' of the Faith in North America for special consultation on the future protection of the Cause. It was in many respects the culmination of his life, for his intensely enquiring mind had had a unique opportunity to explore through consultation some of the most important themes in the Writings of the Bahá'í Faith, and the genius for loving which Fred possessed was fully utilized in this gathering whose principal achievement was to bind more closely than ever before the institutions of the Faith. Stepping out of the Temple shortly before the closing session of the conference, Fred was seen taking a stroll in the gardens. His face was literally radiant, his hat cocked on the side of his head in a fashion that was characteristic of him when he was especially happy, and his step was so jaunty that the phrase 'walking on air' seemed not at all inappropriate. But what most struck those who saw him was his smile; he smiled as if he had discovered some marvellous secret.

His discovery of that secret began in 1949



Fred Graham

when his former piano teacher, Miss Gertrude Barr, was moved to reacquaint herself with him for the express purpose of teaching him the Faith, after his name had come to her repeatedly during prayer. Aware of her interest in an unfamiliar religion, Fred at first tried to avoid her, but she was determined and finally succeeded in telling him about Bahá'u'lláh. It was not long before he responded to the wonderful nature of her message. He embraced the Cause in 1951 and immediately began a course of teaching which lasted until his death on 21 July 1975.

Fred was born in Rose Valley, Prince Edward Island, Canada on 18 August 1913 and spent his childhood in both Canada and the eastern United States. As his father's work involved a great deal of travelling, Fred's early education took place in many different towns and cities, a circumstance which may have contributed to the impression he gave throughout his life of being at home in whatever situation he was in. His work also reflected this flexibility for not only did he at one time manage a large chain of restaurants and establish his own successful business in Hamilton, Ontario, but he later became equally adept in the automotive field.

He saw in every experience further confirmations of the Providence that guided his entire life.

His ability to see the good in everything was applied not only to his own life but to the lives of all who came in contact with him. To his family and friends he was a constant inspiration, a source of wit and a dear companion. He would frequently ask 'Are you happy?' with such a pure reflection of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's spirit of love that he imparted happiness in the asking. He was both a serious student and a spontaneous optimist. He approached young people with the same open humility as he did leaders of thought. This humility, coupled with his humour, invited others to share in his delight with everything around him, and made him able to evoke in others a quality of response which they were unaware that they possessed. While remaining remarkably unaware of his own noble qualities, his audacious mind seemed to put him in touch with ideas that were at the very forefront of the unfoldment of the Cause, for he always strove to unravel their implications, and derived new joy from doing so in his teaching and administrative service.

In 1954 he was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada on which body he served for nine years, participating in the first election of the Universal House of Justice. In 1964, following a heart attack, he was appointed to the Auxiliary Board and, as his health improved, devoted increasing time to extensive travelling teaching throughout his area of responsibility. Fred's service to the Cause was marked by a profound awareness of the importance of its institutions and a deep love for them. During his years as an Auxiliary Board member the National Assembly derived great strength and assurance from his efforts to communicate to the friends the ardent appeals so often made by the Guardian that they should 'rally round' their local, and in particular their national, centres of activity. This special service was paralleled by Fred's love and appreciation of the institution of the Hands of the Cause. His life became an occasion for the institutions of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh to meet, to appreciate the gifts with which each had been endowed, and to serve the common purpose for which they had been created.

On 22 July 1975 the Universal House of Justice cabled:

ASSURE FERVENT PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES
 PROGRESS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM AUXILIARY
 BOARD MEMBER FRED GRAHAM DEVOTED
 SERVANT BAHULLAH INSPIRING TEACHER
 CAUSE STOP EXTEND SYMPATHY WIFE FAMILY
 FRIENDS THROUGHOUT CANADA LOSS WARM-
 HEARTED EXEMPLARY BELIEVER.

VERENA VENTURINI

1878-1975

On 13 August 1975 the noble soul of our unforgettable Bahá'í sister, Mrs. Verena Venturini, took its flight to the Abhá kingdom. My hand is stilled and unable to pen the loving remembrance and the sorrow that her departure evokes in innumerable friends. Her life in the Bahá'í Faith, lasting well over half a century, sets an example, arouses admiration, inspires and infuses courage.

In 1909, in the city of New York, at the home of her sister, Mrs Maria Schober, Mrs. Venturini for the first time heard the names Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. It was the eve of her departure for Italy, as her husband Guido Venturini, a distinguished musician, wished their child to be born in Rome. That evening Grace Ober and Ella Robarts visited Mrs. Schober and spoke of a Personage Whose description made a deep impression upon Verena. Religion had been very important to her since childhood; therefore she was attentive and anxious to know Who He was. She was told: He is the Son of Bahá'u'lláh; His name is 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The next day Mrs. Venturini departed for Rome.

Mrs. Schober later became a Bahá'í through May Maxwell and accompanied her on one occasion in 1912 to the hotel where 'Abdu'l-Bahá was staying. Having attained His presence and, overcome with awe, having forgotten everything she had wanted to ask the Master, Mrs. Schober remembered only her sister of whose difficulties she spoke to Him, and received 'Abdu'l-Bahá's assurance that He would pray for Mrs. Venturini.

The death of Mr. Venturini initiated for Verena a period of anxiety and difficulties. She was in a desperate situation at the outbreak of World War I in 1914 and was attempting to support herself and her little daughter, Evan-

geline, by giving German lessons. She managed to book passage for herself and the child on the last steamer leaving Italy for New York. Had she waited one more day she could not have left.

Some time after reaching America she married a Mr. Kropf and went to live in Michigan. Her interest in religion continued and deepened. On one occasion in 1915 she attended a Nineteen-Day Feast in a private home and on hearing the beautiful prayers read recognized that this was the Faith of God for this day, the Cause of which her sister had been speaking and writing to her for so many years. Once when she was invited by a literary society in Lowell, Michigan to conduct one of their meetings, she felt it was her chance to offer the message of Bahá'u'lláh; a Bahá'í friend, Mrs. Perry of Grand Rapids, read the principles of the Faith and Verena spoke of Ṭáhirih.

Mrs. Agnes Parsons who had given up her worldly life and become a dedicated believer made her pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1918. Verena was prevented by family obligations from joining her, so she contented herself with sending 'Abdu'l-Bahá a pair of tan silk gloves.

When her sister's family moved to San Francisco, she was asked to join them there. Among her new friends she counted John and Louise Bosch.

Two hard blows came in rapid succession through the deaths of her second husband and her physical and spiritual sister, Maria Schober. Mrs. Schober's Bahá'í burial was conducted by Mrs. Ella Cooper in Brentwood, California.

The desire of her daughter, Evangeline, to start her university studies in the fine arts and music in Italy brought Verena back to Rome in 1928. During the long period she spent in Rome, from the date of her return to the end of World War II, she remained steadfast in the Covenant and was delighted to receive from time to time Bahá'í travellers who visited Rome. In 1947, when Dr. and Mrs. Ugo Giachery arrived in Rome as pioneers, she was the first one to join them in their efforts to form the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Italy in that city in 1948. On page 145 of his *Recollections of Shoghi Effendi*, Dr. Giachery has written: '... on the wall by the head of his bed, Shoghi Effendi had placed the photograph of the first Italian Local Assembly, that of Rome ... nothing had pleased him more than the establishment of a Bahá'í administrative institution in the Christian



Verena Venturini

capital of the world,' and the Guardian said, "There are three religious centres in the world with distinct functions: Rome, Mecca, and Cairo, where the Cause will register its greatest victories for the Faith in the future."

Upon learning that a Local Spiritual Assembly was to be formed in Rome, Verena became aflame. She immediately purchased many Bahá'í books and memorized many of the beautiful prayers. One day an American writer, Mrs. Frances Toor, came to her with a letter of introduction from mutual friends in the United States. She was invited by Mrs. Venturini to a meeting at the Giachery's home and later accepted the Faith. Mrs. Isabella Argenide Papa, her daughter's mother-in-law, also met Dr. and Mrs. Giachery and subsequently accepted the Faith. How great was her joy! Having one member of her family embrace the Faith was the source of one of her greatest spiritual comforts during the years she lived in Rome.

Mrs. Venturini attended the Intercontinental Teaching Conference held in Stockholm in 1953, one of the four conferences signaling the launching of the unique Ten Year Crusade of Shoghi Effendi, and during the years that followed she attended some of the Italo-Swiss Bahá'í Summer Schools held at Bex-les-Bains.

She never missed a Nineteen-Day Feast, although her home was at least fifteen kilometres from Rome; and even when she was eighty years old, if there was no one to accompany her, she would take a bus or tram in order to be present. Unfailingly she brought bouquets of flowers which the younger believers recognized as the fragrant and gentle signs of her presence. Unforgettable are the memories of the Nineteen-Day Feasts she hosted yearly, usually in the spring, at her beautiful home. This setting was a perfect fusion of the beauty of her soul with the scent and colour of the flowers and plants in the surrounding gardens.

In a letter dated 16 July 1931 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi it was stated: '... He expects from you splendid achievements and these you can certainly accomplish as you have been endowed with a deep and unwavering faith in the principles and the teachings of the Cause.' Appended in the handwriting of the beloved Guardian were the significant words: 'With the assurance of my loving prayers for your happiness and spiritual advancement...' What perfect consonance came with time to exist between the contents of the Guardian's letter and the life of our dear friend and spiritual sister!

For many years in succession she was elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly of Rome. Her wisdom and love of the Cause of God were a source of inspiration to her colleagues on that body. Her faithful service will never be forgotten, and it was with much regret that she was allowed to withdraw from active administrative service because of her advanced age.

We pray that she may intercede for us, and help to accelerate the progress in this world of those ideals whose universal acceptance, throughout her whole life, was her heart's most ardent longing.

MARIO PIARULLI

GHULÁM-'ALÍ 'UBBÁDÍ

1899-1975

Ghulám-'Alí 'Ubbádi was born in Tīhrán in 1899. His father was a highly placed government employee and a devout Muslim, as were all the members of the family. When Mr. 'Ubbádi was in his early childhood his father died and he

was cared for by his only brother until he reached fifteen years of age at which time he left his brother's house where he was unhappy and began to work in the business world. He applied himself diligently, working far into the night, and soon became successful and prosperous. He was highly respected by his colleagues and tradesmen. He was a leading citizen in his neighbourhood and won the respect of the local residents. One day the representative of the road sweepers' organization, a clerk, came to him requesting a certificate approving the manner in which the sweepers had performed their duties. Mr. 'Ubbádi who was punctilious in all affairs personally inspected the streets of the district and then signed the certificate. The clerk, who was a Bahá'í, was impressed by Mr. 'Ubbádi's character and invited him to his home for tea. A friendship developed between the two men and eventually the clerk arranged a meeting between Mr. 'Ubbádi and an outstanding Bahá'í teacher. All that Mr. 'Ubbádi heard during that first meeting disturbed him, but his heart was attracted to this new message. After a period of uneasiness he requested another meeting between the Bahá'í teacher and some of his Muslim friends who were well versed in Islamic theology. Mr. 'Ubbádi was distressed that his friends

had extreme difficulty in challenging the logic of the teaching presented by the Bahá'í and he and his associates left the house in a state of anger and perplexity. Mr. 'Ubbádi resolved to have nothing further to do with the Bahá'ís. The clerk did not change his behaviour towards Mr. 'Ubbádi but continued to visit him and on one occasion presented him with a Bahá'í book. In time Mr. 'Ubbádi's heart was changed by what he read. He sought out the Bahá'ís and became a devoted and active member of the Bahá'í community. He was at this time about twenty years of age. He eventually married Riḡváníyyih Rawshān-Ḍamir, a member of a distinguished Bahá'í family, and she was in all circumstances a constant source of encouragement and help to him and a sincere and loving collaborator.

In 1943, Mr. and Mrs. 'Ubbádi pioneered to Shāh 'Abdu'l-'Azím, on the outskirts of Ṭīhrán, where they were successful in establishing the first Local Spiritual Assembly. Mr. 'Ubbádi served as a member of the Bahá'í Training Institute in Ṭīhrán. A boarding school had been established for orphaned and needy children. Mr. 'Ubbádi helped the institute both financially and spiritually. In his new home he continued to supervise the education of children and engaged a teacher from Ṭīhrán for their instruction. Unfortunately, after two years, he became seriously ill and suffered extreme pain and had to return to Ṭīhrán, but he continued to send children to the institute and to pay their expenses. When his condition worsened and his physicians despaired of his life, Mr. 'Ubbádi wrote to the beloved Guardian requesting prayers for the restoration of his health. Receiving an assurance of Shoghi Effendi's prayers through a letter written by his secretary on his behalf on 14 November 1945, Mr. 'Ubbádi gradually regained his strength and continued his service in the cradle of the Faith. In 1955 Mr. and Mrs. 'Ubbádi made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and entered the presence of Shoghi Effendi who told them he was well pleased with their services. The visit to the holy Shrines and the moments spent with the Guardian were Mr. 'Ubbádi's most cherished memories.

The most fruitful period of Mr. 'Ubbádi's life was the last twenty years which he spent as a pioneer in Morocco. He and his wife came to Rabat on 23 August 1955, two years after the launching of the Ten Year Crusade. Mr. 'Ubbádi was elected to the Local Spiritual



Ghulam-'Ali 'Ubbádi

Assembly of Rabat and served on this body for nineteen years, often in the capacity of chairman or treasurer. His broken health prevented his continuing this service during the last year of his life. During the period from 1965 to 1967 he was also a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of North West Africa. Despite the distance, his advanced age and his uncertain health he travelled to the meetings, some of which were held in Algeria and Tunisia. He had a profound affection for the friends in Morocco. He had a warm and generous nature and was always the first to offer assistance to those in distress. His help was always extended in a most discreet manner.

Although his most signal services were rendered in Morocco, Mr. 'Ubbádi served the entire Bahá'í world through his unstinting generosity. He was indeed like a fathomless spring, constantly pouring out his resources to advance the work of the Faith throughout the world, through contributing to the purchase or construction of Ḥazíratu'l-Quds, Temples, Teaching Institutes and the publication of Bahá'í literature. He received from Shoghi Effendi many expressions of gratitude including a cable acknowledging with 'deep appreciation' his 'historic service' in purchasing the National Ḥazíratu'l-Quds of Morocco. Among his papers were found more than 80 letters from the Universal House of Justice, many of them containing expressions of appreciation of his unfailing generosity in contributing to a wide variety of Bahá'í projects in every continent.

On 19 August 1975, while in London for medical treatment, Mr. 'Ubbádi passed on to the Abhá kingdom in his seventy-sixth year, mourned by a wide circle of Bahá'í friends. A floral tribute was received from the broken-hearted believers in Morocco who had loved and highly valued him. He is buried near his heart's beloved, Shoghi Effendi, in the Great Northern London Cemetery, New Southgate.

The following cable from the Universal House of Justice summarizes in a few words the qualities we loved in Mr. 'Ubbádi:

REQUEST NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY INFORM RIDVANTYIHH UBBADI DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING GHULAM UBBADI HIS STEADFAST DEDICATION HIS GENEROUS FINANCIAL SUPPORT VAST NUMBER VITAL PROJECTS HIS DEVOTED SERVICES PIONEERING TEACHING FIELDS AL-

WAYS REMEMBERED ASSURE PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES PROGRESS HIS NOBLE SOUL.

F. MIṢBÁH

G. S. SANTHANAM KRISHNAN

1945-1975

In the Heroic Age of the Faith thousands of God-intoxicated men, women and children joyfully sacrificed everything, including their very lives, for their Beloved. In the Formative Age such souls are rare. G. S. Krishnan was one of them.

Krishnan was born in Singapore on 1 October 1945. A quiet boy by nature, he would never quarrel and he went his own way without troubling anyone. A very devout Hindu, he would frequently be found meditating or in prayer. He became a Bahá'í following the Oceanic Conference of the South China Seas, held in Singapore in January 1971. Thenceforward he never looked back, but gave his whole heart and soul to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

He immediately began to serve the Faith by teaching and by working on committees, and he even changed his residence in order that he could provide a place for meetings. He was the chairman of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Katong and was one of the nine delegates at the national convention for the election of the first National Spiritual Assembly of Singapore in 1972. He served as secretary of the regional Bahá'í Youth Council of Singapore and was its press officer. His relations with the local press were good and Krishnan would personally ensure that the Bahá'í Holy Days and other Bahá'í observances were announced. He would deprive himself to give whatever he had to the Bahá'í Fund. While attending the Bahá'í Summer School in Johor Baru before he left Singapore, he gave away his camera although he knew he would be lost without one.

Although Krishnan was slim and of slight stature, his heart was large. His purity of heart, selflessness and good humour endeared him to the friends. When he visited Malaysia in connection with his employment he would contact the Bahá'ís and offer his services, and he was very much loved by the believers there. He was always punctual and never broke a promise.



G. S. Santhanam Krishnan

Krishnan arrived in India in January 1974 and proceeded to his parents' home in Kumbakonam. He served the Cause in India just as eagerly as in Singapore, systematically making appointments with local dignitaries and presenting literature to them. Soon a Bahá'í group formed and he enthusiastically assumed the responsibility of deepening the friends. A prolific writer, he directed a steady flow of letters and reports to the National Spiritual Assembly of India and the State Teaching Committee. After a period of six months the National Assembly appointed him as a travelling teacher. He later became an assistant to Auxiliary Board member B. Afshín.

He was sent to Karaikal to assist with the work in a number of villages in the Thirunallar area where he visited government offices, schools and colleges and spoke to members of service organizations including the Lions Club and the Rotary Club. As he did not find any friends of his calibre there, he felt lonely. He attended all Bahá'í conferences, near and far, to revive his spirits through the joy of Bahá'í fellowship. In the villages of Thirunallar he was handicapped in teaching because he could not speak Tamil and he was distressed by the widespread

drunkenness he witnessed. The only way to lay a foundation for the Faith, he concluded, was to educate the unspoiled children. He vigorously pursued this plan and started children's classes in seven villages, one for each day of the week. He conducted a children's class at Karaikal each Sunday morning and in the evening he offered classes for adults, but no one came and he was in great despair.

Karaikal was opened to the Faith in 1953 through the pioneering efforts of Mrs. S. M. Noorani and Mrs. Salisa Kermani and after years of struggle a Bahá'í Centre was constructed through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Kermani. During her historic tour of India in 1964 the Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum had called for Bahá'í teachers to visit Karaikal where she found a receptivity to the Faith, but she cautioned that they needed to be physically strong and capable of visiting the villages on foot over the rice-paddy walks. Krishnan visited the villages on foot but as time went on his health declined. The spicy local food did not agree with him and he existed mainly on bananas and rice. He became dispirited and wanted to leave Karaikal. In June 1975 he obtained an appointment in a school in Lucknow and there, too, he taught the Faith incessantly although he spoke no Hindi.

At a regional teaching conference in Hyderabad he volunteered with some other Bahá'ís for a teaching project in an interior tribal area in Warangal. When the call for funds was made at the conference he gave his watch, then all his money and finally his sandals. He proceeded with the team to Warangal where they had some success but Krishnan soon fell ill. He was admitted to the University Hospital there and succumbed to an internal haemorrhage which took his life on 6 December 1975. In his small battered suitcase were found only Bahá'í books and notebooks containing quotations from the Bahá'í Writings and carefully transcribed prayers.

The National Spiritual Assembly of India wrote at the time of his passing: 'Mr. Krishnan served the Faith most diligently and sincerely . . . He was a young man . . . full of enthusiasm, devotion and love for Bahá'u'lláh and had dedicated his life to the service of the Faith. In spite of the offer of a good job in Singapore he preferred to continue his full-time services in India and had informed the National Assembly

that till the end of the Five Year Plan he would not leave his post.'

In reply, the Universal House of Justice wrote on 22 December 1975: 'We were grieved to learn of the passing of the devoted, brave and steadfast pioneer, Mr. S. Krishnan. His passing in the field of service to the Cause of God no doubt will confer upon him a special bounty which will be a cause of the progress of his soul in the eternal Kingdom of God.'

'In his lifetime he has established a link between the Bahá'í communities in India and Singapore. This bond of love and co-operation between your two countries will be further strengthened by his passing.

'Please convey our deepest sympathy to his relatives and friends in Singapore and in India. We shall offer prayers at the holy Shrines that the mercy of Bahá'u'lláh may rest upon his soul.'

MUNÍR VAKÍL

1900–1976

Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

It is very difficult in a brief memoir to cover all aspects of the life and services of this courageous and devoted servant of Bahá'u'lláh whose passing to the Abhá kingdom on 14 February 1976 ended a brilliant page in the annals of the history of the Faith in 'Iráq and deprived the Bahá'í world of an outstanding and firm believer.

He was born in Baghdád in a house adjacent to the blessed House of Bahá'u'lláh. His grandfather and father accepted the Faith during the days when Bahá'u'lláh was in Baghdád and they served the Cause devotedly and looked after the blessed House during their lifetimes. This close association with the House was a privilege which Mr. Vakíl and his family treasured. He was also privileged, as a young boy, to be in the presence of the beloved Master in the Holy Land. His mother and elder sister served 'Abdu'l-Bahá's household for a short period during which Munír befriended the young Shoghi Effendi.

With the passing of his father, Munír Vakíl, who was then still a young man, inherited the responsibility of tending the blessed House in



Munír Vakíl

addition to caring for his family and pursuing his studies. Under difficult circumstances, and with perseverance, he obtained a degree in law, and was subsequently enrolled in the army as part of the reserve force.

The 1920s witnessed a stream of very significant events in 'Iráq. King Faisal I of 'Iráq handed the House of Bahá'u'lláh to the Muslim authorities. The entire Bahá'í world community was mustered, by the beloved Guardian, to rise and protest against that shattering decision which, in the words of Shoghi Effendi, deprived the Bahá'ís 'of yet another Bahá'í Shrine, the House occupied by Bahá'u'lláh for well nigh the whole period of His exile in 'Iráq, which had been acquired by Him, and later had been ordained as a centre of pilgrimage, and had continued in the unbroken and undisputed possession of His followers ever since His departure from Baghdád.'¹ Munír Vakíl, acting as the caretaker of that blessed Spot, carried out the instructions of the beloved Guardian with zeal, hope and selfless devotion.

Mr. Vakíl served on the first National Spiritual Assembly of 'Iráq and was enthusiastically

¹ See *God Passes By*, Shoghi Effendi, pp. 356–357.

involved in the progress of the Faith there. His position in the Ministry of Defence reached a peak when he was promoted to legal counsellor to the Ministry with the rank of Brigadier. His colleagues and superiors came to know Mr. Vakíl and witnessed his uprightness, fidelity and devotion in the discharge of his duties. He conveyed the Bahá'í spirit in every aspect of his life and work, especially in looking after the interests of minorities and upholding the rights of individuals regardless of class, rank or creed. His outstanding record and integrity won the respect and admiration of many military officers.

At the onset of the Ten Year Global Crusade of the beloved Guardian Mr. Vakíl attended the Asian Intercontinental Teaching Conference held in New Delhi in October 1953. Immediately after the conference he arose to answer the call of the Guardian for pioneers to virgin territories. He left directly from India to settle in the Kuria Muria Islands, a group of five rocky islets in the Arabian Sea off the south-west coast of Oman, an action for which he was named by Shoghi Effendi a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh. The conditions on the islands were extremely difficult, poor and perilous. He spent a hazardous period of nine months during which he shared his primitive hut with the few domestic animals of the island. The natives who lived entirely on the proceeds of fishing were initially very sceptical of the presence of Mr. Vakíl in their midst. The presence of a foreigner who sought to live as they did was without precedent. He ate and dressed like the natives and shared their subsistence-level existence. He was visited only once by the British military representative of the Hadhramaut and Masqat area. This man and his wife were intrigued by the presence, in such a remote and non-civilized island, of an 'Iráqí of high military rank. It was through this contact that Mr. Vakíl's family received the sole report that reached them about the conditions under which he lived; it was coupled with the admiration expressed by the British Governor for his selfless devotion and perseverance.

Following a period of illness Mr. Vakíl was forced to return to Baghdád where increasing pressure was placed upon him by the Ministry of Defence to resume his job and accept promotion. However, the flame of pioneering service continued to blaze in his heart. This led him

to leave 'Iráq within five months of his arrival and to proceed to the Seychelles which was a goal area assigned to the National Spiritual Assembly of 'Iráq. He stayed there arranging for his entire family to join him, but was recalled to Baghdád in 1954 following the death of his mother. In April 1955, Mr. Vakíl and his family moved from 'Iráq to settle in the Seychelles. His activities in increasing the number of believers, particularly among the native population, were untiring. The Vakíl family stayed in the Seychelles until 1962, by which time the first Local Spiritual Assembly on these islands was established and the number of believers had been increased considerably. Mr. Vakíl purchased for the Faith the *Ḥaẓiratu'l-Quds* in Victoria, Mahé and maintained it until he left the islands.

After his return to 'Iráq he continued unceasingly his vigorous service to the Faith and later served on the National Spiritual Assembly. Following a heart attack, he became bed-ridden for a long time. During the period prior to his passing, he was a tower of strength to the faithful believers in 'Iráq and his steadfastness and obedience to the orders of the Government were exemplary.

The meritorious life of this valiant servant of the Blessed Beauty is summarized in the following cable of the Universal House of Justice which bestowed loving praises for his rich record of service:

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING DEVOTED KNIGHT
BAHAULLAH MUNIR VAKIL HIS SELFSACRIFIC-
ING SERVICES TEACHING ADMINISTRATIVE
PIONEER FIELDS LOVINGLY REMEMBERED SHED
LUSTRE ACHIEVEMENTS HEROIC COMMUNITY OF
WHICH HE WAS SUCH DISTINGUISHED MEMBER
PRAYING SHRINES PROGRESS HIS RADIANT
SOUL ASSURE FAMILY FRIENDS HEARTFELT
SYMPATHY.

RIÐVÁN MUQBIL

EDWARD L. BODE

25 August 1906–13 March 1976

Edward and Mary Bode—these names are entwined in the history of the Bahá'í Faith as were their services in life. From the time of their

marriage in 1936, 'they together had but one goal . . . They were like migratory birds, going where the divine wind of Bahá'u'lláh blew them: the world was their nest; their food: the goals of the Divine Plan; their only security: *God will assist all those who arise to serve Him.*' (G. S.) This unity in service—so tenacious and touching—was often remarked by the Guardian of the Faith, who launched their marriage with the hope that 'this union may serve to impart to your heart and to the heart of your dear husband a renewed and powerful stimulus to assist in spreading far and wide the Divine Word.'¹ Ten years later he urged them 'to persevere in your task, however great the sacrifice involved . . .', and, a year after, expressed his admiration of their 'passionate spirit of devotion to the service of our Faith . . .'² Fulfilling to the utmost of their powers the Guardian's trust, they attained that height of 'living sacrifice' to which Shoghi Effendi had called the 'spiritual descendants of the dawn-breakers' of the Heroic Age.

Edward's father had come from Germany to the United States as a child, and at the time of Edward's birth his family lived in a small Missouri town, moving to St. Louis when he was only three or four. Here, in vacations and after graduation, he gained experience in a hardware store which qualified him for his duties, during World War II, as a civilian attached to the United States Air Force for the supply of flying training fields in Arizona and California. Before this, after his family's move to California when Edward was seventeen, he had made his way in Hollywood, as actor and assistant director in silent films, and as theatrical agent; to him came Mary, who had appeared in a number of plays in New York. Their marriage and Edward's acceptance of the Bahá'í Faith, into which he was welcomed by Shoghi Effendi 'as a dear fellow-worker in the Divine Vineyard', set these two on the path of their 'pioneer labours, so faithfully and selflessly rendered'³ in North and South America, Europe and the island of Madeira.

Their desire to pioneer had been awakened through membership, in 1941–1942, of the Inter-America Committee during the first Seven Year Plan. Even before war's end, they had turned their thoughts to South America, and

¹⁻⁴Numbered quotations are from letters written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi.



Edward L. Bode

arrived in Rio de Janeiro on 16 January 1946. At long last they were 'enabled to . . . serve in those foreign fields' that had for 'so long been luring [them] from afar!'⁴ The formation of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Rio de Janeiro the following April, its incorporation, and the development of a Bahá'í Publishing Trust for the Portuguese language were notable achievements in which they shared during their three years in Brazil. There followed short periods of teaching in Holland and Portugal in 1949–1950. In 1952 Edward required major surgery in the United States; convalescence was long, but the Guardian's 'loving fervent prayers' and their own strong determination brought complete healing and return to the pioneer field, this time in Mexico, where from October 1954 to January 1956 they worked in Cuernavaca, Puebla and Mexico City, then briefly in the Canal Zone, Panama. The next two years found them active in teaching in Mississippi and Florida, but longing 'to win still more brilliant victories, in distant fields . . .' (Shoghi Effendi)

In October 1959 they began their remarkable services to the Dutch Bahá'í community, lasting for nine and a half years, in Arnhem, The Hague and Rotterdam, during which time Edward served for five years as a member of the

National Spiritual Assembly. The years 'we spent in Holland,' he wrote, 'were a mixture of delight, frustration, hard work and gratification. The Dutch people furnished the delight. . . . But their interest in the Faith was a thing of slow and laborious growth. . . . So the years in Holland were filled with work . . . for the Faith . . . for Bahá'u'lláh. And what is more glorious than that?'

In the spring of 1969, Edward aged sixty-three and Mary ten years older, both seriously disabled in health, bravely took up their pioneer post in Funchal, Madeira, recommended to them by the Universal House of Justice. Within six months, Mary's death occurred in Lisbon. Edward had received from his parents, Wilimina and William Bode, whom he greatly cherished, an example of love in marriage, and for forty years Edward, by his 'patience, love and care' for Mary, had enriched his own marriage; 'their togetherness was endless and of classic beauty'. (G. S.) 'Words cannot express my feelings of despair as we were like one unit,' Edward himself commented.

For nearly three years Edward soldiered on, ceaselessly, cautiously teaching; reinforced in 1972 by others, but again alone in 1973 when Muriel Ives Newhall arrived in April to find him with 'the look of another Lincoln—solitary and bowed'. She set herself to be, in Mary's stead, 'the hands and feet' to see to his physical care and to share with him the continuous demands of pioneering in restricted circumstances.

Edward's last service was to find the Bahá'í Centre, a 'lovely house' where enquirers happily gathered.

But Madeira's climate was unsuitable for Edward. In January 1976 he developed an agonizing bronchial asthma after influenza, recovered slowly, but suffered it again in March, followed by a stroke; a day later, on 13 March, he rejoined his dear partner in the Abhá realms, whose presence, Muriel wrote, 'was so strong and real' as 'his breathing became fainter and fainter, lighter and lighter, till it was like the beat of butterfly wings. . . .' Edward's burial was in the British Cemetery. He was known in Madeira as '*O homem de Deus*' (man of God), for 'he was more of a saint and hero than anyone will ever know . . .' (V. O.) He had held to Madeira until the end, and was extolled by the Universal House of Justice in its cablegram dated 15 March 1976:

... HIS FIRM DETERMINATION REMAIN POST
MADEIRA EXEMPLIFIED SPIRIT DEVOTION CAUSE
HE SERVED FOR MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS AS
PIONEER AMERICAS EUROPE . . .

MARION HOFMAN

Note: The author is indebted to Gini Sijlsing, Virginia Orbison and Muriel Ives Newhall for their letters about Edward Bode's life and service; their initials are given after quotations from them. The National Spiritual Assembly of the United States kindly sent Mr. Bode's report, 6 May 1975, describing his and his wife's pioneering in Brazil and Holland. The 'In Memoriam' article about Mary Hotchkiss Bode appears in *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, pp. 460-461.

Errata



Eduardo Duarte Vieira, 1921-1966, the first African Bahá'í martyr, whose 'In Memoriam' appears in *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, pp. 389-390, where his name is incorrectly given. Information subsequently received at the World Centre confirmed the spelling of his name as set out above.



Salomón Pacora Estrada, known as Pacora Blue Mountain, 1889-1969, one of the first of Inca descent to embrace the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. His 'In Memoriam' which appears on p. 467 of *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, is illustrated by the photograph of another believer.

PART SIX
DIRECTORY, BIBLIOGRAPHY,
GLOSSARY

I

BAHÁ'Í DIRECTORY 1973–1976

130–133 OF THE BAHÁ'Í ERA

1. THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Address: 10 Haparsim Street, Haifa 35 055, Israel (P.O. Box 155, Haifa 31 000)

2. THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE

Address: 7 Haparsim Street, Haifa 35 055, Israel (P.O. Box 155, Haifa 31 000)

THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE RESIDING IN THE HOLY LAND

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum
'Alí-Akbar Furútan

Abu'l-Qásim Faizí
Paul E. Haney

CONTINENTAL HANDS OF THE CAUSE

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H. Collis Featherstone
Ugo Giachery
Dhikru'lláh Khádem
Jalál Kházeh

Raḥmatu'lláh Muhájir
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Australasia

Europe

Europe

5. BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Dr. Victor de Araujo,
345 East 46th Street, Room 809,
New York, New York 10017,
U.S.A.

6. NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

At Riḍván 1973 there were 113 Bahá'í National Spiritual Assemblies throughout the world, and at Riḍván 1976 there were 117—34 in Africa, 30 in the Americas, 27 in Asia, 9 in Australasia and 17 in Europe. Current addresses are available from the Bahá'í World Centre, P.O. Box 155, Haifa, Israel 31 000.

7. BAHÁ'Í PUBLISHING TRUSTS

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E.B.I.L.A.,
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* Address communications to Bahá'í World Centre, P.O. Box 155, Haifa, Israel 31 000.

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 Súriy-i-Aşḥáb.
 Súriy-i-Asmá'.
 Súriy-i-Bayán.
 Súriy-i-Damm.
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 Súriy-i-Ziyárih.
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 Súriy-i-Zuhúr.
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 Tajalliyát (Effulgences).
 Tarázát (Ornaments).
 Ziyárat-Námih (The Tablet of Visitation).
 Ziyárat-Námiy-i-Awliyá.
 Ziyárat-Námiy-i-Bábu'l-Báb va Quddús.
 Ziyárat-Námiy-i-Bayt.
 Ziyárat-Námiy-i-Maryam.
 Ziyárat-Námiy-i-Siyyidu'sh-Şuhadá.

(Note: The works of Bahá'u'lláh, translated into English by Shoghi Effendi, are listed on p. 578 under the subheading, 'Translations'.)

2. THE BÁB'S BEST-KNOWN WORKS

- The Arabic Bayán.
 Commentary on the Súrih of Kawthar.
 Commentary on the Súrih of Va'l-'Aşr.
 Dalá'il-i-Sab'ih.
 Epistles to Muḥammad Şháh and Hájí Mirzá Áqásí.
 Khasá'il-i-Sab'ih.
 Kitáb-i-Asmá'.
 Kitáb-i-Panj-Şha'n.
 Kitábu'r-Rúḥ.
 Lawḥ-i-Ḥurúfát.
 The Persian Bayán.
 Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'.
 Risáliy-i-'Adliyyih.
 Risáliy-i-Dhahabíyyih.
 Risáliy-i-Fiqhiyyih.

Risáliy-i-Furú'-i-'Adliyyih.
 Şahífatu'l-Haramayn.
 Şahífy-i-Ja'fariyyih.
 Şahífy-i-Makhdhúmiyyih.

Şahífy-i-Raḡaviyyih.
 Súriy-i-Tawhíd.
 Tafsír-i-Nubuvvat-i-Khásshih.
 Ziyárat-i-Şháh-'Abdu'l-'Azím.

(Note: The Báb Himself states in one passage of the Persian Bayán that His writings *comprise no less than 500,000 verses.*)

3. 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ'S BEST-KNOWN WORKS

IN PERSIAN AND ARABIC

Ad'íyyih va Munáját.
 Alváh-i-Tablíghí-i-Imríká.
 Alváh-i-Vaşáyá.
Khitábát dar Urúpa va Imríká.
 Lawḡ-i-Aflákíyyih.
 Lawḡ-i-'Ahd va Mitháq (Imríká).
 Lawḡ-i-'Ammih.
 Lawḡ-i-Áyát.
 Lawḡ-i-Do-Nidáy-i-Faláh va Najáh.
 Lawḡ-i-Dr. Forel.
 Lawḡ-i-Haft Şham' .
 Lawḡ-i-Hizár Baytí.
 Lawḡ-i-Khurásán.
 Lawḡ-i-Láhih.
 Lawḡ-i-Mahfil-i-Şhawr.

Lawḡ-i-Muḡabbat.
 Lawḡ-i-Tanzih va Taqdís.
 Lawḡ-i-Tarbíyat.
 Madaniyyih.
 Makátíb-i-'Abdu'l-Bahá.
 Maqáliy-i-Sayyáh.
 Mufávidát.
Şarḡ-i-Faşş-i-Nigin-i-Ism-i-A'zam.
Şarh-i-Şhuhadáy-i-Yazd va Işfahán.
 Siyásiyyih.
 Taḡkiratu'l-Vafá.
 Tafsír-i-Bismi'lláhi'r-Raḡmání'r-Raḡim.
 Tafsír-i-Kuntu Kanzan Makḡfiyyan.
 Ziyárat Námih.

IN ENGLISH

The Secret of Divine Civilization. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1957. Originally published by Cope & Fenwick, London 1910, under the title *The Mysterious Forces of Civilization*. Subsequently published by Bahá'í Publishing Society, Chicago, 1918.
Some Answered Questions. First printed by Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. Ltd., London, 1908. Subsequently published by Bahá'í Publishing Society, Chicago, 1918, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.
Tablet to the Central Organisation for a Durable Peace, The Hague. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, New York, 1930.
Tablet to Dr. Forel. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, New York, 1930.

Tablets of the Divine Plan. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1959.
A Traveller's Narrative. Translated into English by Edward Granville Browne under the title *A Traveller's Narrative written to illustrate The Episode of the Báb*. Cambridge University Press, 1891. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, New York, 1930.
Will and Testament. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, New York, 1925, 1935. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1944, 1968, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.
Memorials of the Faithful. Translated from the original Persian and annotated by Marzieh Gail. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1971.

COMPILATIONS IN ENGLISH

- Foundations of World Unity*; a selection of letters and public addresses. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1945.
- Paris Talks*; a compilation of His addresses in Paris. G. Bell and Son Ltd., London, 1923. Subsequently published by Bahá'í Publishing Trust, London, 10th edition 1961; and in the United States under the title *The Wisdom of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*; Brentano's, New York, 1924.
- The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, vols. I, II; a compilation of His addresses in Canada and the United States in 1912. Bahá'í Publishing Society, Chicago, 1922 and 1925.
- Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, vols. I, II, III*; a compilation of His letters to individual believers in America. Bahá'í Publishing Society, Chicago, 1909, 1915, 1916.

4. SOME COMPILATIONS FROM THE WRITINGS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH AND 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

- The Bahá'í Revelation*. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, London, 1955.
- Bahá'í World Faith*. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, Wilmette, Illinois, 1943, 1956.
- The Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh*. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, London, 1950; revised, 1963.
- The Divine Art of Living*. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, Wilmette, Illinois, 1944; revised, 1960.
- Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, Wilmette, Illinois, 1939, 1952, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.
- Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh*. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, Wilmette, Illinois, 1938, 1954, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.
- The Reality of Man*. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, Wilmette, Illinois, 1931; revised, 1962.

(Note: A large number of Prayer Books compiled of prayers revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá has been published by Bahá'í Publishing Trusts and National Spiritual Assemblies throughout the world).

5. SHOGHI EFFENDI'S BEST-KNOWN WORKS

- The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*. February, 1929.
- The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, Further Considerations*. March, 1930.
- The Goal of a New World Order*. November, 1931.
- The Golden Age of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh*. March, 1932.
- America and the Most Great Peace*. April, 1933.
- The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh*. February, 1934.
- The Unfoldment of World Civilization*. March, 1936.

(Note: The above seven essays have been published in one volume entitled *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1938. Revised edition, 1955; second printing, 1965).

- The Advent of Divine Justice*. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1939.
- The Promised Day is Come*. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1941.
- God Passes By*. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1944.

TRANSLATIONS (see note p. 575)

- The Dawn-Breakers*, by Nabil-i-Zarandí. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, New York, 1932, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.
- Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, by Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1941, 1953, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.
- Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1939, 1952, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.
- The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh* (Arabic and Persian). Bahá'í Publishing Committee, New York, 1924. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, London, 1932, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.
- Kitáb-i-Íqán*, by Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1931, 1950, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.
- Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh*. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1938, 1962, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.
- Tablet to the Central Organization for a Durable Peace, The Hague*, by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, dated December 17, 1919. Published as a leaflet by Bahá'í Publishing Trust, London.
- Tablet to Dr. Forel*, by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Published in *Star of the West*, vol. xiv, no. 4, July 1923, p. 101. Subsequently published as a leaflet by various Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.
- Tablet of the Holy Mariner*, by Bahá'u'lláh. Published in *Star of the West*, vol. xiii, no. 4, May 1922, p. 75. Subsequently published in Prayer Books and other compilations.
- The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, New York, 1925, 1935. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1944, 1968, and other Bahá'í Publishing Trusts.

SOME COMPILATIONS FROM HIS WRITINGS

- Bahá'í Administration*. Bahá'í Publishing Committee, Wilmette, Illinois, 1928, 1960.
- Messages to America* (1932–1946). Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1947.
- Messages to the Bahá'í World* (1950–1957). Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1958.
- Principles of Bahá'í Administration*. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, England, 1950.
- Guidance for Today and Tomorrow*. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, London, 1953.
- Citadel of Faith* (Messages to America 1947–1957). Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, 1965.
- Messages to Canada*. National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada, 1965.
- Letters from the Guardian to Australia and New Zealand* (1923–1957). National Spiritual Assembly of Australia, 1970.
- Dawn of a New Day—Messages to India* (1923–1957). Bahá'í Publishing Trust, New Delhi, 1970.
- Directives from the Guardian*. Bahá'í Publishing Trust, New Delhi, 1970.

6. LANGUAGES INTO WHICH BAHÁ'Í LITERATURE HAS BEEN TRANSLATED

Riḍván 1973–Riḍván 1976

In previous volumes of *The Bahá'í World* more than five hundred languages and major dialects are listed into which the Sacred Writings and other literature of the Bahá'í Faith have been translated. Such translations have been one of the objectives of the international teaching plans pursued by the Bahá'í world community. Details of the specific languages into which literature is to be translated or in which additional publications are to be made during the Five Year Plan appear in 'Analysis of the Five Year International Teaching Plan', page 111 of this volume. Information about the languages in which Bahá'í literature is presently available may be obtained from the Bahá'í World Centre, P.O. Box 155, Haifa 31 000, Israel.

Listed below, by continent, are the languages into which first translations of Bahá'í literature were made and those in which additional publications were produced in the period from Riḍván 1973 to Riḍván 1976. Some variant names and spellings appear in brackets followed by the major countries, islands or territories where the languages are spoken.

A. AFRICA

New Translations

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Bambara: <i>Upper West Africa</i> | 9. Kipare: <i>Tanzania</i> |
| 2. Berba: <i>Benin</i> | 10. Ngambaye (Ngambai, Sar-Gambai): <i>Chad</i> |
| 3. Edo: <i>Nigeria</i> | 11. Sara Madyngaye: <i>Chad</i> |
| 4. Ejaghám: <i>Cameroon Republic, Nigeria</i> | 12. Sara Ngama: <i>Chad</i> |
| 5. Gniandé: <i>Benin</i> | 13. Sena (ChiSena): <i>Mozambique</i> |
| 6. Hausa (Ghanian dialect): <i>Ghana</i> | 14. Tiv: <i>Nigeria</i> |
| 7. Kalabari: <i>Nigeria</i> | 15. Tonga (ChiTonga) (Malawi): <i>Malawi</i> |
| 8. Kiluba: <i>Zaire</i> | |

Additional Translations

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| 1. Amharic (Abyssinian): <i>Ethiopia</i> | 11. Gā (Accra): <i>Ghana</i> |
| 2. Cewa (ChiCewa, ChiNyanja): <i>Malawi, Zambia</i> | 12. Galligna (Oromigna): <i>Ethiopia</i> |
| 3. Chokwe (ChiOkwe): <i>Angola, Zaire</i> | 13. Hausa (Haoussa, Houssa): <i>Chad, Niger, Nigeria</i> |
| 4. Dinka: <i>Sudan</i> | 14. Igbo: <i>Cameroon Republic, Niger, Nigeria</i> |
| 5. Djerma (Dyerma, Zarma, Zerma): <i>Niger, Togo</i> | 15. Jola (Diola, Dyola): <i>Gambia</i> |
| 6. Douala (Duala): <i>Cameroon Republic</i> | 16. Kanouri (Kanuri): <i>Chad, Niger, Nigeria</i> |
| 7. Efik (Ibibio): <i>Nigeria</i> | 17. KeNyang: <i>Cameroon Republic</i> |
| 8. Ewe (Efe, Eve): <i>Benin, Ghana, Togo</i> | 18. Kikongo (Kituba): <i>Angola, Congo Republic, Zaire</i> |
| 9. Fanté (Fanti): <i>Ghana</i> | 19. Kikuyu (Gikuyu, KiKuyu): <i>Kenya</i> |
| 10. Fula (Fulani, Peuhl, Puhl, Torodo): <i>Gambia, Nigeria</i> | 20. Kinyarwanda (IkinyaRuanda): <i>Rwanda, Zaire</i> |

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| 20. Kisii (Ekikisii): <i>Kenya</i> | 41. Sesotho (Sutho): <i>Lesotho, Republic of South Africa</i> |
| 21. Laadi (Lari, Larri): <i>Congo Republic, Gabon, Uganda</i> | 42. Sholuk (Shuluk, Shilluk): <i>Sudan</i> |
| 22. Lingala (LiNgala): <i>Congo Republic, Zaïre</i> | 43. Shona (ChiShona): <i>Mozambique, Rhodesia</i> |
| 23. Lingombe (Ngombe): <i>Zaïre</i> | 44. Sidaminga (Sidamo): <i>Ethiopia</i> |
| 24. Lomongo (Mongo): <i>Zaïre</i> | 45. SiSwati: <i>Swaziland</i> |
| 25. Lozi (Chilozi, SiLozi): <i>Zambia</i> | 46. Somali: <i>Ethiopia, Somalia</i> |
| 26. Luganda: <i>Uganda</i> | 47. Songe (KiSonge): <i>Zaïre</i> |
| 27. Luo: <i>Kenya, Uganda</i> | 48. Sotho (SeSotho): <i>Lesotho</i> |
| 28. Malagasy: <i>Malagasy Republic</i> | 49. Swahili: <i>Kenya, Tanzania</i> |
| 29. Mashengoli: <i>Ethiopia, Somalia</i> | 50. Temne (Themne): <i>Sierra Leone</i> |
| 30. Mashi: <i>Zaïre, Zambia</i> | 51. Teso (Ateso): <i>Uganda</i> |
| 31. Massa: <i>Chad</i> | 52. Tigrina (Tigrinya): <i>Ethiopia, Sudan</i> |
| 32. Mbundu (KiMbundu, ChiMbundu): <i>Angola, Zambia</i> | 53. Tiriki (Luhyia' dialect): <i>Kenya</i> |
| 33. Mende: <i>Liberia, Sierra Leone</i> | 54. Tonga (ChiTonga): <i>Zambia</i> |
| 34. Moré: <i>Ghana, Ivory Coast, Togo, Upper Volta</i> | 55. Tswana (Chuana, Setswana): <i>Botswana, Republic of South Africa</i> |
| 35. Ndebele (IsiNdebele, Sindebele, Tabele): <i>Rhodesia</i> | 56. Tumbuka (Chitumbuka): <i>Malawi, Zambia</i> |
| 36. Ronga (ShiRonga): <i>Mozambique, Swaziland</i> | 57. Twi (Ashanti): <i>Ghana</i> |
| 37. Runyoro/Rutoro: <i>Uganda</i> | 58. Wolof (Jolof): <i>Gambia, Sénégal</i> |
| 38. Sango (Sangho): <i>Central African Republic</i> | 59. Xhosa (IsiXhosa, !Xhosa): <i>Republic of South Africa</i> |
| 39. Sara (Sar, SaraNgama): <i>Central African Republic, Chad</i> | 60. Yao (Chiyao): <i>Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania</i> |
| 40. Serere: <i>Sénégal</i> | 61. Yoruba: <i>Dahomey, Nigeria</i> |
| | 62. Zulu: <i>Mozambique, Republic of South Africa</i> |

B. THE AMERICAS

New Translations

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|---|---|
| 1. Arawak: <i>Guyana</i> | 5. Mississagi Chippewa (Ojibwa, Ojibway): <i>Canada</i> |
| 2. Inupiaq (Inupiak, Inupiat) Eskimo: <i>Alaska</i> | 6. Piaroa: <i>Venezuela</i> |
| 3. Katio (Catio): <i>Colombia</i> | 7. Tanacross Athabaskan: <i>Alaska</i> |
| 4. Maco: <i>Venezuela</i> | 8. Upik Eskimo (Uk): <i>Alaska</i> |

Additional Translations

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| 1. Aguaruna: <i>Peru</i> | 11. Flathead (Northern Cheyenne): <i>United States</i> |
| 2. Aleut: <i>Aleutian Is., Alaska</i> | 12. French Creole: <i>Haiti</i> |
| 3. Apache: <i>United States</i> | 13. Galibi Carib: <i>Guyana</i> |
| 4. Aymara: <i>Bolivia</i> | 14. Guajira: <i>Colombia, Venezuela</i> |
| 5. Ayoré (Tapiete, Yanaigua): <i>Bolivia</i> | 15. Guaraní: <i>Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay</i> |
| 6. Blackfoot: <i>Canada, United States</i> | 16. Guaymí: <i>Panama</i> |
| 7. Bolivian Quechua: <i>Bolivia</i> | 17. Jicaque: <i>Honduras</i> |
| 8. Bri Bri: <i>Costa Rica</i> | 18. Kutchin Athabaskan: <i>Alaska</i> |
| 9. Cuna (Kuna): <i>Colombia, Panama</i> | 19. Machinguenga: <i>Peru</i> |
| 10. Ecuadorian Quechua: <i>Ecuador</i> | |

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|--|--|
| 20. Mapuche: <i>Argentina, Chile</i> | 29. Papiamentu: <i>Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao</i> |
| 21. Mataco: <i>Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay</i> | 30. Salish (Puget Sound): <i>United States</i> |
| 22. Maya/Quiché: <i>Guatemala</i> | 31. Shoshone: <i>United States</i> |
| 23. Miskito (Misquito, Moskito): <i>Honduras, Nicaragua</i> | 32. Sirionó: <i>Bolivia</i> |
| 24. Moreno/Garifuna Carib: <i>Belize, Honduras, Nicaragua, Surinam</i> | 33. Sranan (Taki Taki): <i>Surinam</i> |
| 25. Navajo: <i>United States</i> | 34. Sumo: <i>Honduras, Nicaragua</i> |
| 26. Otomí: <i>Mexico</i> | 35. Tewa: <i>United States</i> |
| 27. Panamanian Chocó (Chocoe): <i>Panama</i> | 36. Tlingit: <i>Alaska, Canada</i> |
| 28. Papago: <i>Mexico, United States</i> | 37. Toba: <i>Argentina</i> |
| | 38. Yukpa: <i>Venezuela</i> |

C. ASIA

New Translations

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Gujari: <i>Pakistan</i> | 2. Kazakh: <i>Kazakhstan S.S.R.</i> |
| | 3. Sanskrit: <i>India</i> |

Additional Translations

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|--|---|
| 1. Arabic: <i>Near East, Northern Africa</i> | 24. Kurdish: <i>Írán, 'Iráq, Turkey</i> |
| 2. Armenian: <i>Armenia S.S.R., Írán, Turkey</i> | 25. Lao (Laotian Tai): <i>Laos</i> |
| 3. Assamese: <i>India</i> | 26. Malay: <i>Malaysia</i> |
| 4. Balochi (Baluchi): <i>West Pakistan</i> | 27. Malayalam: <i>India</i> |
| 5. Bengali: <i>Bangladesh, India</i> | 28. Marathi: <i>India</i> |
| 6. Bicol: <i>Philippine Islands</i> | 29. Nepali (Nepalese): <i>Nepal</i> |
| 7. Bidayuh (Land Dayak): <i>Malaysia</i> | 30. Oriya: <i>India</i> |
| 8. Burmese: <i>Burma</i> | 31. Persian: <i>Afghanistan, Írán, Tadjik S.S.R.</i> |
| 9. Cebuano: <i>Philippine Islands</i> | 32. Punjabi: <i>India, Pakistan</i> |
| 10. Chinese: <i>Hong Kong, Malaysia, Taiwan</i> | 33. Pushtu: <i>Afghanistan</i> |
| 11. Gujarati: <i>India</i> | 34. Sindhi: <i>India, Pakistan</i> |
| 12. Halabi: <i>India</i> | 35. Sinhalese (Sinhala): <i>Sri Lanka</i> |
| 13. Hindi: <i>India, Nepal</i> | 36. Tagalog (Filipino, Pilipino): <i>Philippine Islands</i> |
| 14. Iban: <i>Malaysia</i> | 37. Tamil: <i>India, Malaysia, Sri Lanka</i> |
| 15. Ilocano (Ilokano): <i>Philippine Islands</i> | 38. Telugu: <i>India</i> |
| 16. Japanese: <i>Japan</i> | 39. Thai: <i>Thailand</i> |
| 17. Jaunsari: <i>India</i> | 40. Tripuri (Kok-Borok): <i>India</i> |
| 18. Kanarese (Kannada): <i>India</i> | 41. Turkish: <i>Cyprus, Turkey</i> |
| 19. Kashmiri: <i>India, Pakistan</i> | 42. Turkoman: <i>Írán, 'Iráq, Turkmen S.S.R.</i> |
| 20. Kenyah: <i>Malaysia</i> | 43. Urdu: <i>India, Pakistan</i> |
| 21. Kinaraya: <i>Philippine Islands</i> | 44. Vietnamese: <i>Vietnam</i> |
| 22. Khmer: <i>Khmer Republic</i> | |
| 23. Korean: <i>Korea</i> | |

D. AUSTRALASIA AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

New Translations

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|---|---|
| 1. Bellona: <i>Solomon Islands</i> | 3. Futuna: <i>Futuna Island, New Hebrides</i> |
| 2. Fila Island Mele: <i>Fila Island</i> | 4. Vaho: <i>New Caledonia</i> |

Additional Translations

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|---|--|
| 1. Baining (Kuanua): <i>New Britain Island</i> | 15. Palauan (Palau): <i>Palau Islands, West Caroline Islands</i> |
| 2. Bogutu: <i>Santa Isabel, Solomon Islands</i> | 16. Pidgin English (Bichelmare): <i>New Hebrides</i> |
| 3. Erakor (Nguna): <i>New Hebrides</i> | 17. Pidgin English (Neo-Melanesian): <i>Papua New Guinea</i> |
| 4. Fijian: <i>Fiji</i> | 18. Pidgin English (Solomon Islands): <i>Solomon Islands</i> |
| 5. Gilbertese: <i>Gilbert Islands</i> | 19. Ponapean: <i>Ponape Island, Caroline Islands</i> |
| 6. Hawaiian: <i>Hawaii</i> | 20. Samoan: <i>Samoa</i> |
| 7. Kusaie (Kusaie): <i>Caroline Islands</i> | 21. Tahitian: <i>Society Islands</i> |
| 8. Langa Langa: <i>Solomon Islands</i> | 22. Trukese (Ruk): <i>Caroline Islands</i> |
| 9. Lifou (Lifoucan, Lifu): <i>Loyalty Islands</i> | 23. Tuvaluan (Ellice): <i>Tuvalu</i> |
| 10. Malaita Lau (Mwala Lau): <i>Malaita Island, Solomon Islands</i> | 24. Tongan: <i>Tonga</i> |
| 11. Maori: <i>New Zealand</i> | 25. Yapese: <i>Yap Island, Caroline Islands</i> |
| 12. Maré (Maréen): <i>Loyalty Islands</i> | |
| 13. Marshallese (Ebon): <i>Marshall Islands</i> | |
| 14. Motu: <i>Papua New Guinea</i> | |

E. EUROPE

New Translations

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Romanés (Romani) (Sinto dialect): <i>Italy</i> | 2. Sardinian (Logudorese dialect): <i>Italy</i> |
|---|---|

Additional Translations

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Alsatian: <i>France</i> | 13. Greek: <i>Cyprus, Greece</i> |
| 2. Basque: <i>France, Spain</i> | 14. Hungarian: <i>Hungary</i> |
| 3. Bulgarian: <i>Bulgaria</i> | 15. Icelandic: <i>Iceland</i> |
| 4. Byelorussian (White Russian): <i>Byelorussian S.S.R.</i> | 16. Italian: <i>Italy, Switzerland</i> |
| 5. Danish: <i>Denmark</i> | 17. Latvian (Lettish): <i>Latvian S.S.R.</i> |
| 6. Dutch: <i>The Netherlands</i> | 18. Lulesamiska (Lule Lapp): <i>Northern Scandinavia</i> |
| 7. English | 19. Nordsamiska (Northern Lapp): <i>Northern Scandinavia</i> |
| 8. Estonian: <i>Estonian S.S.R.</i> | 20. Norwegian: <i>Norway</i> |
| 9. Faroese: <i>Faroe Islands</i> | 21. Piedmontese: <i>Italy</i> |
| 10. Finnish: <i>Finland, Sweden</i> | 22. Polish: <i>Poland</i> |
| 11. French | 23. Portuguese: <i>Brazil, Portugal</i> |
| 12. German: <i>Austria, Germany, Switzerland</i> | |

24. Romanian: *Romania*
 25. Russian: *U.S.S.R.*
 26. Serbo-Croatian: *Yugoslavia*
 27. Spanish
28. Swedish: *Finland, Sweden*
 29. Sydsamiska (Southern Lapp): *Northern Scandinavia*

F. INVENTED LANGUAGES

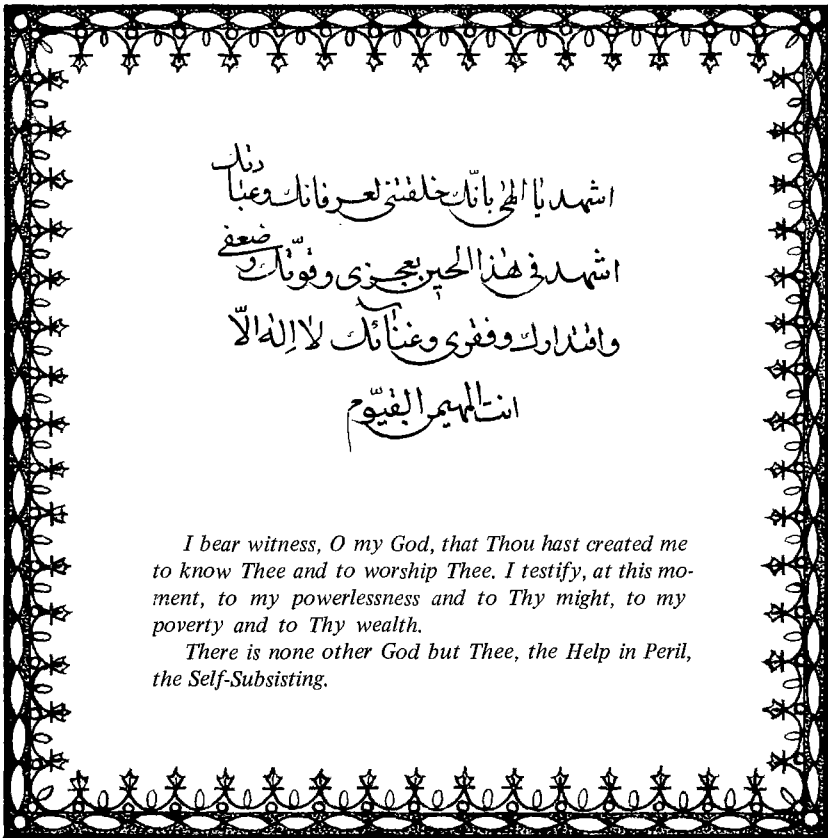
Additional Translations

1. Esperanto

G. TOTAL BY CONTINENTS

	<i>New Translations</i>	<i>Additional Translations</i>
Africa	15	63
The Americas	8	38
Asia	3	44
Australasia and the Pacific Islands	4	25
Europe	2	29
Invented languages		1
Total	32	200

7. THE SHORT OBLIGATORY PRAYER IN 320 LANGUAGES, DIALECTS OR SCRIPTS



ABOVE is the original Arabic and its translation into English of one of the prayers revealed by Bahá'u'lláh and prescribed for fulfilment of the daily obligatory prayer. It is known as the Short Obligatory Prayer, and when used is recited once in twenty-four hours, at noon.

Following are translations of this prayer in 318 additional languages, dialects or scripts listed according to the continents to which those languages are indigenous. Included are some recent translations which are not reflected in the preceding statistical listing.

Africa 99; The Americas 66; Asia 79; Australasia and the Pacific Islands 27; Europe 46; Invented 2; Braille 1; Total 320.

AFRICA

AFRIKAANS (*South Africa*)

Ek getuig, O my God, dat U my geskape het om U te ken en U te aanbid. Ek bely op hierdie oomblik my magdeloosheid en U mag, my armoede en U rykdom.

Daar is geen ander God buiten U, die Helper in gevaar, die Self-bestaande.

CHOKWE(CHIOKWE) (*Angola, Zaire*)

Yami nguli chela che, O Yihova, Zambi yami wangutangile mumu ngukuningike ni ngukuhalise. Ngunatawiza ha shimbu line, kulela chami ni tachije, ushwale wami ni upichi we. Kushi Zambi mukwo ngwe yene, Yoze wa kupulula atu mu lamba lia ufwe, ni Yoze uli ni mwono wa mutolo muli iye mwene.

AMHARIC (ABYSSINIAN) (*Ethiopia*)

አምላኬ ሆይ! አንተን እንዳውቅና እሰግድልህም ዘንድ እንደ ፈጠርከኝ እመሰክራለሁ ካንተ ጋር በምነጋገርባት በዚህች ጊዜ የኔን ደካማነትና ያንተን ኃይልነት ፤ የኔን ምስኪንነትና ያንተን ሃብታምነት አረጋግጣለሁ ። ካንተ ባደጋ ጊዜ ረዳት ከምትሆነውና በገዛ ራስህም ከምትኖረው ዓምላክ በስተቀር ሌላ ዓምላክ የለም!

ATESO (*Uganda*)

Arai eog ikajenan, Wu Ekadeke, ebe Ijo ibu kosub eog aijen Ijo kakukonokin Ijo. Etogogogit kapak kana, akalogwau ka agogong Kon, ikabakor ka amio Kon.

Emamei bobo Edeke ece dimarai Ijo, Ekesimalikinan kotoma Amudiaro, elopet-Aijar.

CICEWA(CHICHEWA) (*Malawi, Zambia*)

Ndicitira umboni, O! Mulungu wanga, kuti munandirenga ine kuti ndikudziweni ndi kukupembedzani. Nditsimikiza pa nthawi ino, kufooka kwanga ndi kukula kwa mphamvu Zanu, kusauka kwanga ndi kulemera Kwanu.

Palibe Mulungu wina koma Inu nokha, Wothandiza pa tsoka, Wodzithandiza Nokha.

AWING (NGEMBA) (*Cameroon Republic*)

Mbi Nsi-meh pah-aneh tsunkene me ngeh ngonke-yeh.

Nji yanengeh mangleh nwu te meteneh, Nsih peh nchi ne meziem eh chemeh, mangleh nfomeh, nsi peh mbeh tsu yi mbe chiki nfoh.

Nsi yi tsih langna yoh koh tchipo le tsoyoh mbo-oh kwalemeh mbo ngeh, mbo-oh wa memeh.

CREOLE (FRENCH) (*Mauritius Island*)

Mo témoigné, Bon Dié, qui to fine créé moi pour conne toi et adore toi. Mo confessé maintenant mo impuissance divan to puissance et mo pauvreté divan to richesse.

Na péna éne lote Bon Dié qui toi, celui qui aide dans danger et existé par li même.

BEMBA(CIBEMBA) (*Zambia*)

Ndesininkisha, Mwe Lesa wandi, ukuti Nimwe Mwa nengele uku Mwishaba ku Mpuepa. Nde sumina, pa kashita aka, kulubulwa amaka yandi nakubukulu Bwenu, kubupabi bwandi naku bukankala Bwenu.

Takuli Lesa umbi kanofye Imwe, Kafwa mu Buchushi, Mwe Baikalila Mweka.

DAGBANE(DAGOMBA) (*Ghana*)

Nti, ti Duma Nawuni yeda, kaman nyini n Nam ma, ni n mi Nawuni, ka dzemdi nuni Na titam lana. N ti yeda punpno, kaman Naa n kani n pahi nuni Na ti tam lana; nun tiri nira fara ni buni.

Sheli kam n kani n pahi la nuni Nawuni Nati tam lana; nuni yihiri mira fukunsi ni, kao nam saxinrla o ko.

DJERMA (*Togo*)

Aĩ Koy-Béro! Aĩ ga saĩda ni naĩ taka aĩ mi ni bay-sé, aĩ mi ni bérey di mo.

Aĩ tabatandi aĩ hinabana-ga dini gabo-ga, aĩ tabatandi-mo aĩ djang-a dini dura-ga.

Koy-si kan nin daru, nin kan tchi faba-ko, nin kan nini bon taka.

DOUALA* (*Cameroon Republic*)

Nemboñ, a loba lam na o weki mba o bia oa na o sesa oa. Na dubé tatan bobó lam ngiñango, tue lam mbwañ môngo.

Loba dipepe di titi buka te oa mené mo môngwanedi o ndutu nu nye na momene.

EFIK/IBIBIO (*Nigeria*)

Ami medi ntiense O! Abasi mi, nte ke Afo okobot mi, man ndiono Fi, nyun nkpono Fi. Ami metin iko ntiense kemi ndiwut unana odudu mi, ye odudu Fo, nyun nwut nko ubuene mi ye inyene Fo.

Abasi efen iduhe ke ebede Fi, Andinyana kini nanenyin, Akama idem ikpon.

EJAGHAM (*Cameroon Republic, Nigeria*)

Njimé ntiesé Atta Obasi, bré Wéh oturéme sé nding Wah na nyubé Wah.

Méh nwoh otti kah njimé nyih, kah ogong ohomé na kah ikonm Effah, kah okpagk ohomé nah kah effonome Obah.

Kpeh Obasi ettat chang bréh Wéh, nyoh anyangané Kpekpe nah Nfonéh arringeh Bejih Ebéh.

EMBUN(KIBUNDA) (*Zaire*)

Mwenzem, me lengyuy: Nze oweng me ongir eyu, ongir eboyi, Lalé owu kapah, me ngy eyu obets onze, ngol anze, ompur ome, obwel onze.

Nze mur kabé fan, kadzé Nzem asa né Nze, Nze okolume bar engots, Nze oye kabewang.

EWE(EBE) (*Ghana, Togo*)

Međi đase, O nye Mawu, be Ewom be manya Wò eye masubò wò. Međi đase le yeyiyi sia me le nye nusémanonju kple Wò gányenye n̄uti, le nye hia kple wò kesinon̄uwo n̄uti.

Mawua đeke megali wu Wò o, Kped̄đejuto le Xaxame. Amesilid̄aa!

FANTÉ (*Ghana*)

O, m'Ewuradze, midzi dase de ɔwo abo me de munhu Wo na monsom Wo. Midzi dase sesei de mennyi ahoodzen biara na Ɔwodze Eye Otumfo, midzi hia neminemi na Ɔwo Eye ɔdzeɔfo.

Ewuradze, obiara nnyi ho kã wo ho, ɔhaw mu Ɔboafɔ, Ɔwo a Ɔwoara Etse W'ase.

FON (*Benin, Cameroon Republic*)

Ijeri n̄o Mahu ché, d̄o yèwè dami do gbèmè bo wa tu.

Mahu ché unt dô té nou houé dô houï wê sê mi dô bê mê bô ni na dô tun houé bô na non sin houé. Unt dô gbé gni nou troué wê dô hon lonhon lon ché sô nou dé a gna ché kpo do dokou mi ton kpo.

Nou dé bou so dé bo hou houégna houï mê dé é non houin lin gbé gan bô ka non sous sous hoyé nou mê houin dé sous non.

FULA (*Nigeria*)

Mohal berde di labbinta ha dir berde an Allah an, a kesuna kala ku mi wadata dir herde an, wala wadowo bo sai an mo hisintammi. Der berde ma di labbinde a usatan ko dume ha berde am, ya an mo yidiyam hedi labbinde mangol ma, a holliyam gidol ma, de ni an on timitorde ku'a yidi. Defte warol ma di vonnatako waddi beldum ha dir berde an, an mo timminta be bo yokkowo do yukkol.

FULA TORODO (*Nigeria*)

Mi sedi, Ala, a'tagi lang mi andu mi julane. Mijabi heh wasude dole ang de heh mountinare ma, heh wasude am heh kebal ma ang.

Wode Ala godo sina mada, walo wo fowu darani do hore mung. (O'do julde foti halade nyarol ma wo nyarolma.)

GA (ACCRA) (*Ghana*)

Miiye odase, Oo mi-Nyɔɔmɔ, ake Obɔ mi ni male Bo ni madza O. Miyeɔ he odase n̄m̄eletsɔwaa n̄e. Miiye migbodzɔmɔ le ke Oheɔwale le, mihia ke Oninamɔ le he odase.

Nyɔɔmɔ kroko ko be Osee Dza Bo. Bualɔ ye fimɔ beiaɔ ke mɔ ni ye ha Le-dientse ehe.

GĚN (GĚNGBE) (*Benin, Togo*)

Mougni dassé, o gné Mawu, odom bé madjessigné eyé massomonyé. Mougnan Ouélébè kéa apé housin mado. Coudo apo housin dodo apé aya coudo opo tchikpokpo.

*Denotes revised translation.

Noudékpé mougbadé ouwo, amé ké hona na améó be afocoumé amékélé édokesia.

GOUN (*Benin*)

Yin wêyi kpajlè, oklu non ton, dé da na dọ yon in bọ na dọ sin. Yin wlé tọ wénin nou dō ma dō gan tché kpọ houhlon tọ we kpọ wa mon non gni gni tché pọ adō koun tọ wé kpọ.

Yê dō kpọ non wê gni ji wé yê wé, yê mê non dé mê son ahou fièssa mê, yê dé kọ gni nou da họ na dé wé.

HAUSA (*Ghanaian dialect*) (*Ghana*)

Ya ubangiji Allah, na shaidā, kai ne ka haliccenī, don in san ka, in kuma bautata maka. Yanzu, na tabbata baħi da wani iko sai kai ne me iko, kuma ni bawanka ne, gare ka, nike rokon arziki.

Baħu wani aħin bauta, sai Kai Allah, me ceton rayuka, kuma kai ne wadataccen Sarki.

HAUSA (*Nigerian dialect*) (*Chad, Niger, Nigeria*)

Na shaida, Ya Allah na cewa ka halicce ne domin in yi maka sujada. Ina furci a wannan lokacin cewa ni mara iko ne ta wajen ikon ka domin patara ta ta wurin yalwarka. Babu wani Allah sai kai domin ka yi taimako cikin wahala. Kai da kake mai riko.

ḥHŌĀ (*Botswana*)

Má cě, 'ám šť ||Gáma bè, 'ú č'ěó 'á má n |nè má č'á 'ú kě n |nè šť č'ě'š-šú 'ú. Má qháf cě, kì |hè'e há kì, kì 'ám šť kf- |gò'oa kì 'àu-šf kě 'ú šť kf-||'ó, kì 'ám šť kì- |gò'oa kì ||kà'a qā kě 'ú šť kf-júa.

Yà |gò'oa ||Gáma Okūi há yà n |hđđ ká đ 'ú, Kí- |nùí OX'dě, ||'Á kì |'Éě.

JOLA (*Upper West Africa*)

Fetan fet, aw Atty Jamet, mate aw tepan min emanji de pop ne kobe. Kabajati oum sembe ku fetanfet nyemi momay, de sambaye yourley yamakaye, kabajatiyoum waff de fu bajafoley famakafu.

Bajut Atty Jamet ake a wujumi aw, aranbay nawu de bu gall aw akum fange.

KALANGA BOTSWANA (*Botswana*)

Ndo pa malebeswa, mu Ndizmu, kuti ma-kandi eta kuti ndi mu zibe ne ku Mu shingila. Ndo tendeka mu tjobaka i tjetji, kuti shaya masimba kwangu ne simba Lenyu, Bushayi gwangu ne fumwa Yenyu. A kuna mwe Ndizimu kuzhe Kwenyu. Ntjidzi mu magwadzi, ntjili muli Moga.

KANURI (*Chad, Niger, Nigeria*)

Wuye shadangena, Ya Ala, nyiga notęga abattęga garo wuga alakkamro. Wuye sa allan tabatķęķena nem duno banyiga duno nęmgaro nęm denyiga nęm qwowa nęm garo.

Nyilan nguron Ala gade ba, banama yim banna'be, kęndęga ķęla nęmbelan kargam.

KENYANG (*Cameroon Republic*)

Ntei ntisó o ta Mandem, be me kewoke Wò, ndu beringe Wo ne besepti Wo, ntei ntisé tete ne, ndu bepabebah ne betang Ebe, ndu nchep eya ne kefor Eke, Mandem achek apu ane acha Wo, Mpeme ndu esongeri ane atei chi ndu metyi.

KIKUYU (*Kenya*)

Ndi muira Ngai ati niwanyumbire niguo ngumenye na ngugocage wee Mwathani Ngai. Ninjui kahinda-ini gaka ni wa unini wakwa hari Wee na uthini wakwa ni undu wa utonga waku.

Gutiri Ngai ungi thengia Niwe hari uteithio waku mathina-ini na Uhoti Waku.

KILUBA (*Zaire*)

Nakwabija, ô Leza wami, wampangile mwanda wa kukuyuka ne kukutota. Pa kifuko kino, nāsama kyakanwa kyami, kukulombola bunkomo-nkomo bobé, kulandapala kwami, ne buipeta bobé.

I Kutupu Leza mukwabo enka abe, wita-banga mu bya malwa, kudi yewa ukulupie mudi aye mwine.

KILUWA (*Zaire*)

Nakumbula ha mesu matshu akhima eni ayi Nzambi wonguhangidi mu sambu die kukwizika ni kukufukimina. Kikitsudi eki, nezika eni ami nidiku ni ngolu, Ayi Nzambi Pungu, ami nidi musuyi, Ayi mwama.

Nzambi Pungu mweka kadiku, Ayi wokut-susadisanga mu yigonsa, Ayi Fumu wodifuka.

KIMANIANGA (*Zaire*)

Ntele kimbangi, ô Nzambi ami, i Ngeye wa mvanga mpasi vo yakuzaya ye kuzitisanga mpe. Ye buabu, ngieti zaya vo lebakana kuami i lulendo luaku, bumputu buami i kimvuama kiaku.

Kakuena Nzambi ya nkaka ko, ye mu ntangu a mpasi Ngeye wusadisanga, kadi Ngeye wena mu Ngeye kibeni.

KIMBUNDU (*Angola*)

Ngabana umbangi uami u Nzambi iami, mukonda eiê ua ngi bange pala ku kuijia ni kukubeza.

Ngadifisala mu kitangana kiki o kubuila kuami ne kutena kuê, uadiama uami ni unvuama uê. Kanaku Nzambi iengi kikale Eie ngó, u Mubuludi bu i bidi, u Lenda-diâ lenda.

KIMPIN/KIPINDI (*Zaire*)

Kierek, â Nzêm ami, Nze le mandoen umuin mukukuyebanga ti mukukufukiminanga. Tan aliâ, ekis bumol ba mi ti bungol ba Nze, busui ba mi ti bunvam ba Nze. Kukitene, lo kufuyini ti Nzêm ambên, kaka Nze mbwes Nzêm, u useresa band mu bigonz, u uzing a mumpil e nziên mbwes.

KINANDE (*Zaire*)

Indi kyimisho, O Nyamuhanga waghe Ngoko wanyihangika okwikuminya n'okwikwanza n'olwanzo lunene Ngaminya okondambi'eno ovolo vwaghe n'ovutoki vwaghe Ovusama vwaghe n'ovungi vwaghu.

Sihali wundi Nyamuhanga oyuti'iwe Oyuk-asavula omonavi, oyuliho okwiye musa.

KINTANDU (*Zaire*)

O Nzambi ame, ngina mbangi bonso unganga mu kuzaya ye mu kuzitisa. Yi kuzeyi bungangi mu ngolo zaku ye bumolo bumunu, mu kimvuama kiaku ye kimpotu kiamu. Ga nkatu Mfumu nkaka bonso Ngeye, Yu ukunkatula mu kigonsa, Mfumu yani mosi ukiganga.

KINYARWANDA (*Rwanda, Zaire*)

Ndemera Mungu wanjye, ko wandemeye kukumenya no kugusenga. Muli aka kanya, neme ye amagara make yanjye n'ubushobozi

Bwawe, ubukene bwanjye n'ubukungu Bwawe. Ntayind'Imana ibaho itali wowe, Umufasha mu byago, Ubaho kubwe wenyine.

KISONGE (*Zaire*)

Nankumina shi, Obe Yaya Efile Mukulu ngi bampangile bua kukuiuka na kukuuma. Kano kapindji nambuela bobofule buande na bukome buobe, bulanda buande na bulolo buobe.

Takui mungi Efile bu Obe ni nya, anka Obe apasana kumasaku, Obe namene shi mukitshibue na mungi.

KIZOMBO (*Angola, Zaire*)

E Nzambi 'ama, nsidi 'e kimbangi vo Ngeye wa mpanga mukuzaya ye kukunda. Ewau ntambuluidi 'e nbvok 'ama ye ngolo zaku, kimpotu kiama ye kimvuama kiaku.

Kavena Nzambi 'e nkaka ko vo ka Ngeye ko, Ona unanga usadisi muna sumbula, Ona unanga muna Yani kibeni.

KONDE (NYAKYUSA-NGONDE) (*Malawi, Tanzania*)

Nilikumanya, wako Nungu wangu, doni undingumba nikumanye nikupambedye Wako. Niku-kumanya kwa wakati hau, kudidimanga kwangu na chakulula Chako, na umasikini wangu na uhumu Wako.

Apali Nungu junji ni Wako, Wakupwazela Mu-mauvilo Muwikala Umwene wa uti.

KONGO (KIKONGO KITUBA) (*Angola, Congo Republic, Zaire*)

Ngienina mbangi, o Nzambi ame, vo wanvanga mu kuzaya ye mu kufukamena. Yisungamena mu ntangu yayi kiwayi kiame ye kimfumu kiaku, ki sukami kiame ye kimvuama kiaku.

Ngeye mosi kaka i Nzambi, Ngeye wusadisanga muna sumbula, Ngeye wuzinganga muna Ngeye masi.

KRIO (*Sierra Leone*)

God, ah know say you make me for know you, en pray to you. Ah day tell you now wit all me heart say ah can't do natin without you becoss you power pass all, en nar you han all tin day. Nor order God nor day pass you: nar you day ep way trouble can en day keep life together.

KUANJAMA (KUANYAMA) (*Southwest Africa*)

Ondi sisi, Kalunga kange, no ku tia ove ua sitange ndi ku sive, ndi ku linjongamene. Oha ndi, hokolola, pe fimbo eli, mo ku hena enono kuange ndelene mo lu enono Doje, moluhepo lange no mo lu upuna Uoje.

Kapena nande Okalunga va mue ndelene Ove, Omukuafi, uopoupatekedi, Ou mu Ove Muene.

!KWI (*Botswana*)

Tse xo sa khe khoa ||ha, ||Kama kha khi di be, kha tsae qxo khe a ts'ao ta tsa a kha, ta tsa tsaoama kha. Khe khoa dɛkum n|ngi |kam, khi kha tsaa sa tsa kha khedi se he, khi kha |xo m xa tsa kha khobe se he.

||Kama hka |kú be ha be tsa |kwi 'e, xwe kxam tsa se'ua, qx'oe kha tsa |kwidi s kha.

LINGALA (*Congo Republic, Zaïre*)

Nazali nzeneneke, o Nzambe wa ngai, 'ta okeli ngai mpo nayeba Yo mpe natondo Yo; nakondima bebe na bolembo bwa ngai mpe bokasi bwa Yo, na bobola bwa ngai mpe bokumi bwa Yo.

Nzambe mosusu lokola Yo azali te, ozali oyo akosalisa otango ya mpasi, oyo akotikala se Ye moko.

LOGO (*Zaïre*)

O Djuka, miba ta ma ami nizo mpe amia-kumbamelizo. Andro konidi, mali mivo amitada ma ngufwa yo, ami ngufu lavu lavu ama tiza mpe ami mosoro.

Djuka azia yo paka mi, api mondia alunguli ta mabi a, api adriile ise.

LOKELE (*Zaïre*)

O Mungu wami, isoene mbo okelimi eoka iluweke la iinelek'Aε. Iswimela nda eye mbileye bowandu wami la bofoka w'Aε; iuw'ami la lifoka liae.

Angoene Mungu wasi sakoloko Aε, oyo atosungaka nda mbile ya tale, oyo ayali laya laya.

LOZI (KOLOLO) (*Zambia*)

Kina paki mulena mulimu waka, uni bupezi kuli ni kuzibe hape ni ku lapele. Na lumela ka nako ye kuli niya fokola wena ki wena ya mata, na mi shebile we na ufumile. Akuma mulimu

usili kwanda ahao, kiwena mutusi mwama-nyando aluna, upila katato yahao.

LUBUKUSU (LUHYIA) (*Kenya*)

Esendi ne bung'ali, O, Wele wase, sikila Ewe wanonga khumanye ne khu khusikamila Ewe. Nga ndola luno luri, khu mani kase kamakekhe khu bunyali Bwowo, khu butambi bwase, khu buhinda Bwowo.

Saliho Wele okundi nokhali Ewe, Omuyeti mubutinyu, Oliyo yeng'ene.

LUGANDA (*Uganda*)

Nina obujjulizi, Ai Katonda wange, nti wantonda okukumanya n'okukusiza. Nkakkasa mu kiseera kino obutesobola bwange, n'olwobuyinza bwo, mu bwaavu bwange, ne mu bugagga bwo.

Tewali Katonda mulala okugyako, Ggwe, Omuyambi mu kabi, Eyemalirira.

LUNDA (CILUNDA) (*Zambia*)

Eyi Nzambi yami, eyi inkeni wankeñeli kulonda nikiwluki kulonda nikulombeleli. Nacheseki, hampinji yinu, ha kubula inovu jami, mukulema kweyi muwuzweni wami muku heta kweyi.

Kosi Nzambi ji Kwawu ja cheñiku china eyi hohu. Eyi inkwashi inhembu wayuma yejima.

LUNDA/NDEMBO (*Zaïre*)

Nidi kambaji keyi O Nzambi yami, netu yeyi wanleñeli muloña wakukwiluka ni kuku hameka. Nashimuni chalala lelu dinu kuzeya kwami ni ñovu jeyi, uzweñi wami ni kùheṭa kweyi.

Kosi Nzambi mukwau china yeyi hohu, ona wakulaña mu malwa, ona wahaya nyaka kudi eyi aweni.

LUO (*Kenya, Uganda*)

Ai Lubanga, aye ni In icweya me ngeno In ki me woro In. Anyutu kombedi ni tekona pe ento diti tye, ni an lacan In lalonyo.

Pe tye dok Lubanga mukene kono In, Lakony ican, dok Ikwo giri keni.

MAKHUWA (*Mozambique, Swaziland*)

Kiniwerelani namona, Kho Mulukwaka, wera wi Nyuwo Mokipatusha wi miyo Nyuwo Kosuweleni ni wokokhorani Kinnilapa mwa chuhu yela ethu yohiwereya mene ikuru sanyu, muthonyero aka ni muhakhwanya.

Khavovo Muluku Mukina opwaha Nyuwo, okikhunela mu sawopiha yowo onikhala Mwa yowo Mekhaiye.

MALAGASY (*Malagasy Republic*)

Toviko, Andriamanitra ô, fa Ianao no namorona ahy, mba hahalála Anao sy ho tia Anao. Tsaroako amin' izao fotoana izao ny fahalemeko miolotra amin'ny herinao, sy ny fahantrako manoloana ny harenao. Tsy misy Andriamanitra afa-tsy Ianao, dia Ilay miaro amin'ny loza, Ilay misy tokoa amin'ny maha-Andriamanitra Azy.

MANDINKA (MANDINGO) (*Gambia, Sénégal, Guinea*)

N'sedeya, n'mari ko I'ye n'da le ke I'long aning ka I'batu.

N'sonta n'na sembeng tang ya la aning I'te la bungba ya, N'fua re ya anina I'la bana ya. Ala koteng mang soto fo I'te, I'dembari la, I'meng ye I'fang tarandi.

MASHI (*Zaire*)

Neci Yagirwa Nnamahanga, manyirire oku wandemire mpu nkumanye na nkuharamye. Bunola nyemire obuzamba bwani n'Obuhashe bwawe, obukenyi bwani n'Obugale bwawe. Wene Nnamahanga nta wundi, we burhabale omu mbaka, we Nnamubaho.

MASHINGOLI (*Somalia*)

NA SHAHIDHI MNUNGU YUANGU KAMA WEYE KUNUMBA NI KUMAGNE NA IBADHA YAKO NA SH AHIDHI KAMA JERO KUA UZIVU NA NGUVUZAKO NA BILLA NGUVU NA GUDURA YAKO NA UFAGHIRI UANGU NA UTAGIRI UAKO HAKUNA MNUNGU MTUHU ILLA NI UEYE NA HUKUMU YAKO UEYE.

MASSA (*Chad*)

Nan wi touanou nan sama souloukna Launa vanou nang la nou, à nan wangou grivangou.

Wili ni nan wala toutga vanou ti denota vangou, haouta vanou nan tia tangou.

Lau mara meidi kouta kan nangou samara ma soua meidi.

MENDE (*Liberia, Sierra Leone*)

Selimo lo a nge. O nya Yewoi ke Bia mia Bi nya gbateni koo ngi Bi goo ngi yaa a hœ Bi ma. Nyaa gayema kiahuna, ke kpaya-gbi ii nya we, ke leke Bia kpaya Maha Wai a Bie; nya vœelingœ, ke leke Bia Kpatei gbi i Bi yeya.

Ngewo weka gbi ii na aa wie kia Bi na.

Bia mia Ba gbõ mu ma kpunde gbi hu. Bia yakpe mia Ndevui i Bi hu kunafo va.

MORÉ (*Upper Volta*)

Mam yaa kaset soaba, O mam Wënnam, ti yâmb nâana ma ti m bânge la waoge Yâmba.

Mam wilga Yâmba mam pân-komsem morsâ, la Yamb pângâ; mam naôngo la Yâmb aezegse.

Wënnam ato ka lebê n bee, kal Yâmb bala, Yâmb yaa asoaba ninga s'n fângda sê n data fângere, Yâmb yaa asoaba ninga sê n bee nè a meng pângâ.

NDEBELE (SINDEBELE) (*Rhodesia*)

Ngiyafakasa, O Nkulunkuly wami, ukuthi wangidala ukuthi ngikwazi, njalo ngikukhonze. Ngiyufakaza kathesinje, ngingelamandla kuwe OMkhulu, ebumpofini bami lekunothemi kwakho.

Akakho omunye UNkulunkulu ngaphandle kwakho. UnguMgcini eziNgozini Ungo-Ncedayo.

NGAMBAI (NGAMBAYE) (*Chad*)

Ei Allah lem, mam'toojee naigetarée, I ya ram kam geri lem mba kam mosso kul noin'g lem.

Mayan missi noin'g basiné, ma m'to nje rem I too jé singa mon'g, ma m'to njé ndoo I too njé né kinga.

Allah I ya ge kari ba, I ya too jé la ge dojé lo g too bel g I ya too deou doroi.

NGONDE (CHIKHONDE) (*Malawi*)

Nguyagha nketi wako, E! Kyala wangu, ukuti walimbelile une ukuti ngumanye, nukukwiputa yuyuwe. Ngwitukisya akabililo aka, nensita maka, kangi Mmaka ghako amakulumba, mbutolwe bwangu na mbukabi Bwako.

Akayako Kyala uyungi loli yuyuwe popapo, We ntuli mbutolwe, Uliko kubumi wi Mwene.

NYAMWEZI (*Tanzania*)

Ndisanizya, Guku Mulungu wane ati wambumba kigele nkumanye na kukwisenga B'eb'e. Ndizumilizya, henaha ku vugayiwa nguzu kwane na kuvusondo wako, kubapina wane na kuvusavi wako.

Kuduhu Mulungu ungi sumbwa B'eb'e wakisa mumaluduko na wa kuhola kuhanya.

NYANJA (CHINYANJA) (*Malawi, Zambia*)

Ndicitila umboni, O Ambuye, Mulungu wanga, kuti munandilenga kuziwa Inu ndi kukondani Inu. Ndibvomela panthawi ino kulefuka kwanga ndi kukula kwa mphamvu zanu, kusauka kwanga ndi kulemela kwanu.

Kulibenso Mulungu wina koma Inu nokha Muchinjilizi, Mwini zonse.

'NDONGA (OCHINDONGA) (*Southwest Africa*)

Gena okutumbulwa lumwe mootundi Omi-longo mbali na ne, Omutenya.

Ongame otandi hempulula Kalunga Kandje, kutya ongoye wa shiti ndje ndi ku tseye ngame ndi ku longele nokukugalikana. Otandi hempulula mpaka uunjengwi wandje moonkondo dhoye noluhopo lwandje mUuyamba woye. Kakuna Kalunga gulwe ponto yoye, Ongoy Omukwathi mUudhigu, Ongoye Omuyapuki.

PEDI (*Northern Transvaal*)

Xore e rapelwe xa tee ka moraxo za masome a mabedi le mentso e mene ya di Iri, Xoba mosexare o moxolo.

Ke nea bohlatse, O Modimo waka, xobane O mpopile xore ke xo tsebe, Ke xo o khunamele. Ke ineela mo nakong e, bofokodi byaka maatleng a Xaxo, bohumanexing byaka Khumong ya Xaxo. Xaxo Modimo e mong xa e se Wena. Mothusi melekong, Wena E o tiileng.

PHIKAHNI (*Mozambique*)

Ndzi maha a fakazi, oh Xikueimbu xa mina. Lešaku hambi lešui u ndzi Wumbeke aku ku tiva ni kuku khizamela. Ndzi maha fakazi hi xikhathi xai šuošui. Agomeni la mina, mintanwini ya Wena. Aussiwani la mina awumpfundzini la wena.

Akuna Xikuembu xinwana handlhe ka wena mumpfuni wa tinkarhato ni nwinhi Wamintamu.

RONGA (SHIRONGA) (*Mozambique, Swaziland*)

Ni hamba bumboni Oh! Šikwembu šanga. Lešaku nambi leši uni bumbiki akuku tiba niku ku nkhinsamela, ni yentša bumboni hi nkama wa šoši agomeni danga ami ntanwini yaku, abusiwani bya nga abu pfundini byaku.

Akuna Šikwembu šimbe handle kwaku, mupfuni wa ntikarato nwinji wa mintamu.

RUNYORO RUTORO (*Uganda*)

Nimpayo obukaiso, Ai Ruhanga wange, ngu niwe wampangire nkuramyé kandi nkumanye, nindanga omukasumi kanu, mu bugara bwange kandi mu buguuda bwawe.

Busaho Ruhanga ondi, Kwihaho iwe wenka, Omukonyezi omukabi, Anyakwomeera.

SANGO (SANGHO) (*Central African Republic*)

Mbi yékè témoin, O Nzapa ti mbi, biani Mo sala mbi, si mbi lingbi ti hinga Mo, ti vuro Mo, mbi fa sioni ti mbi na ngoi so na gbèlè Mo, passi ti mbi na ndoyé ti Mo.

Mbèni Nzapa ndé ayékè pépé, gui Mo oko Mo Jo ti bata ajo na ya ti ngangou, Mo yékè lakouè lakouè.

SARA (SAR) (Ngama dialect) (*Chad*)

Me guer go Allah yam, Kad yi râm Kad m'guério m'doi o. M'guer go rotam, tam ri wa togoum goto ngang Yai o, ndô yam o i yan kingué Yai.

Allah krang ki toi goto, Yi ngué korjiko kem yah ki madjal guetio, Yi kba tel roi yi Allah.

SARA (SAR) (Madjingaye dialect) (*Chad*)

M'Guergo Nuba yam, kade oubum, m'Gueri o, m'ndoi o. M'Guer rokum, ngolan'to Togum goto, yi Tog yaï, Rondo yam ke yân kinga yaï.

Nuba ke rang ke toi goto, ngue kordje kem yam ke madjalgue te, ngue tog.

SHONA (*Mozambique, Rhodesia, Transvaal*)

Ndinopupura, O Mwari wangu, kuti makan-disika kuti ndimuzivei nokukunamatai. Ndine umboo panguva ino, mukushaya simba kwangu nesimba Renyu, kurombo hwangu nekuup-fumi Hwenyu.

Hakuna mumwe Mwari kunze Kwenyu Muhatsiri mumatambudziko, Uyo asingade rubatsiro.

SHUA (*Botswana*)

Tse huse re o k é ta kō, tí Tōra to, tsa ta 'a se nyā aha, tí tsa 'a 'ā na tsa 'a hyaā ma tia. Ta ke ē |kam a n |l'áu, ta ci o |hoa tsa kári |hoa ta ye o |hoa tsa |l'ai |hoa.

Tōra ka ny:e h:ā tsām se, Thō ke hu 'a kwára kwe, |kūi se hk'ōē kwe.

SOMALI (*Somalia*)

Waxaan marag ka ahay, Eebbow, inaad ii abuurtay aqoonsigaaga iyo caabudidaada. Waxaan hadderba marag ka ahay tabar-darridayda iyo karitaankaaga, cayrnimadayda iyo hodanimadaada.

Eebbow, Ilaah kale majiro adiga mooyee, dhibkabixiye, weligijire.

SUKUMA (*Tanzania*)

Nalinzunya, Bebe Mulugu wane, giki ukan-izumba nakumane Bebe na kukulemilija. Dm-zunya ung'wi ikanza ili, ubusunduhazu bone na kunzu jako, mubihabi bone na usabi boko Bebe.

Hatiho Mulugu ugi hambunu Bebe Nduhu Ng'wambilija wa Mayaga, Uyokikalaga Muweyi Ng'wenikili.

SUTHO (SESOTHO) (*Lesotho*)

Ke paki, U Molimo oa ka, Uena U mpopet-seng hore ke be le tseho ea Hau, 'me ke U khumamele.

Kea itlhatlhoba, motsotsong ona, ho hlokeng matla hoaka ho Ea matla 'ohle, bofumeng ba ka ho ea ruileng tsohle.

Ha ho Molimo o mong hape haese Uena, Mothusi litlokotsing, Ea iphelisang—ka—Boena.

SWAHILI (*East and Central Africa*)

Nashuhudia, Ewe Mungu Wangu, kwamba Wewe Umeniumba mimi kukujua Wewe na kukuabudu Wewe. Nahakikisha, katika wakati huu, juu ya unyonge wangu na uwezo Wako, juu ya umasikini wangu na utajiri Wako.

Hakuna Mungu mwingine ila Wewe, Msaada katika Mashaka, Aliyepo-Mwenyewe.

SWATI (siSWATI) (*Swaziland*)

Ngiyafakaza, Maye Nkulunkulu Wami, kutsi ungidalele kwekuba ngikwati ngikukhonte.

'Ngiyafakaza, manje, kutsi anginawo emandla Wena unemandla lesabekako, ngimphofu Wena ucebile.

Akekho lomunye Nkulunkulu nguWe kuphela, uMsiti etiNgotini, Wena lotiPhilela ngeKwakho.

TEMNE (TIMNE) (*Sierra Leone*)

I sɔŋ məseri OKuru kami, munɔŋ po bempa mi tək tara mu; yi kəbatho mu rəmə lompi. I lanə ka aləkə aŋe. I teba ayethe mi ka munɔŋ kaba afɔsɔ; ka amɔne mami yi munɔŋ ka rayola ramu. Ukuru ulɔm ɔyi yɛsɔ thambe munɔŋ. Ka mar mi ka masibo, munɔŋ I yi gborə tək batho.

TIGRINYA (*Eritrea*)

ፆ ኦዎላቮ !ከፈልጠካን ከዎልባካን፡

ከዎዘፈጠርካ ሂ ኦዎላቮ ኦሎቶ፡፡

ኦብዛ ኦዎንዛኦ ከኦ፡ ሰንፍፍፍን ሳይል

ባን፡ ሰከንተፍን ሃብተባን ኦረጋገጽ፡፡

ብጊሁ ጸበባ ረፃኢ፡ ብገዛኦ ርክሰባ ኦተ

ነብር፡ ብጀባባ ካልኦ ኦዎላቮ ዓላን፡፡

TIV (*Nigeria*)

U kimbir kwa môm ken ahwa ikundu-kar-enyiin, shie u iyange i lu sha tembe yo.

Mer shiada, Aondo wam, mer u gbam wen m fa u man shi m civir we. M ngu pasen hegen mer m ngu aa agee ga kpa we u ngu a mi, m gba ican kpa we u gbough aa akaa.

Aondo ugen ngu ga saa we tsegh, ka we u wasen shie u kwaghbo ka una tser or ye, u ngu u tsôron.

TONGA (CHITONGA) (*Zambia*)

Ndime kamboni mwami Leza wangu, kuti wakandilengela kuti nkuzibe alimwi nkukombe. Ndazumina cino ciindi kuti ndimuteteete webo ndiwe singuzu, mebo ndimucete pele webo ulimuvubi.

Kunyina umbi Leza zunze kwako ndiwe mugwasyi mumapenzi esu, ulapona mukuyanda kwako.

TSHILUBA (*Zaire*)

Ndi njadika, Wewe Mvidi-Mukulu wanyi, ne wakamfuta bua kukumanya ne bua kuku-tendelela. Ndi njadika mu tshitupa tshihi emu,

bufuba buanyi ne bukole Buebe, bupele buanyi ne bubanji Buebe.

Kakuena Muidi-Mukulu mukuabo bu Wewe, M-Muambuluishi wa mu Dikenga, Nyeye udi wikalaku anu Yeye-Nkayende.

TSWANA (CHUANA/SETSWANA) (*Botswana*)

Ke supa bopaki, O MODimo wa me, gore ke Wena yo O ntlhodileng go Go itse le go Go direla. Ke paka, mo motsotsong o', bokowa ba me go matleng a Gago, khumanego ya me go khumong ya Gago.

Ga gona ope o mongwe Modimo ga ese Wena, Mothusi mo Botlhokong. Motshidi ka Esi ba Gagwe.

TUMBUKA (CHITUMBUKA) (*Malawi*)

Nkucita wukaboni, A! Ciuta wane, kuti muli kundilenga ine kuti ndimumanyani imwe, na kumusopani imwe. Nkupanikizga panyengo iyi, kwambula nkongono kwane na kwa nkongono zinu zikuru, ku wukavu wane na kuwusambazi Winu.

Kulive Ciuta munyakhe kweni ndinwe pera, Muvwiri muvisuzgo, Muliko bamoyo Mwekha.

TWI/ASHANTI (*Ghana, Ivory Coast*)

O me Nyame, medi adanseɛ se Woabo me se menhu Wo na mensom Wo. Medi adanseɛ seesei se menni ahoaden biara na Wo deɛ Woye Otumfoɔ, medi hia buroburo na Woye ɔdefoo.

Onyame foforo biara nni ho ka Wo ho, ɔhaw mu Boafoɔ, Wo na wote Wo ho ne W'ase.

WACI (WACIGBE) (*Benin, Togo*)

Me ɖu ɖase, o Mawuyen, be ye ɖɔwun né má jesiye eye né má sumoye. Le gayame a, me yán wunsenmaɖoyen ku wunsenɔɖoo, ayayen kú ɖɔkuo. Mawu ɖokpo me gba lei tóvo neo, kpeɖeamewuntito le Xaxame, Ame ke su eɖokoi ji a.

WOLOF (JOLOF) (*Gambia, Sénégal*)

Sedenane, Yow Suma Yalla, neh dangama sos ngirr hamla teh jamu la. Sedena chi jamano ji chi suma nyaka katan ak chi sa magai, chi suma mbadola ak suma am-am.

Benen Yalla amut ku moye you, ndimbal gi chi musiba ki dul danu.

!XŌ (*Botswana*)

N| e Ku-ʒe, ma ||'ha ka g||kqon |i te: |nga ɳdi |nga i- |ga. Ma ||'ha cen kona ||'a: te: |nga ih ||'ha ka kona |i te: |nga, ɱ ||'hâ cen |a t'hani |ui te: |nga ih ||'ha ka |a t'hani ||'ali te: |nga.

Ku-ʒe te'e ɳ||'a ka |e |'an ti, ah'a: kaɲ |gubi uhi:, ah'a: |ngo ka tam.

XOSA (!XHOSA) (*Botswana*)

Ndiyangqina O Thixo wam ukuba undidalele ukuba ndikwazi ndikunqule. Ngako oko ndiyangqinisisa ngalo eli thuba ngokungabinamandla kwam, nobungangamsha Bakho, ngobuglwenpu bam, nangobutyebi Bakho. Akukho Thixo ngaphandle kwakho Oluncedo emngciphekweni Ozimele ngokukokwakhe.

YAHORÉ (*Ivory Coast, Mali*)

Bie na yè, E Bali, Bie man gnain ambolah. Biandré yémitô gnennipan, Bian pah lah nah goo.

Bié plehblé le main pléhblé kah é Kiand ahngna ya leh tehzan, gnien bié ki fé yezan Bali péh kah lénah bié ouizoude oui péhnon héh qui gui re yahé evleeah.

YAO (CHIYAO) (*Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania*)

Nguwichila umboni O Mlungu jwangu! Kuti Mwanenjile une, kuti nim'manyilile nikumpopela. Ngwitichisya pa-je ndawi jino, kulembuka kwangu niukulu wa machili Genu, kulaga kwangu nikupuka Kwenu.

Pangali Mlungu jwine akawe M'mwe Jikape, Wakamusa muyakogoya.

YORUBA (*Benin, Nigeria*)

Mo ʒe ijerii si i, Iwo Ọlọrun mi, pe Iwo da mi lati mo Ọ ati lati sin Ọ Mo jẹwo ni akoko yi niti ailagbara mi, atiniti agbara Re, niti aini ati niti Ọla Re.

Ko si Ọlọrun miran bi ko ʒe Iwo Oluranlwo nigba isoro, Ẹni ti ki i ku, Ẹni ti o le da duro.

ZANDE (*Sudan, Zaïre*)

Mi ni gamu bolo, ai Mboli, wa ma vungule tipa hinolo, tipa hilisolo. Mi idi, ti ku logobo le gimi nangala na gamu ngulu, gimi lungu na gamu hiliso.

Meinongo kula Mboli balo 'te, Kuko na hundo a bolo lo lungu yo, Kuko nala na a gala nitiko.

ZULU (*Republic of South Africa*)

Ngi yafakaza, Nkulunkulu wami ukuthi ungidalele ukuba ngi kwazi nokuba ngi Ku konze. Ngi ya qinisa, kulo mzuzu, ukuthi angi namandla wena u namandla onke, nokuthi ngimpofu mina u cebile Wena.

Amukho omnye u Nkulunkulu ngaphandle Kwakho, U wu Msizi e ngozini, U zimele ngo Kwakho.

THE AMERICAS

AGUARUNA (*Peru*)

WIRJAÍ ETSEGNUNUK, MINA APUJU, EME-
MÁTJITI WAITUKTUSAM NAJATUAWAITAN
DUWI.

WÍTJAI CHICHÁGKAGTINUK YA BAISHKAM,
AME SENCHIJUM SUGUSBAWA DUWI YABAIK
ÁGKAN PUJÁJAI.

TIKICHIK AMEA IBAUK ATSAWAI, ISHAM-
INUMVAIJÁTMAINUK, AMEKETNIE PUJUT SU-
KAGTINMEX.

ARAWAK (*N. Guyana, Surinam*)

A baa bekotoi gia ka de Wathinathie bie wa maritana da de dei thien bia be goe nang da sika da-ka-ke-wa gowe babong. Tataa-go damong ka sjoko dja rong, bee wa tataa abo-na, matho damoeneka dja ko mahto baboewa djako. Abathie go sabona, Adajaali bie rong kie, bie rong kie boeroewata na ma da de damoeneka loko de bie rong kie.

ALEUT (Cyrillic script) (*Alaska, Aleutian Is.*)

И́минз андаҳтихз акъ-
кйнз и́гъгънз аганз тинз
агинах акъхтхинз, тинз
акаталнхз каюхз и́минз
камгакинз, занз гасамз и́-
данз санахз тигънагасанн-
захз акатакскинз каюхз
кадиминз агънахз ананз
нънз кингъригасакскинз
каюхз тэкъсананз.

У́гъакиминз и́гъгъхз
алакахз згакиминз агъ-
атамз ама маагъкананз
лахз иланз тиминз си-
смикхз алакахз.

ARHUACO (*Panama*)

Matuni gukui naji Ghalaghwasha ma nagh-wamalé má natunanamighzeja (y adorarte) matuni gukwa ghaika gwásu nituku, má ghama-mekwa yá daznada nashi dazna gháwia, ayzc nadaki yá Ghalaghwasha yónaghohija niashi yónghwapa.

ATHABASCAN (Ft. Yukon dialect) (*Alaska, Canada*)

Osi vittekueichanchyo, netitinihsha, Nit tsut. Kititihchya tenitenitutula Kenjit, kuikit sid-hatsei choog. Tzut-nikueinidhut. Sut tei, Kkuea ei tzut. Sinersitkwichachyo, nitsi, nichile Kit-inichi. Nekhe, vittekwichanchyo Koolikkua, nunrzi, kookontrhi. Tei, kwutsut thitihndul. Kokwadhun.

APACHE (*United States*)

Bi'keguindan ne na sha; Bi'keguindan nibika' nshinzi, negusij, ashi ni chi itedishdlii binka. Dakugu adishdi, shi shin dzi'leyaedi. Ndi ni dzileguli, shi te'nsjine, aku ndi yafa diy dike ni'z shi jash. Na'shi duhan katô bi'kegu dahinda, dandina ni'kegu dahinda, naichudanne. Ha'a duguzhuda a agufegu dandi ni'keguinda.

ATHABASCAN (Kutchin dialect) (*Alaska*)

Set kekwadhut nitsut kthutkikhechya kenjit sidhantsei kkashudei. Ako nun nuttie kooli. She suttei kkwa Ako nitkwikhele kooli. Ako she kettun tesichya ako nekhe kekwadhut kooli kkwa. Nunrzi kukootri tei. Kwutsut trikhendul kindhun.

AYMARA* (*Bolivia, Peru*)

Nayajja uñjta Dios Tatay, jumawa lurista nayaru jumaru uñt'añataki, yupaychañataki, nayajja uñjta anchhicha uruna jani ch'amanita ukama, juma ch'amanitama, nayajja uñjaraktwa anchhicha uruna jani kunanita ukama, juma taqe kunanitama, janiwa yaqha Dios Awkijja utjkiti. Juma spakitawa, jumawa yanapt'iritajja taqe jan walinakansa, jumawa utjta juma pachapata.

AYORÉ (AYOREO) (*Bolivia, Paraguay*)

Urepiseyu, Dupadea, uje je vapesute yu, ujetiga yiraja uato ega ujetiga yisi vabay. Yigome ua uje que yó bajopire gotique, uje mataqueyu jeque cuchapeua, que Dupade uñeque cusego gusuúa. Ua ú uje barate yoque, ome cucha gajnaregone, uje je ua ú cuchadej-nese.

BAURÉ (*Bolivia*)

Di reshitóu, to vekiyir, piti kem shokóvi kesko vichipti ash vekiyichip. Di reshiróu nerekiye, doka nasé rején ash piti asérokón, di pohour (o povor o pubor) ash piti kótirón.

Do kat kapónpóu ponshohué piti. Piti as inkoróbi ash chapchóvi doka kansérpou tikuer ti.

BRIBRI (*Costa Rica*)

YERUR BEBIKETSU BERO YE SIBU ECUEKY BETUYEYU EDIRIRSU EBKETSU YE WASCHEN Y YERURETA YE QUE DIRIRCHETA, BERCHE TAIE YE SIORARA BE BURU TAIE ER KIO QUE SIBU SCATU BE IMEKE YISCATU YEI SKIMENE ISURUETA IERBI IBUBRABA IEBUSCO IBUBRABA.

CAKCHIQUÉL (*Guatemala*)

Yin nibij riyecht, nu Dios, yin aquiytisan ri chi nuguatamaj aguach y gantiguajó.

Yin nibij ri jun ti rato ré ri nu ban y riyalan ri aguachuka, ri nu mebahil y ri abellomal.

Majun chik jun Dios mas que regui riyet, ri gatohon cheré ru queyebal, ri xa ban riret mismo.

CARIB (MORENO/GARÍFUNA) (*Belize, Nicaragua, Honduras, Venezuela*)

Au pu'üneauwa. O Lloso kuru, amoro puascanenpo amoro mana adupu'ustoome

érome óseguachooome. Au pu'üneauwa co'ollene éropo, au piorésmaba érome amoro tu paripiín, au poreauwa érome amoro tu caballero.

Lla'aba Lloso amu bátuman abiñoscopore, abapune llapiopunta adasta, amántoto aseque tu cugüentarumue.

CARIB (Galibi dialect) (*French Guiana*)

AOU SOUGOUCA TAMOUCHI, TWUE GASSER O OIR OIR A YOU OUCOUTOMER MENGAR O SE OIRTIOMER.

AOU SOUGOUCA ET LOU MELO, AOU PALIPEOIR A YOU ABOROT MENGAR QUADAMADOR A YOU OIR BOROT RICHEMINS.

A MOEIR OUR TE LA PASMENT TAMOUCHI A OIR LA NO COLAT DANDER DA A YOU PANPAMANOLANT, MANCOLOT COMOMINPOENT OA ASSEQUERO.

CATÍO (*Colombia*)

Bútru mua asia Búra caira cawabamanea Búra zhi biara jaraita. Mûa jaraya jômaña Bú ne éaba mûa o be éa. Búra wárinu obeya. Mûra zhi supuriata Búra shi wai bua bara buta.

Búra Caragabia tewara ne éa. Shi dai ne cazhirua cawade ni mi buru ewate Bú tru careba bua Búra to aba bua tewara waí éa bu éa.

CHAHUANCO (CHIRIGUANO) (*Bolivia*)

Che aicúa ma che Tumpa, de che apoaba rocua baera jare romboete baera. Che aicua ma aña ve che chepueréa coba jaré depuere, che cheparabete jare. De denbaeyecou Baetij imru Tumpa ma De güi ba, Poromborijicabibaepaba, jare iyeu guiño oicoba.

CHEROKEE* (*United States*)

LLAVVQ JLVFQVJ

QIW LLAVVQ JLVFQVJ H@ TGGAJ JLVFQVJ BS FRT. TS DCTG@LT.

DB hSW, hZP, h@ QILW@Q, Q'Q@ DB h@ EHPY TGFQVJ@, D@ h@ EQLVFQVJ@.

DB EhFR hEL, hZP, A@ DF-FRT. DB @TFhEE@ FRT, h@ GFhEE @hEL. D@ DY@iT h@ V@TG FR @hEL.

iLZ QL@ QAW@Q QY, h@ CR@G QY@SFQY D@ QYGL@QY hS iT D@ hA@QT.

h@ CH DF@SFQY.

*Denotes revised translation.

FLATHEAD (CHEYENNE) (*United States*)

Quin Kolinstuten, lu til Anawee U ko kolintwhu lu que ks soohum U que ks putenem. Ku yes konkonstinum yetilwha lu ye til eas s.hopt U jasyoyit, U ye til eas konquint U jas s.koyoleewhu.

Tat suewet wes olkosheetums oopen es olkosheetwhu lu es yapastenee. Lu ta epl chinaks Kolinstuten, e.chimish Anawee.

GUAJIRA (*Colombia, Venezuela*)

Tatuja auch, piá Maléiwaa, piain ainjin taya zupúla terrájuin piá ma aijachin tapula piá Tatuja auch jolucho, marchin tayá ma piainja katchin, mulieshtayá pumá piainja washirin.

Nójoish wané maléiwa makaika piá, ja makai jumúin ekai mojúin mukuwaipa, chi ekai numúinwa.

GUARANÍ (*Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay*)

She aikua'a she Tupá, Nde she japó hagüe, roikua'a hagüa, haró Tupa'itu hagüa.

Aikua'a avei koağa, la she kangy ha, ha Nde, Nde mbaretéha, Ha she Mboriahú, ha Nd, Nde riko ha.

Ndai pori ambu'éishagüa, Ñandejara, Nde ñoite pytyvohára roimé va'í javé, Nde ñoite reikó Nde jehevé.

GUAYMÍ (*Panama*)

Ti es gáde, Oh Nübü tígüe! Mägués ti mígá ni túbá Mädrugái gáde tí-e. Bütá tígüe es mátaréde. Tí-e gáde ménguäre. Ti tū brai mātū crididā. Ti tābre rizeza mähüé bütá.

Nübü müdá ñácarr.

Mäbe ítibé mä ára dé migága mä ára ni nobá bidíga.

HAIDA (*Alaska, Canada*)

Hlaa, weiyat suus uu dii dung Tl'aahlaany; eihl uu saa dungeng dii guudengaan. Uhl giisluu wy'aat tlii dii xaagaas k'an uu, is siis dii k'ungisgydaas k'ang tlii dung iitlaa gadaas. Dung squun nuueitl dung klaaiidungung. Dung kil Eihl ging gets sqwaagu saang.

JICAQUE (*Honduras*)

¡O Dios Mand! An timnon ni na mayá, si suanda was ten iga. Po qui noi es sun. Dios, te qua la ti way, na polra monse sa a ti qui Dios pa

ha li cum. Pan u hay Dios, in oy le Dios, un ving baten Dios.

LOUCHEUX (*Alaska, Canada*)

Sit ve tte kwut cha chyoo nya le sen dei ako nit tsut ki le ti chya choog. Kwe tha zit te let ti nja. Sit tei kkwa, kwit zit nun nit chi tei, sit ne rsil kwit cha chyoo kwi zit. Ako nit kwit chilee chi zyoo kkwa nun zi.

Vitte kwit cha chyoo kouko nyoo, kwut tsut tri chi ili.

MACHIGUENGA (*Peru*)

Naro noncamantaquetería, Aparioshi, camicitataqería Viro pitomidákena narunocama táqueri narotáqui noneaquitémbira y nungamagitaquémbara Viro. Pineaquénari oca maicca teranagábe pagabeáquena teranonsanmaíte Viro pashe.

Mameri pashiniacparióshi payoyabisaquiviro irirori ymectacutáqueri notsaroganáque, iriori ictímira por irirori.

MAPUCHE (*Argentina, Chile*)

Ng illatun ranjiñ antü men.

Iñche wəldəŋun, Eimi Ngənechen, Eimi tremümen tami kimafiel taññillatuael. Iñche wəldəŋun feula tami neweŋen, iñche yafüŋelán; tami ülmenŋen, iñche weshacheŋen. Ngelai ka Ngənechen Eimi məten, kellukelu kuñin men, kishu moŋelnieulu.

MATACO (*Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay*)

Ohap okalethtayajwo, oka Dios, Ta Am ta enekno yamlek otajwueth amej wet ochaame. Ohap okelethtayajwo hapet atana ta tek okajñayaj ihi wet Am akajnayaj, hap opathseyaj wet Am aniyatyaj.

Tsi tek iche eth Dios thamet Am, o-eth ta lchote ta owitay ihinya, o-eth Tek latunjwuihi.

MAYA (Lowlands) (*Mexico*)

Ten ilé, oh, in Jajal-Dios, tech dzaen yolal in kajoltquech yolal kulquech. Ten iláe tí junzutáj, minaan in muk, teché yan a muk, otzilen; teche ayiklech yetel yacunail. Minaan u laak Jajal-Dios, chen tech, tech ca antaj can anac baal kaz, cu cuxtal chen letí.

MAYA/QUICHÉ (*Guatemala*)

In xin wiló, oh nu Dios, chi ri at xinaq'uisaj rech quin weta'maj awach y quin lok'ok'ej awach Weta'am quin ri camic ri' na c'o ta ri nu chok'ab y ru, nimal ak'ij ri at, ri nu meba'li in ri ak'inomal ri at.

Maj jun chi Dios xew ri at, at ri cat tob pa ri jun c'ax, y ri ca c'aslic chi rilic rib.

MICMAC (*Canada*)

Oeligtjitjito, O NISGAM, Gil gisiitepotjtj gisi nenolin a gepmitelmolin. Oelnimito, enge asma, nin mnagôtim ag Gil migignôtim, nineolegecag-nin ag Gil milsotim. Mo eimog piloei Nisgam pasig Gil tan Apognimasoti metoegigtog ag Gil Iaptjoei.

MOHAWK (*Canada, United States*)

Wa-geh-ni-wha-gwa-risi, Ook Niyo, Neh Ihse dá-ká-dis-son ne á-gon-yen-dé-rih-hok ta-non dá-gon-non-wha-ra-don-sek. wá-geh-ri-wha-ni-rot, nook-non-wa. ji-niah-teh-geh-suts-teh ta-non Ihse, ji-ni-seh-sots-tens-seh-ro-waneh, ji-ni-wá-ki-den ta-non ji-ni-sah-gwe-nya-tsa-ro-wa-nen. Ihya-gonega oya ne niyo néok Ihse, negah-yeh-na-wa-tsérá neh-yo-da-ri-hok, ne-ihse sa-ri-wha-gwa-noh.

MOSKITO (MISKITO) (*Honduras, Nicaragua*)

Won lal kat praiska:

Yang witnisna O God man yangra paskatma man kaikaia bara man mayunaia. Yang nan witnisna naha pyua sip apia kapri bara man karnikamra; yang umpira lakasna bara man ailalka.

Bahara God apusa man bamansma. Help Patra, ba mita witin Selp rayasa.

NAVAJO (*United States*)

Diyin Shitaa' Níníłíní shíl beehozin éí alhí-náhodiilzìh biniighé áshjìnláa áádóó Níjì' sodiizìn do. T'áá k'ad bee haszìí', háálá shìch'ì' nahwii'ná áádóó Ni t'éiyá Nidziil, té'é'í shidaah ndahkai áádóó Ni t'éiyá t'áá altsoní Ni holó'.

T'áá Ni t'éiyá Aláadi Diyin nilí háálá nihich'ì' nahwii'ná'ígíí t'áá' ínínsin, Hool'áágóó Honiló'.

OTOMÍ (*Mexico*)

Teróxukua jurhíatijua:

Ji testígueska, oh juchiti tatá diosi, eskarini t'u kueraska parakini mítini ka k'eri ambé arhinguini. Ji testígueska ia iasi, juchiti jukapárhakueri ka chiti uinápikueri para íámindu ambé uni, juchiti komu jángueri ka no ma jatsikuarhikueri ka chiti kánikua jakapárhakueri jimbokari íámindu ambé jatsiska.

No jarhasti máteru tatá diosi engá sánderu k'erika eska cha, emanga jarhóajpka engá kánikua uétarhijka, emanga jarhajka mentku isi nájkiru no nemá jarhóataka.

PAPIAMENTU (*Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao*)

Mi ta doena testimonio, o mi Dios, coe Bo a cria mi pa mi conoce Bo y pa mi adora Bo. Mi ta testigo na e momento aki di mi flaqueza y di Bo poder, di mi pobreza y di Bo rikeza.

No tin ningun otro Dios, sino Bo, e auxilio den Peliger, Esun coe ta subsisti di su mes.

PUKINA (*Bolivia*)

Wertre Yooz distike amchuaaweke pachamke paj zapa, amkin Mayziz zapa, anzchiruktra tee urake, wuer am azizaricha, wer anachullchica, amke thapa chulltakchichmcha, mazel yakha Yooz zallzzie, yanapt'icha anawalinakista, amzestra personkistra.

QUECHUA* (*Bolivian*) (*Bolivia*)

Noqa rikuni, Aa Apu Yaya Diusniy, Qan rikhurichiwaskaykita rejsisunaypaj, yupaycha-sunaypaj. Cheqamanta yachani kunanpacha mana atinyiyoj kasqayta, Qan Manchay Jatun atinyiyoj kasqaykita, mana imayoj kasqayta jinataj Qan Qhapaj Kasqaykita. Mana Waj Apu Yaya Dius kanchu Qanmanta astawan, Pichus mana allimpi yanapakuj, Pichus Kaj Payllam-anta.

QUECHUA (*Ecuadorian*) (*Ecuador*)

Ñuca dius tistigu cani ñucaman viñachiscangui Canman sirvingapa alabaringapa. Tistigu cani cay ratuta ñuca, mana ushay cani, Canmi tucuy ushay Cangui, ñuca pubri cani Quiquin chari cangui Mana Tianpash shug Dius ashta yali hurmana huraspi yanapangui Cammandallatami causangui.

*Denotes revised translation.

QUECHUA (Peruvian) (*Peru*)

Noqan yachani, Diosniy, qampaq kanawaskayquita recsinaypaq, yupaychanaypac. Yachanitaqui kunan pachapi, nana atinyiyoq qqaskayta, qampaq jatun atinyiyoq kaskayta, waqcha kaskayt, kcapaq cayniquta.

Manan joc Diosniy kanchu qanmanta astawan nana allinkunamanta yanapaqniykun, qanllan Diosniy kausanqui qanllamanta.

SALISH (Puget Sound dialect) (*United States*)

ʔəstəʔildxʷ čəd, šəq siʔab, dəbəd dxʷʔal kʷi t(u)adshuyuc dxʷʔal kʷi gʷədsəs(h)ay-dubícid. gʷəl ʔəskʷədícit kʷi gʷədšiwít dxʷʔal dəgʷiʔ. læcut čəd ʔal tiʔəʔ ʔal ti xʷiʔ gʷədsqʷiđʷ ʔi t(i) adsgʷaʔ adsqʷiđʷ, dxʷʔal tiʔəʔ(ʔ) dsəsʔušəbābdxʷil ʔi t(i) adsgʷaʔ ʔitqah. xʷiʔ kʷi bələliʔ šəq siʔab dxʷʔal dəgʷiʔ, dxʷskʷaxʷəxʷ ʔal sʰaxil, kʷi ʔa čkʷaqid ʔəsʔistə.

SAULTEAUX (*Canada, United States*)

Gee Kayne dah mah zon, Ke shay Manito, che ke kayn ne me nan, Shegwah che mah wim we to nan, Che mean e go e ze yan. Che ke kayne ne me nan ke kaye da ma zon ke zong e ze win she quah neen aye pee chee nay sou e ze yan, shegwa ka a pe chee we note e ze yun. She gwah neen apee chee ke tee mak e ze anne.

Keen aye ta go ka Manito win, ka we che tas so win, Apee saig e ze an, kah ke kay kah ah ya yin.

SHOSHONE (*United States*)

NEH OO-KOO TI SOOM BĀDUGH UPEH SOOK DA-MEH UH NŪ-MEH NĪP-H ŪMEH DA-MEH SOOM BA-DO-H KHANDO-H ŪMEH DA-MEH OIYOS NA-NEH SHOON-DĪ KHAN-DOH. NEH UGH SOOKA DĀ-GWATS, NEH WI-H GĀ HEENA MA-BA-NĪ-WĪ-H ŪNEH WI-H DA-MEH GOOPANDH, WI-HU DA-MEH DIH TIH HAUNC ŪMEH WI-HU DA-MEH OYOI-DEH-WHUP. ŪNEH WI-HU DA-MEH UPEH GĀ-DEAS OO-AH NEESH DAMEH UPEH BĪ-H ŪNEH WI-DU DA-MEH BOONIH UPEH, DA-MEH DEH-MA-ZI-DH DIH TIH DAMEH NA KHANC OIYO-GOOS HE-INH GOO-PAS NANA-SOO-WOO ĠINDH.

SIOUX (*United States*)

Wakan Tonka mitawa slol ceye na ceyo onihau kta ca maya gage.

Mahon ke sni na neye ni waski, onma si he na naye nejınca, lel owape hin el epin kte.

Okokipe na ni som onyanki yapi, Wakan Tonka ni some towa wi sin.

SIRIONÓ (*Bolivia*)

EBii aba chéé dau chéé. Sá dau abatu chéé, ima-chéé chiian Sande imachéé chian Sande. Yasu tata a. De-aygue de-quiran cuantuchii mbia chii. Tendam ñandeiti taua de-aygue chéé chaura nyebe eirachéé rache-equia déjera deningue Dios-ra.

De-aygue chéé dea-catura.

SUMO (*Honduras, Nicaragua*)

Matu nakkat prennias:

Yang witnins yang Papahnki yang yamus naman yang matilik man kul makulnini. Akaminit yang witnins yang sip awas sai yangki man paun makaupak sipki, yang minikun yangkat man yankli mankat.

Papahn ukdiska man waliki, patkaupa ilk maiataman, witin sip sankalitki.

SRANAN (TAKI-TAKI) (*Surinam*)

Mie e kotoigie—o mie Gado—datie Joe mekie mie foe sabie en aanbedjie Joe. Mie e kotoigie na tapoe na momenti diesie, mie zwatjie en Joe maktie, mie potiefasie en Joe goedoe. No wang tra Gado no de lekie Joe, na Helpiemang ini notoe, na Wang-Die-De-Na-Hing-Srevie.

TACANA (*Bolivia*)

He marda mi que testigó, oh mia dada Diushú, mia dada ve peitia Diushú eshenapa puji. He marda mi que testigó ye orashú mi que poder mi que impotencia, que ma purí que ma mi que riqueza. Hay ma ve pia Diushú, mi dabai ejejeña, mi dabai Diushú ejejeña.

TEWA (Santa Clara Pueblo) (*United States*)

Naa o toh ne (Nave Taa jo sii) (HaY ti) UU Ti Te PAA Na wi TAAE UU He-ta wi Jo sii a mi tee (naa o TUUNI) (Naa bo) Navi Ka bi ni gati He ta UUVE (Kaa-in ga ta) Nave CHE Biin in gata He ta uuvi CHE IN GATA wiaa wi na aan pi wi Taa jo sii UUTAH; KHA GA TE Di Khun WO DA TE Wi boh gi moi.

TLINGIT (*Alaska, Canada*)

XAT YEEKAXNEEK AX DIKEE ANKOW YOO
XATYEEKLEEYETK EE KASAKOOWOO EE YA
SCHKAKAWK. XAT YEEKAXNEEK YA YEBDAT
KLETH XAT OOTSEEN KA YEE KLITHSEENA, KA
XAT KANISHKEEDEI, KA YEE ANKAW.

WE EE CHEEKLEINAK DIKEE ANKAW YEE
SITEE KA YEE YEDASHEE, KA CHEEWEAH-
SKEEDANEK.

TOBA* (*Argentina*)

Ayem naq'taxananeq, oh ýalamxat' Dios, ye
'am aýem ad'onataq savotaique da 'am
savat'ton qataq' shioqden. Saq'taxan vetoigui
nagui da iqalaxa qataq' da ad'añxaq', ýachoqyic
qataq' da ad'sallxá.

Qaica ca lya Dios napacaleq' 'am, Ñimaye
detaunaxan da souqapoigui ca Ichic, Ñimaye
qaica ca iben'a.

TRINITARIO (MOXOS) (*Bolivia*)

Núti néchoyóre, oh Viya, píti pepyaknó'í
tayé'é nimotviravíyre éne njiruchvíyre. Nécho-
vóyre té fuíti naripu tahína ntumayvína. Ene píti
túmevíjch'á, núti póvréno éne píti rícoví'i.

Nahína ponéna Viya pkévoríchu píti,
p'áyudachvokówi té' tō vyátahibóno, éma
maké-voríchu kjówríkwri.

YAQUÍ (*Mexico*)

Lutácatéco:

Inapooné testicó in Dios, enpooné yóturiac
paquéne enchitallane. Paqueté enchiwatane.

Inapone téstico en lautipo, caemo beki jume in
uteám caen utean bequi impovea poovetana
emporítoorico. Cabe intok Dios, jú lleaniame,
enpo jibapó be chiibo jiapsá.

YARURO (*Venezuela*)

Dadémene koné. Dadémene koné kodé uní
optéa. Mené cua ja no rē dērrēr dabáicreine.
Dabáicreine cua jámene dērrēr. Dáicre udércre
uchércre. Guardémércre guamérene chere-
guámerenene. Aéme véi optáedi kanémedi
optáedi. Optáedi da jua di chí cua.

Optáedi da diu di que juing.

YUKPA (*Colombia, Venezuela*)

Aunene, ol Cámoco, ouncat auyune óope
oyénepe, áapera ayampo auyá tócsinco.
Aunene, jũarketáu, yóitpai auvía, amor-
cotipshin, aumeréjera'yá amori mavarejaapera
ma.

Óloco mak amóroco ólmak, Cãmoco tócs-
shinco, ólok oyémerúcané cupétuócoyo,
toápanoperám.

ZAPOTECA (*Mexico*)

NAQUE TESTIGU SHIOSE, YEB LU BAS LA
NAHRE TE GUMBE, CHANE LAZ SE YEBLU.
NAKQUE TESTIGU NAH SHTEN YEL GU, BIH'N,
SHTEN YEL NAZAK.

Ruti steh dad loh yeb lu, ni rak ne nu re che ca-
yac nadzin, ni nabahn shteb tis.

ASIA

AGUSANON (AGUSAN) (*Philippine Islands*)

Ako motindog nga saksi, oh akong Dios, nga
Ikaw nagbuhat kaniko para magkila kanimo
hasta magsimbá kanimo. Ako mosaksi ini do-
on, sa ako pagka wa do-oy gahum, sa akong
pagkapobre, hasta sa ako bahandi. Wa nay lain
iban Dios kondi Ikaw, ang panabang sa kalisud,
ang nagkaugalingon nangabuhí.

AKLAN (*Philippine Islands*)

May pagtestigo aco, O Guino-o, nga Icao ro
nag himo cacon para magquilala kimo cag mag
ampo sa atubang mo. Nagtestigo aco sa sinong
momento, sa acon buya cag sa imong ng ca
cusog, sa acon ca pobrehon cag imong mangad.

Owa lon it ibang imong Dios con indi Icao,
mananabang sa tanan capiligrohan cag ang
maintanuson.

*Denotes revised translation.

ANTIQUENO (*Philippine Islands*)

May pag testigo aco, O Guino-o co, nga Icao ang nag himo canacon para mag quilala canimo, cag mag ampo sa atubang mo. Nag testigo aco sa sining momento, sa acon caluya cag sa imong ca cusog, sa acon ca pobrehon cag sa imong manggad.

Wara ron it iba nga Dios con indi Icao, mananabang sa tanan capilogrohan cag ang mainantoston.

ARABIC

See p. 584.

ARMENIAN

«Ով Տէր, ի՞՞մ Աստուածս, կը վկայի՞մ որ Դուն զիս սաւի-
ծած ես Գեղ ճանչնալու և Գեղ սյաշտելու համար: Այն վայր-
կեանիս կը խոտոզանի՞՞մ ահարսւթիւնս և Գու զօրութիւնս,
ի՞՞մ ազքատութիւնս և Գու հարստութիւնս: Գեղձէ զստ
Աստուած չիայ, Պաշտպանող և Ինքնապոյն:»

ASSAMESE (*Northeast India*)

হে প্রভু, মোৰ ঈশ্বৰ ! মই জানোঁ যে তোমাক জানিবলৈ আৰু পূজা কৰিবলৈ
তুমি মোক সৃষ্টি কৰিছা। এই মুহূৰ্ত্তত মই স্বীকাৰ কৰোঁ যে মই দুৰ্ব্বল, তুমি

সবল, মই গৰীব তুমি সম্ৰাট, তুমি ত্ৰাণকৰ্তা, স্বয়ংপূৰ্ণ; তোমাত বাহিৰে আৰু
অন্ত দেৱতা নাই।

AZERI (ÁDHIRBÁYJÁNÍ) (*Írán*)

ای منم اللہیم شہادت ویریرم بونا کسه منی خلق ایله -
بیب سن سننی تانیام و سننه عبادت ایلهیم ایندی
شہادت ویریرم ئوز عاجزلیغیما و سننن قوتلی اولماغیوا
ئوز ضعیفلیگیمه سننن قدرتلی اولماغیوا ئوز فقیرلیگیمه
سننن غنی لیگیموه یوقدور سننن سوی همیشه لیک
حفظ ایله یین الله .

BAGOBO-GUIANGAN (*Philippine Islands*)

Monna O nama ko, ngo poggali no ogo para kohaddon asta nikko. Mallo-o kloni mismo ngo hago lomilomit nikko keng kollos, ngo ogo keng kaayo-ayo, hikko keng malikoddo anda ottad ngo nama, hikko na eng kotawang neng hirap eng boy-yottow neng naw-wo mo.

BAHASA BADJAO (*Philippine Islands*)

Aku makasaksi, Ya Tuha ku, dah bay hinang aku ni katoon-nan maka ni duwaahan. Aku nulay ma kadjapan iti ni kalunaan maka ni kamiskinan ku maka dayan.

Mahananiya saddi Tuhan suga siga nabang ma kalaatan Kauluman.

BENGALI (Bangladesh)

হে আমার ঈশ্বর, তুমি আমাকে সৃষ্টি করিয়াছ তোমাকেই জানিবার জ্ঞান এবং তোমারই অর্চনা করিবার জ্ঞান, সেই সাফাই আমি বহন করিতেছি। প্রতি মুহূর্তে আমি আমার শক্তিহীনতা এবং তোমার অসীম শক্তি ও আমার দারিদ্র্য এবং তোমার ঐশ্বর্যের প্রমাণ পাইতেছি।

তুমি ছাড়া আর কোনো ঈশ্বর নাই, বিপদকালে তুমিই পরিত্রাতা, চিরস্থায়ী।

BHOJPURI (India)

हे ईश्वर हम गोआही देत बानी कि तोहारा के चिन्हे आ तोहारे पूजा करे खातिर तू हमरा के पीदा कहले बाड़। हम एह घरी कबूल करत बानी कि हम बेसकति बानी आ तू सब सकती से भरल बाड़ हम दलिवर बानी आ तू सब सकति से भरल पूरल बाड़ हम तुच्छ बानी आ तू सब सामरथी बाड़।

तोहारा के छोड़ के दोसर केहू परमात्मा नइखे। तूही हब भयावन संकटन से तारनहार आ स्वनिर्भर

BICOL (BIKOLANO) (Philippine Islands)

Nagpapatotoo ako, O Dios ko, na linalang Mo ako na mamidbid Ika asin sambahon Ika. Nagpapatotoo ako, sa oras na ini, sa pagka dai ko nin kapangyarihan asin sa Saimong Kusog, sa sakuyang kadukhaan asin sa Saimong kayamanan.

Dai nin ibang Dios kundi Ika, an Tabang sa Peligro, an Mismong Nagdadanay.

BIDAYUH (Sarawak)

Aku jaji saksi ndug tanpa aku, akam mbuh ngundah supaya aku empuan akam serta lalu nyembah akam. Aku besaksi ndug iti seh, minan semoa pengurang kuasa aku ndug semoa pengagah akam, serta dingan pinyiranta aku dengan pingiraja akam.

Anyap tanpa da bekun masu akam, pinulung masa susah, pinulung adup.

BILAAN (Philippine Islands)

Fnanglut go O Duwata na ge i ftabo deg na mimo deg agmade ge na mangamfo de ge. Gade go de kagkahan ani de klande gnagan go, dee de akgaganam de kablasok go na dee de kalgadom. Lande dame Duwata ko la lohge de lande sen kafyem na tabongam di kat sato de gami.

BUKIDNON (Philippine Islands)

Testigosan ko, O Magbabaya ko, ha iyan ka nigtul-tul kanak ho pagkilala imo daw pagsimba imo. Matun-an ko ha laus taini ha gutlo-a ha hura ko agkabaloy daw sa gahum no, sa ka pobre ko da sa Bahandi no.

Hura un lain ha Magbabaya; kodi Ynaka, magbulig ho Katalagman; nagkinaugalingun-ho Pagpanginabuhi.

BURMESE (Burma)

အိုအရှင်ထာဝရဘုရား ယခင်၊ အရှင်တို့သို့ နားလည်လျက်၊ အရှင်တို့ပူဇော်တော်မူရာ၌ တပြည်တော်အား ဖန်ဆင်း တော်မူသည်ကို ယုံကြည်ပါသည်။ ယခုလောလောဆယ်မှာ တပြည်တော်၏ ချိန့်ခြင်း နှင့် အရှင်၏ တံခိုးတော်တို့၎င်း ၊ တပြည်တော်၏ ဆင်းရဲနစ်နား ဝမ်းခြင်း နှင့် အရှင်၏ ဩဝံပေါများခြင်းတို့၎င်း ၊ ဝန်ခံပါသည်။ စောင့်ရှောက်တော်မူသော ထာဝရတစ်နေ့တော်မူသော အရှင်မှတစ်ပါး ၊ အခြား မည်သည့်ဘုရားမျှ မရှိပါ။

CAMBODIAN (KHMER) (Khmer Republic)

បពិត្រព្រះជាម្ចាស់ ខ្ញុំសូមទទួលស្គាល់ថា ព្រះអង្គបានមេត្តាខ្ញុំ ដើម្បីឲ្យស្គាល់ព្រះអង្គនិងគោរពព្រះអង្គ ។ គ្មានពេលនេះសូមមេត្តាករុណាទានខ្សោយរបស់ខ្ញុំនឹងបារមីជ័យរបស់ព្រះអង្គ ការក្រលំបាករបស់ខ្ញុំ និងការមានសម្បត្តិដ៏ធំរបស់ព្រះអង្គ ។ ក្រៅពីព្រះអង្គចេញ គ្មានព្រះជាម្ចាស់ណាមួយយកមកប្រៀបធៀបបានឡើយ។ ព្រះអង្គជាអ្នកជួយដោះស្រាយរបស់សត្វ ព្រះអង្គគង់នៅជាទីពឹង ។

CUYUNIN (*Philippine Islands*)

Naga testigo aco Dios co nga icao ang may buat canaquen, nga kilala ta cao ig ing gueguegman. Naga testigo aco sa mga oras nga dia Dios co nga inde sarang macacomparar ang aqueng keseg sa canimo ig ang aqueng calised sa imong manggad. Icaico lamang ang Dios, ig icao lamang ang sarang macabawi canamen sa tanang cacorian.

GONDI (*India*)

हे भगवान-नवा इद मेन्दूल इद पोल्लोदा यवाइ आन्द कि नीकून समके मायलाहक अन पूजा कोलाहक इन्जोर पन्डतीन । नना इजेक कमजोर आतान अन निमा खूदे लाव बितान मन्तोन, अन नियाना घन हुङ्कान्यो मन्ता अन नना गरीब आतान ।

निकून तासीन दूसरा भगवान हिले, निमाती खुदे ईता आन्दी, अन निमाय सत्यानाश कीसहोयातोन !

GADDUNG (GADDANG) (*Philippine Islands*)

Pacuruhan co, O Dios co, se pinaratanac ta quesí maamuan ta Ca e idayadayo ta Ca. Taddanggan cu, sitoya ya quinacafec e ya pacapanguam, ya diyariyat co e ya quinamayamannu.

Awan a corhuan a Dios nu baccan a Icca, na Acquisasalacan si Quetaggacan, na Acquitaranan.

GUJARATI (*India*)

‘हुं साक्षी आयुं छुं, हे मारा धंशर, के तने ज्योणभवा तथा तारी न पून करवा ते भने सन्धे छे. आ क्षणे हुं भारी तुच्छता अने तारी सर्व-शक्तिमानपञ्चानी, भारी इन्द्रिता अने तारी सर्व-संपन्नतानी तथा भारी अशक्ति अने तारा परमसाभयनी साक्षी आयुं छुं.’

GARHWALI (*India*)

हे भगवान मि यीं बातक गवाह छइ कि तिथइ जगना खुणी और तेरी ही पूजा करणा खुणी म्यारू हवाइ । मि वीं बान थइ मनदू छइ कि तू सबले भन्हुया ताकतवर छइ, मि गरीब छइ और तू ताकत, मि छोटू छइ और नीम सब कुछ छन ।

त्यारू अलावा कुइ भी भगवान मीचा । त्वीही केवल बड़ा कण्ठों म पार कराग वलू छइ तथा त्वीही सहायता करणा वलू छइ ।

GUJARI (*India*)

ہوں گواہی دیہوں اے میرا محبوبا
کہ تیں میناں اپنی واقعی تے اپنی عبادت
واسطے پیدا کیواے - ہوں اسی ویلے
اپنی عاجزی تے تیری طاقت - اے
اپنی غیرہی تے تری بادشاہی اے اپنی
مکزوری تے تیرا اقتدار کی گواہی دے
رہیوں ہوں - کوئے ہور خدا نیہ پرتوں
جہڑو ہر شے ناں سنجالن کھلان آوا

HALABI (*India*)

हे मोचो भगवान । मोचो ए देह ए गोठ चो सबूत कि तुमी मुके तुमके जानतोर संमज्ञतोर काजे आउर तुमचो पूजा करबा काजे बनाय ला आस । मोके ए गोठ सत लोमसे कि मोचो लगे बल खिण्डक बले निहाय, आउर तुमचो लगे कतक बल आसे तुमी कतक बलवान आस, मोचो ने कतक गरिबी आसे, आउर तुमचो घन कतक समुद जयन आसे । तुमके छाडून आउर कोनी भगवान तूहात, तुमी निज ने चे आस, तुमी सब-घरतो-बेरा सहायक आस ।

HEBREW

אעידה לפניך, אלוהי,
 כי אחה בראתני לדעת דרכך ולעבדך בלבב שלם.
 מודה אני היום כי לך הגבורה ואני חסר אונים,
 דל אני ואביון ואחה מושל בכל.
 אין אלוה מבלעדך, עונה בעת צרה, אלהי העולמים.

HILIGAYNON (*Philippine Islands*)

Nagasaksi ako, O Guino-o ko, nga guinahimo Mo ako agud makakilala Icao cag makahalad sa Imo. Naga pamatu-od ako sa subong nga ti-on sang akon kakabus cag sa Imo gahum, ang akon kapobre, cag sa Imo nga mangaranon.

Wala iban nga Guino-o kondi Icao ang bulig sa katalagman ang mabinuhaton.

ILOCANO (ILOKANO) (*Philippine Islands*)

Ipanecnecco, O Dios ko, a Sica ti namarsua caniac nga umammo Kenca ken mangiday-dayaw Kenca. Panecnecac, iti daytoy a canito, ti kinacapuyco ken awan bilegco ken ti kinabilegmo, ti kinapanglawco ken ti kinabacnangmo.

Awan ti sabali a Dios no di Sica laeng, ti Catulong iti tiempo ti peggad, ti puon ken gubbuayan dagiti isu-amin.

HINDI (*India*)

हे ईश्वर ! मैं साक्षी देता हूँ कि तुम्हें पहचानने और तेरी ही पूजा करने के लिए तूने मुझे उत्पन्न किया है। मैं इस क्षण स्वीकार करता हूँ कि मैं अशक्त हूँ और तू सर्वशक्तिमान है, मैं दरिद्र हूँ और तू धनाढ्य है, मैं तुच्छ हूँ और तू सर्वसमर्थ है।

तेरे अतिरिक्त अन्य कोई परमात्मा नहीं है। तू ही संकटमोचन, सर्वव्यापी है।

JAHAI (*Malaysia*)

Yek tanggongkan ley sa-bagai saksi, Mei Tuhan yek, Pai yei menjadik-kan yek ney gelong yek kenel Pai dan bersembahyang Pai. Yek luek saksi bahawa peryam ta'ah, ok lemech yek dan ok et et Pai maken basat yek dan Kayak Pai.

Berak Tuhan peu chan lebah Pai, Tulung keleng Bahayak, yang Henjan Belak.

IBAN (DYAK) (*Indonesia, Malaysia*)

Aku nyadi saksi ka Petara Aku, Nuan udah ngaga awak ka aku nemu Nuan sereta lalu nyembah Nuan. Aku besaksi ka diatu, ngena samoa pengurang kuasa aku, ka samoa pengering Nuan, sereta enggau penyeranta aku enggau pengeraja Nuan.

Nadai bisi Petara kalimpah ari Nuan, Penu-long leboh Tusah, Penulong Diri.

JAKUN (*Malaysia*)

H'ma mëna-ngongkan dirik sabagai saksi, O Tuhan h'ma, bahawak Ajeh tēlah mënjadikan h'ma ontok mëngēnoo Ajeh dan sēmayang Ajeh. H'ma naik saksi, pada masa ka, akan kēlēhoman h'ma dan kudrat Ajeh, padah kēpapaan h'ma dan kēkayaan Ajeh.

Hēmpak Tuhan lain daripada Ajeh, Mēnung lung dalam Chēlaka, Yang Bēdirik Sēndirik.

JAPANESE

短かい日々の祈り

神様 あなたが私と造り給い
ましたのは、あなたを知り
あなたと崇拜するためであり
ますことを証言いたします。
いまこそ私の無力なことを
あなたのみ力の大きいなることを
また私の貧しさとあなたの
おん豊かさとして証明致し
ます。あなたの他に神は
いません。あなたは危険の
中のみ救いに在し御自力にて
存在し給う御方に在します

KALINGGA (*Philippine Islands*)

Sacan y testigo O Diosco nga Sicaw y namaravvu ta niacan tape nu ammuattaca anna dayawattaca. Testiguaccu ta sangaw y cawaccu tu awa-awayya anna y dactal nga pacawayyam; ta quinapobre anna ta quinaricum.

Awatta tanacuan nga Dios nu ari laman Sicsicaw; y Cabbag ta tiempo na ziga anna Mangyawa ta ngamin nga mawmawag.

KALINGGA-APAYAO (*Philippine Islands*)

Apo Kabunian, inuman ko un Sika din nangwa kan Sakon tan matagammuak kan mapadayawak Sika. Testigoak sinsaton, maid kabkaboolak kan Sika, kamas dan! Bilongno, kinakapus ko kan kina Babalin no.

Maid udom si apowok no adi Sika, Katulungan di makasapul, Sika din Mannakabalin.

KANNADA (KANARESE) (*India*)

ದೇವಾ, ನನ್ನೊಡೆಯಾ! ನೀನೇ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿ, ನಿನ್ನನ್ನು ಆರಿಯಲು ಮತ್ತು
ದಿನ್ನನ್ನು ಆರಾಧಿಸಲು ನೀನು ನನ್ನನ್ನು ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸಿದೆಯೆ; ನಾನು ಬಲಹೀನ, ನೀನು
ಬಲಶಾಲಿ; ನಾನು ಬಡನ, ನೀನು ಶ್ರೀಮಂತ. ಇದನ್ನು ನಾನೀಗ ಸಾಂ ದೇಳು
ತ್ತೇನೆ. ನಿನ್ನ ದೂರತೆ ಮತ್ತು ವದೇವರೂ ಇಲ್ಲ. ನೀನೇ ಜಗದ್ರಕ್ಷಕ, ಸ್ವಯಂ
ಪರಪೂರ್ಣ!

KASHMIRI

”لے میاں پروردگارہ! بوچھوس میہ کہتہ ہنر گمراہی دوان
دہ بو کر تھس ترہ اودھ جیلو پیدہ نہ بو کرہ چیان زان نہ پیمان بندگی
بوچھوس میہ وقتہ پنہنہ عاجزی ہنر نہ چاہی قنوک پنہنہ فقیری ہنر
نہ چاہی یعنی تسمکا قرار کران۔ بڑ پانہ چھو نہ چاہی ورلے میہ کا نھ
خدا۔ تری جھوک حفاظت کرکوں۔ نگرانی کرکوں اے میاں نہ خدا یہ!

KAYAN (*Sarawak*)

AKUI NAH ITUNG TAKSI KA', O TUHAN, TENANGAN KUI, IKA' ALENG UH NYELUNG AKUI NAI JADI' JAM IKA' DAHIN NYEPIDA IKA'. KERAI NIH AKUI BARA LEMA KUI KATYAHA DAHIN KUASA KA', KETAH KUI DAHIN KAYA' KA'. USI'TE' KET ALENG HA BEH DENG SENG AK KATALAU LA'AN MEH UH TENANGAN BIH IKA' TUA, ALENG NYEKANG AKUI, ALENG TE' MURIP NYELIMAN.

kapangyarihan kag sa kanmo pakusog sa kangko pagkuriang kag sa kanmo pag mangaranton.

On man may Panginoong Dios no kontay kawo lamang ti umawat sa tanan nga palad kag sa on man may katabuha.

MANOBO (*Philippine Islands*)

Bannalan ko no kaddin nad Langagan na id baballan do siak amid killa kikaw owayd simba kikaw. Kaddin nad pangintowan kaungkay edda kaddin wara sadda tat kikawn katussan oway edda kikawn katussan tat kaddin kapobrian oway tat kikawn kayamanan.

Warad as-san manama gawas kikaw, eddad tabang ta kahimpan, oway naantay ta salili rin.

MARATHI (*India*)

हे माझ्या ईश्वरा ! तुला जाणावे नि पूजावे या साठी तू मला निर्मिलेस याची मला जाणीव आहे. मी निर्बल आहे तर तू सर्वशक्तिमान आहेस, मी निर्धन आहे तर तू सर्वसंपन्न आहेस ! असे मी या क्षणी स्वीकारतो.

संकटात साह्य करणारा स्वयंभू असा
तूच एकमेव परमेश्वर आहेस.

MARWARI (*India, Pakistan*)

हे ईश्वर ! मैं साथी देवूं सूं.....पिछान ने ताई तथा तेरी पूजा करने ताई, तें मना पैदा कियो सः । मं ए बखत मंजूर कलैं सूं कि मैं निर्बल सूं और तू सर्वशक्तिमान सः मं गरीब सूं और तू बहुत धनी सः तथा मं तुच्छ सूं तथा तू सामर्थ्य सः ।

तेरे अलावा और कोई परमात्मा कोनी तू ही भयानक संकट मं तारणां हार और सामर्थ्य सः ।

NEPALI (NEPALESE) (*Nepal, Sikkim*)

हे मेरा ईश्वर ! म साक्षी दिन्छु कि तिमी लाई चिन्न, जान्न अनि तिम्नै पूजां अर्चना गर्न तिमी ले मलाई उत्पन्न गर्नुयो । म अहिले यो स्वीकार गर्दछु कि म अशक्त छु, तर तिमी सर्वशक्तिमान छौ, म दरिद्र छु, तिमी सर्व सम्पन्न छौ, तथा म तुच्छ छु, तिमी सर्व समर्थ छौ ।

तिम्ना अतिरिक्त अन्य कुनै परमात्मा छन । तिमी नै ही भयानक संकटमा तारण हारा एवं आत्म निर्भर ।

ORIYA (*India*)

ଅପଣଙ୍କୁ ଜାଣିବା ପାଇଁ ଓ ଅପଣଙ୍କର ଉପାସନା ପାଇଁ ମୋତେ ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରନ୍ତୁ ;
ପ୍ରଭୁ ହେ ! ମୁଁ ପ୍ରମାଣ ଦେଉଛି, ଏଇ ମୁହୂର୍ତ୍ତରେ, ମୁଁ ମୋର ଶକ୍ତିହୀନତା ଓ ଅପଣଙ୍କର ଶକ୍ତିମଗ୍ନ,
ମୋର ଦୈନିକ ଓ ଅପଣଙ୍କର ସମ୍ପଦର ପ୍ରମାଣ ଦେଉଛି ।

ବସନ୍ତରେ ସୂର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଓ ଅସୁ-ଜୀବନ ଧାରଣ ପାଇଁ ଅପଣଙ୍କ ଛତ୍ର ଅନ୍ୟ କେହି ଦେବତା
ନାହାନ୍ତି ।'

PANGASINAN (*Philippine Islands*)

Ipasuutko O Diosko, a sikay amalsar siak, ya umamta er sika lan mangiday dayew er sika. Ipasuutko ed sayan lamlamang, su inkakapuyko tan anggapyu nayarian ko, su inkabiskegmo. Su inkapobrek tan inkayaman Mo.

Anggapoy arem a Dios no agsika labat. Su katulungay tiempo su pangkamalian. Su singeg tanpanlapan su saray amin.

PUNJABI (*Gurmukhi script*) (*India, Pakistan*)

ਹੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਸਵਾਮੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਈਸ਼ਵਰ ! ਮੈਂ ਇਸ ਗਲ ਦੀ ਗਵਾਹੀ ਦੇਂਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਤੂੰ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਲਈ ਉਤਪੰਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਪਛਾਣਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਤੇਰੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਕਰਾਂ । ਮੈਂ ਇਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਸਰੀਕਾਰ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਨਿਰਬਲ ਅਤੇ ਤੂੰ ਸਰਬ ਸਮਰਥ ਹੈਂ, ਮੈਂ ਦਰਿਦਰੀ ਅਤੇ ਤੂੰ ਧਨੀ ਹੈਂ । ਤੇਰੇ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਦੂਸਰਾ ਕੋਈ ਈਸ਼ਵਰ ਨਹੀਂ । ਤੂੰ ਹੀ ਰਖਸਕ ਅਤੇ ਸਰਬ ਸਿਧ ਹੈਂ ।

PUNJABI (Persian script) (*India, Pakistan*)

سچ میرے خدائے مالک! میں ایسے گدی گراہی دینا ہوں کہ
تو میںوں اپنی بچیمان واسطے پیدا کیتا اے تے اپنی مبادت واسطے
پیدا کیتا اے۔ میں ایس ویلے اپنی کمزوری دا اقرار کرنا ہاں تے تیری
طاقت دا اقراری ہوں۔ میں غریب ہاں تے توں امیر۔ تیرے سوا ہور
کوئی خدا نہیں جھیرا ساڈی مفاقت کرے۔ توں ہی توں ایس۔

RAJASTHANI (*India*)

हे म्हारा परमात्मा मैं साख देऊ हूँ के थाने
पेदाणरे वास्ते, थारी पूजा करणरे वास्ते
ही तू मने जनम कियो है। हण पल मैं म्हारी
नबलता ने थारी सबलता, भाणी. दुबलता ने
थारी ऐश्वर्यता ने परमाणित कइ हूँ। थारे
विना और कोई भगवान का नी है। ने तू
संकट दूर करण वाड़ो ने सग जम तू हज है।

SAMAL BAHASA (*Philippine Islands*)

Adu makasaksi, Ya Tuhan ku, dah bay hinang aku ni katoonan maka ni duwaahan. Aku nulay ma kadjapan iti ni kalunaan maka ni kamiskinan ku maka dayah Mahananiya sakki Tuhan Suga Siga nabang ma kalaatan kaul-luman.

SAMAREÑO (SAMAR-LEYTE/WARAY-WARAY) (*Philippine Islands*)

Testigos ako Nimo, Dios namon, nga Ikaw an naghimo ha acon para kilal-on ka ngan tuuron. Natuod ako hini yana nga oras nga waray aco gahom ug ha imo gahom, ha acon kawarayan ug ha imo caricohan.

Waray na iba nga Dios con diri Ikaw, ma naracop han maka-luluoy, ug mga waray na paglaom.

SENOI (SĒMAI) (*Malaysia*)

Eng mēnanggonkan bērok ng sabagai saksi, Ya Tuhan eng, ajeh-lah Jun tēlah pēradikan ha eng untok ha pannei ha-Jun ru ha sēmbahyang ha—Jun. Eng pērhut saksi, ku-ma sēadeh, ha kēlēmahan eng ru ha kēkuasaan Jun, ru ha nahajap eng ru ha kēnayak Jun.

Walah Tuhan asik ju padēr Jun, Jun Pēnolok kate Bahaya, yang dēr Chukup Jun Sēndiri.

SINDHI (*India, Pakistan*)

هي منهنجا پر پوء، مان سا کي تو ڏيان تہ تو مون کي
پنهنجي سچائي ۽ پنهنجي ئي اُپاسنا ڪرڻ لاءِ پيدا ڪيو
آهي. هن کن مان پنهنجي درٻلٽا ۽ تنهنجي شڪستي ۽
پنهنجي هيٺائي ۽ تنهنجي طاقت ۽ پنهنجي ولهائي ۽
تنهنجي ونهياڻي سويڪار ڪريان ٿو. توکان سواءِ ڪوبه
ايشور ڪونہ آهي. تون ئي خطري ۾ مددگار آهين ۽
پنهنجي قوت ڪرائي ۽ سان بيٺل آهين.

SINHALESE (SINHALA) (*India, Sri Lanka*)

මාගේ දෙවියනි, සිබ වහන්සේ අවබෝධ කර ගැනීමටත්, සිබ වහන්සේට
 නවස්තර කිරීමත් සඳහා සිබ වහන්සේ මා මැවූ බවට මම සාක්ෂි වෙමි. මා ගේ
 දුර්වලත්වය සහ සිබගේ ශක්තියත්, මාගේ අසරණතම සහ සිබගේ සෞභාග්‍යයත්
 පිළිබඳව, මේ මොනොතෙහිදී මම සාක්ෂාත් වෙමි.

උපද්‍රවයේදී ආධාර කරන්නාවූත් ක්‍රියාත්මකවූත්, සිබ වහන්සේ හැර වෙන
 දෙවි තෙතෙක් නැත.

TAGALOG (PILIPINO) (*Philippine Islands*)

Ako ay sumasaksi, O Diyos ko, na ako ay
 Iyong nilikha upang Ikaw ay kilalanin at
 sambahin. Aking pinatutunayan, sa mga san-
 daling ito, and aking kawalan ng kapangyarihan
 at ang Iyong lakas, sa aking karukhaan at and
 Iyong kayamanan.
 Walang ibang Panginoong Diyos maliban sa
 Iyo, ang Siyang Tumutulong sa lahat ng
 panganib at ang Walang Kawakasan.

TAGBANWA (ABORLAN) (*Philippine Is-lands*)

Taksi ako, O Dios ko nga pianak manan mo
 ako nga sumonod Kanimo baw ikaw e nag buat
 kanaum. Natandaan ko kayte nga yon kiarotan
 ko nga sabap, kanimo baw kat Kakorongnan ko
 daasi kat ka doonan ko baw yan Kadoonan mo.
 Uga nay bakun ng Dios ekaw lamang, nga
 mananabang et Kakorean baw Ka gayonan et
 usa baw usa.

TAMIL (*India, Malaysia, Sri Lanka*)

என் கடவுளே, தங்களை அழிந்து வழி
 படுவதற்கு கெனவே என்னைப் படைத்திருக்
 கிறீர் என்பதற்கு நானே சாட்சி. இத்
 தருணம், என் பலவீனத்திற்கும் உந்தன்
 வல்லமைக்கும், என் வறுமைக்கும் உந்தன்
 செல்லாக்கிற்கும் சாட்சியம் கூறுகிறீர்கள்.

ஆபத்தில் சகாயம், சுய உருவமான
 தாங்களன்றி வேறு யாருமில்லை.

TAU SUG (MORO JOLOANO) (*Philippine Islands*)

Aku, in saksi, O Allah, ikaw in nagpapanjari
 kaku, umingat kaimu iban magsumba kaimu.
 Sapahan ku ha way kung ku iban ha gaus mu ha
 ka miskin ku iban ha daya mu.
 Wayruun dugaing Tuhan hambuuk-buuk da
 ikaw, tabang ha kasusahan, in way nagpapan-
 jari.

TELUGU (*India*)

ఓ నా దేవా. నువ్వు నన్ను నీ గురించి
 తెలుసుకోడానికి నిన్ను పూజించడానికి
 సృష్టించావని చెప్పడానికి నేను సాక్షి. నాకు
 ఉన్న నా ఆశక్తతను నీ శక్తిని నా పేద
 రికాన్ని నీ సంపదను ఈ క్షణంలో నే నంగీక
 రిస్తున్నాను.

పాధలలో సహకారిగా ఆత్మ సంయ
 మన పరునిగవుండే దైవం నువ్వు తప్ప
 ఇంకెవరూ లేరు.

TEMIAR (*Malaysia*)

Yeeq menanggongkan diri yeeq-deh re saksi,
 O Tuhan yeeq, naq Haaq-top menteqelkan yeeq
 untok neh-neh Haaq wab bersembahyang
 Haaq, Yeeq naik saksi, ma-mentar-deh, akan
 teq bersil yeeq wab bersil Haaq, kapada
 kemiskinan yeeq wab kekayaan Haaq.
 Hoi Tuhan yang moi num Haaq, Pembeseh
 dallam Bahaya, yang Ehtet tet tenaq.

TEMUAN (Malaysia)

Akuk menanggongkan dighik sabagai saksi, Yak Tuhan-Kuk, bahawak—lah Ong, telah menjadikan akuk untok mengenal dan memujuk Ong. Akuk nait saksi, padak waketu nin, akan kelemah akuk dan kekuasak Ong, kemiskinan akuk dan kekayak Ong.

Nyap adak Tuhan melainkan Ong, Pelindong dalam Bahaya, yang Bedighik Sendighik.

TIRURAY (Philippine Islands)

Ge-tindego ko Tulus si be-em me'y le-mem-nimbang ge begen inok ge-tuwa ku be-em brab ge-datu-o ko be-em. Ge-safa-a ku bene'y enda e ke-ataga ku brab ati'y barakat Mu-we, e kemeskina ku-we brab keungangen mu-we.

Enda e se-giyo Tulus we-e Be-em sa-en, e Temabang ngo enok u-wen ni kamarasayan, e Turun.

THAI (Thailand)

โอ ข้าแต่พระเจ้าผู้เป็นเจ้า ข้าพเจ้าขอเป็นพยานที่ พระองค์ ได้ทรงสร้างให้ข้าพเจ้าได้รู้จักพระองค์ และได้ สรรเสริญพระองค์ ในขณะนี้ข้าพเจ้าได้เป็นประจักษ์พยาน แล้วต่อการไร้กำลัง อำนาจของข้าพเจ้าต่อฤทธิ์เดชของ พระองค์ ต่อความซัดสนของข้าพเจ้าและต่อความมั่งคั่ง ของพระองค์

ไม่มีพระเจ้าอื่นใดนอกจากพระองค์ พระองค์ผู้ ทรงช่วยในภยันตราย และพระองค์ผู้ทรงดำรงอยู่โดยลำพัง

TULU (India)

ದೇವೆರಿ ! ಈರಿನ ತಿರಿಯೆರಿ ಗಾಡ್. ಈರಿನ ಪೂಜೆ ಮಲ್ಪುರಿ ಗಾಡ್ ಈರಿಯನನ ಸೃಷ್ಟಿ ಮಲ್ತುರಿ. ಯಾನ ಶಕ್ತಿ ದಾಂತಿನಾಯೆ? ಈರ ಶಕ್ತಿಸಂತೆ, ಯಾನ ಬಡವೆ. ಈರ ಶ್ರೀಮಂತೆ.

ಈರ ಒರಿಯೇ ನೇನೇರ. ಈರ ಕಷ್ಟೊಡ್ ಸಹಾಯ ಮಲ್ಪುನಾರ. ತಾನೇ ತಾನಾದ ಉಪ್ಪುನಾರದಾ ಈರೇ, ಓ ದೇವೆರಿ

TURKISH

İlâhi! Senin, beni, Seni tanimak ve Sana tapmak için yaratmış olduğuna şahadet ederim. Şu anda kendi aczime ve Senin Kuvvetine; kendi zaafıma ve Senin iktidarına ve kendi fakirliğime ve senin zenginliğine taniklik ediyorum. Mühe-yimin ve Kayyum İlâh ancak Sen sin.

TURKMEN (TURKOMAN) (Írán, Turkmen S.S.R.)

گواھلق بر بارین ای منینگ خدایم سن منی یارا تدینگ اذنیگی
نانا تمی وعبادت اتمک ووجین ، شهادت بر بارین شو حاله اولز
یار امرلقه و سن نیگ قوت لغتکا اولز سوکل لکه و سن نیگ
اقت داریتکا اولز یوق سیزلقه و سن نیگ های لغتکا ،
یوق سندن باشقا خدا قدرتلی ایام سنینگ

VIETNAMESE (Vietnam)

Lạy Thượng-Đế của con, con xin chứng nhận rằng NGƯỜI, đã tạo con để hiểu biết NGƯỜI, để tôn thờ NGƯỜI. Con xin thú-nhận ngay lúc này con thật là bất-lực trước uy-lực của NGƯỜI và nghèo-nhàn trước sự phong-phú của NGƯỜI.

Không có ai ngoài NGƯỜI là Thượng Đế, NGƯỜI là Đấng Cản-khởi Cứu-nạn Đấng Tự-Tồn Tự-Tại,

AUSTRALASIA AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

BAINING (*New Britain Island, Bismarck Archipelago*)

Ngo tes nas, aingo gu Kalau. Sa na rong na nge ivengo taram inge dilotu. Ai langit ingo koir kunga kurot dap ai nge di di kurot. Aingo di ama ralak ka na ngo dap a inge di ama hurong bara ka na nge. Ai re Varivat ki di koir a nga Kalau dokop sokop nge. Katat naramut na mara ma guvengirong, kosaki koir memar varung dokop sokop e Lalau.

CHAMORRO (*Mariana Islands*)

Mandeklara yo', si Us'us-hu, na un fatinos yo' ya para bai hu tungo' Hao yan para bai hu adora Hao. Tumestitigu yo' pago' na Momento, ni tai nina' sina-hu yan ma acompara gi fuetsa-mu, i pobla-hu yan i Abundasia-mu Taya mas ke guaiya na Yu'us i a'ayuda gi pelegro i todo i tiempo layana na Yu'us.

FIJIAN

Au sa qai kila, O i Kemuni na noqu Kalou, ni sa i Kemuni ga Koni a vakatuburi au mai me'u kilai Kemuni ka dau masu vei Kemuni. Au sa kila tu e na gauna oqo ni'u sa ka malumalumu wale Koni sa kaukauwa Ko i Kemuni, ni'u sa ligalala Koni sa vutuniyau Ko i Kemuni.

Sa sega tale ni dua na Kalou au kila sa i Kemuni duadua ga, O i Kemuni Koni sa Dauveivukei e na Gauna ni Leqa, O i Kemuni na Kalou Bula Vakai Koya ga.

FILA ISLAND MELE (*Fila Island, New Hebrides*)

Feuia foki akoe Atua akoe gani konia auau sirtaea akoe, go akoe gani komaro. Tmaramararaga niau iaro maramana poulapa, kit teulia, go mujia miefa geia tmouriraga. Go kainugia foki akoe geia nekekelu gani mafitlakena toturu akoe Atua.

FUTUNA (*Futuna Island, New Hebrides*)

Ekau tui maoki loku Atua, na ke faka tupu au ke kau iloa ma atolasio ki lou agai.

Ekau tui maoki ile temi nei, iloku gaegae ki lou puleaga, loku mativa ki lou kalasia.

Tie kau tui fuai kile Atua etasi, kole pule tualuga mo mafimafi.

Eina saofaki tatou mei le fakasala, mo tuutamaki kesekeke ole malama.

GILBERTESE (*Gilbert Islands*)

Atuau, I kaotia ma te koaua ba Ko a tia ni karikai ba N na ataiko, N na tangiriko ao N na noboiko. Ao I kaotia n te tai aei ba boni moan te m'aaka Ngkoe ao ngai boni moan te mangori. Moan te korakora Ngkoe ao ngai boni moan te kainnano. Bon akea te Atua temanna ba ti Ngkoo ae Ko maiu i bon Iroum ao te Tia Buokiira.

HAWAIIAN

KE HI'I NEI AU I KA'U HOIKE, E KUU AKUA, UA HANA MAI OE IA'U E IKE IA OE A E HOOMANA IA OE. KE HOIKE NEI AU, I KEIA MANAWA, I KO'U PALUPALU A I KOU IKAIKA I KO'U ILIHUNE A I KOU WAIWAI. AO LE HE AKUA EA'E O OE WALENO, KE KOKUA I KA MANAWA POINNO, KE KOKUA O KEIA KINO NOU NA POMAIIKA'I.

KUSAIEN (KOSRAEN) (*Eastern Caroline Islands*)

Nga fwakak, O God luk Kom oreyla nga in ete kom a in alu nu Sum, Nga fwakak ingena ke munas luk a ke ku Lom, nu ke sukasrup luk a ke kasrup Lom.

Mangin God Sayom, mwe kasre kut in pal in fosrgna, a ma ku in sifwana.

LIFOU (LIFU) (*Loyalty Islands, New Caledonia*)

Akötésie ti fe, nyipici koi ni laka Cilie la Atre xupi ni matre troni a adraië Cilie. Ini a öhne hnyawa enehila laka Atre ka kucakuca ni, nge thei Cilie la egöcatr. Atre ka pë mo ni, nge Cilie la trenamo.

Nyipici, pëkö ketre Akötésie hui Enëtilai, Joxu, la Atre i xatua ngöne la ijine hace, la Atre ka cilehuti epinëti palua.

MALAITA/LAU (*Solomon Islands*)

Nau ku fa mamana oe, a God nau, na o, haungai nau, uria kua haitamamu, ma kua foa hatamu. Nau ku fitooumu asi kada na, kua alua makeso la nau gi, i fafo na rigita la oe, na siofa la nau i fafo na initooua oe, e langi lau ta God, teeni oe na, na fufa kada ana ta'a la, ma a toto fri.

MAORI (New Zealand) (*New Zealand*)

E te Atua, kei te mōhio ra nōu taku whakapono me te whakakorōria anō i a koe. E whakapuake ana ahau i tēnei wā i taku ngoikoire ki tōu haka, i taku pōharatangi ki tōu orange.

E te Atua kāhori atu hoki te Atua i tua atu i a koe, ko koe anō te aroha i roto i te pōuri ora ana hoki te tangata.

MAORI (Rarotongan) (*Cook Islands*)

Ko au te kite E taku Atua e Naau au i anga mai kia kite ia Koe e kia akamori ia Koe. Te akapapu nei au i teia nei i toku puapingakore e i Toou ririnui, ki toku putaua e ki Toou ki e manganui. Kare atu e Atua ke mari ra ko Koe anake, te Tauturu i roto i te tuatau o te kino, te Tauturu o te oraanga.

MARÉ (*Loyalty Islands*)

Kolo ca Madrarungo, inu ci asesekoni, ko hnei Buango hna puli nu thu bane carajewe du Buango, ne ahmani Buango, inu ci waamilu du Buango ri gula hawa ome, wenore kogo ke inu ri tadawaien 'ore nene ni Buango, ka deko ace ke inu ri tadawaien 'ore aca ace ni Buango, ka deko se Makaze, ka Buango so 'ore thu thakui nu ri tadan 'ore tango, ne Buango 'ore ci wien kani Buango ko.

OUVÉAN (*Ouvéa Island, Loyalty Islands*)

Oge me haihnathuu, Khong lö, ujē up nya me oge méhé ka oganōu. Me hai hnathuu ogé mé haiö monu hnyi traém ang hnyi hnyimākan hnām hna hu, me ānyam hnathu me anyik thedruōc me hnām hna tren.

Ebē ke Khong aé ücü möu, at aé hana jē ünyi hia, mé hé ka hum öta hnyi hwetr aé gan, uthibi at aé tibentenge.

PALAUAN (PALAU) (*Western Caroline Islands*)

Akmui el medengei, O Dios erngak, el kmo kau a milebak el mome dengelkau e mengull er Kau. Makuuchais er chelechal time el kirel a elitechetuk ma klisichem, ma elebulek, ma chiltetem.

Ngdiak a ngodech el Dios ngkmal di kau el tang. El mesiou ra chelebuul edingar el mo cherechar.

PIDGIN* (BICHELAMARE, BISLAMA) (*New Hebrides*)

Mi talem stret O God blong mi se yu mekem mi blong save yu mo prei long yu. Long smol taem ia mi save talem tru long wik paoa blong mi mo long strong paoa blong yu; mo mi talem se mi kat nating be yu yu kat planti samting. I no kat nara fala God be yu: yu yu help long taem blong trabol mo yu yu save stap oltaem yu wan no mo.

PIDGIN* (Papuan) (*Papua and New Guinea*)

O God bilong mi. Mi tokaut nau long Yu yet i bin wokim mi beambai mi nap long save long Yu na mi nap long preia long Yu. Nau tasol mi tokaut, olsem mi no strong na Yu i strong moa. Na mi tokaut tu olsem mi rabis pinis na Yi i holim olgeta samting.

I no gat narapela God. Yu tasol i stap. Na Yu i halivim ol long taim bagarap i laik kisim ol na Yu tasol i lukautim Yu yet.

PONAPE (PONAPEAN) (*Caroline Islands*)

I wia kadehdeh, Oh ai Koht, me Komwi me ketin kapikiedahr en esei Komwi oh en kaundok ohng Komwi. I patohwanehr, ni ansou kiset, me ngehi me leut oh Komwi me manaman, oh sohte ahi mehkot ah Omwi te mehkaro.

Sohte pil emen Koht pwe Komwih te, me Sawasepen ansoun apwal, oh Koamoaur Poat-papoat.

ROTUMAN (ROTUMA) (*Rotuma Island*)

Gou aier'āk 'otou 'Āitu, ne 'Ae ta fup'ākim gou la 'inea 'Āe. Gou aier'āk 'e ao paū hete'is, ne gou 'af'af ka 'Āe ne'ne', gou keiā ka 'Āe'es koroa.

Kat 'es 'Āit hoi'ākit ra, 'Āe 'esea Gagaja, ne asoa gou 'e ao noanoā. 'Āit se 'es ā'ofige.

SAMOAN (*Samoa*)

Lo'u Atua e, ou te molimau atu, na faie, e Lau Afio a'u ina ia ou iloa Oe ma tapuai atu ia te Oe. Ou te tautino atu i lenei itula, lo'u augavale ma Lou malosi, o lo'u mativa i le ma Lou tamaoauga.

E leai lava se tasi Atua na o Oe, o le Fesoasoani i Puapuga, o le Puna-o-le-Ola.

TAHITIAN (*Society islands*)

Te ite nei au e ta 'u Atua e ua hamani Oe ia'u Note iteraa ia e te haamuriraa atu hoi ia Oe.

*Denotes revised translation.

Te ite nei hoi au na roto i teie nei taime i to'u nei paruparu I mua i to Oe na Puai Hope, e, to'u nei veve i mua i te rahi O ta Oe na Tao'a.

Aore roa e Atua ê atu maori rà o Oe ana'e, Oia tei hi'o aroha mai i tae i te mau taime ati, Oia tei tupu mai mai toro mai ia'Na iho.

TONGAN (*Tonga Islands*)

Lotu Ho'ata. Ko e fakamo'oni au 'e hoku 'Otua, kuo Ke ngaohi au, ke u 'ilo koe mo u hu kiate koe, 'Oku ou faka-mo'oni'i, 'i he momeniti ni ki hoku vaivai pea ki Ho'o Málahi, ki hoku masivá pea ki Ho'o Koloa 'ia. 'Oku 'ikai ha toe 'Otua kehe ka ko Koe, ko e tokoni 'i he tu'utámakí, ko e mo' ui pé íate Koe.

TRUKESE (RUK) (*Eastern Caroline islands*)

Ua puaratta, O ai Kot, pun En ka fori inisi pun upwe sile En o felngeni En. Ua puer nganuk non ei atun pun ngang use fakkun tufich nge En ka atufichi ai, ua osupuang nge En ka apiseki ai.

Ese wor eman Kot pun En chok. Ewe Tufich lon feiengau, O Ewe-unusan Anuwor.

URIPIV (MALEKULA) (*Malekula Island, New Hebrides*)

Inu nurai weritun, o Atua suk, ga nik kuloli inu re borong wosi nik ko re bosrove nik.

Inu nurai weritun leligen wolik re inu sete nu teter ko teterin som, re jorok ejki ko re jorom elep.

Atua san ejki ko nik, ku metmet kem re nanu ga marsej, nik ga kumaur tetajer.

VAHO (*New Caledonia*)

Gotchogn'héré némé Gn'hon Yova. Gn'hon ro wéra mé gorowé atché wé Gn'hon. Gn'hon tai go mé noué ka Gn'hon. Arégn'h wéhn gn'hin gn'hre gn'hiri, ka, iken, mon wéhn gn'hi i go mé oumo wéhn: go tchogn'héré némé Gn'hon venvürü ton ra. Gn'hon bo tonhenran nohu ta vi patou, mon na ta ko'hen mé vinniré.

Gn'hon tai, Gn'hon Yova, aya kon, tdha mon ari koa.

WHITESANDS (*Tanna Island, New Hebrides*)

Iau iakani nuparian, o rahak Iarumanig, in namol iau iakarun ik iakafaki kamik. Iau iakani nuparian u roaiu o rahak napauian, ik iatam askasik iau iatos takaku.

Iarumanig katimun tika matou ik pusin ama, ik nakasiru ia nian raha narahain, ik pusin ama.

YAPESE (*Yap Islands, Western Caroline Islands*)

A Got kemichu wun'ug

Ni kam sunmiyeg

Ni ngug mathange—luwol.

Nigem mug liyor ngom.

Gum nang ni gage dariy

Rogog ma gure gab fala—ab.

Dariy rebe Got ni taareb

Rogon ngom ni wod

Fanam mathange luwol.

EUROPE

ALBANIAN

Deshmoj a Zot, i em Perëndi! që ti më ke krijue mue për me të njoftun tyë dhe për me të adhurue tyë. Deshmoj këtë çeshtje në dobsinën t'ime dhe në fuqinë tate, në vobeksinë t'eme dhe në pasuninë Tate, S'ka tjetër Perëndi për vec se teje, Mbrues, i vet-gjendun!

ALSATIAN

Isch bezei, o min Gott, dass dü mish erschafft häsh, disch ze erkenne un anzebette.

Isch bezei én dem Aübleck mini Schwäsche un dini Macht, mini Ärmut un din Rischdum.

Es gét ken Gott üsser dér, dem Beschétzer, dem ewich seiende.

BASQUE (*France*)

Seguratzendut oi néré Jainkoa égin na zula zu ezagutuzeko éta adoratzuzeko. Seguratzendut orai néré ahalgabétasuna éta zuré podéria néré béhartasuna éta zuré ontasuna.

Esta bertze Jainkok zu bésik, bera iraun dena Guré lagintza galbitdetan.

BASQUE (*Spain*)

Ene Jainko hori, Zu ezagutzeko eta adoratzeko egin nauzula sinesten dut. Une honetan banaiz neure botererik ezaren lekuko, zure ahalmenarena, bai eta neure pobrezia eta zure aberastasunarena.

Ez dago Zu baino beste jainkorik, arriskuan laguntzen duena, bere baitan bizi dena.

BYELORUSSIAN (WHITE RUSSIAN)

Я сьведчу, О Божа, што Ты мяне стварыў, каб я пазнаў Цябе і Цябе славіў. Я сьцьвярджаю ў гэтую хвіліну маю бездапаможнасьць і Тваю моц, маю ўбогасьць і Тваю веліч.

Няма іншага Бога, апрача Цябе, Дапаможца ў бядзе, Самаіснующы.

CATALÁN (*Andorra, Balearic Islands, Spain*)

Sóc testimoni, ioh Déu meu! que tu m'has creat per a conèixer-te i adorar-te. Sóc testimoni en aquest moment, de la meva impotència i del Teu poder, de la meva pobresa i de la Teva riquesa.

No existeix altre Déu, més que Tu, el que Ajuda en el Perill, el que substitueix per Sí Mateix.

CORSICAN

So testimone, u me Diu, chi mi hai fattu per conocedi e per amarti Digu, da stu momentu a me debuleza e a to forza, a me poereza e a to ricchezza.

Un ce altro Diu chi tu, l'auido in u periculu, quellu chi è per ellu stessu.

CZECH

Dosvědčuji, ó Pane, můj Bože, že jsi mne stvořil, abych tě poznal a tebe zbožňoval. Přiznávám se v této chvíli ke své slabosti a k tvé moci, je své chudobě a k tvému bohatství. Není Boha mimo tebe, ochránce a samotrvajícího!

DANISH

Jeg bevidner, o min Gud, at du har skabt mig, for at jeg skal kende og tilbede dig. Jeg vidner i denne stund om min afmagt og din styrke, om min armod og din rigdom.

Der er ingen anden Gud end dig, hjælpen i farens stund, deñ enerådende.

DUTCH

Ik getuig, o mijn God, dat Gij mij hebt geschapen om U te kennen en te aanbidden. Ik betuig op dit ogenblik mijn machteloosheid en Uw macht, mijn armoede en Uw rijkdom.

Er is geen ander God dan Gij, de Helper in nood, de Bij-Zich-Bestaande.

ENGLISH

See p. 584.

ERSE (IRISH GAELIC)

Tugaim fianaise, a Dhia, gur chruthaigh tú mé chun thú a aithint agus a adhradh. Dearbhaím san am seo mo neamhéifeacht agus do Neart, mo bhochtaineacht agus do Shaibhreas.

Nil Dia ar bith eile ann ach tú, an Cúntóir i mBaol, an FéinChothaitheach.

ESTONIAN

Tunnistan, oh my Jumal, et Sa oled mind loonud Sind tundma ja teenima. Sel hetkel tunnistan oma jõuetust ja Sinu Vägevust, minu vaesust ja Sinu rikkust.

Pole muud Jumalat kui Sina, Abi hädas, Iseolev.

FAROESE (*Faroe Islands*)

Eg asánni, Gud mín, at tú skapaði meg til at kenna teg og tilbidja teg.

Sanneliga kenni eg, í hesu løtu, mítt hjálparloysi og tína meg, mítt fatakdømi og títt veldi.

Eingin annar Gud er til uttan tú, bert tú hjálpur í vanda, bert tú ert um alt annað fer.

FINNISH

Todistan, oi Jumalani, että olet luonut minut tuntemaan sinut ja palvelemaan sinua. Tuon julki täällä hetkellä oman voimattomuuteni ja sinun voimasi, oman köyhyyteni ja sinun rikkautesi. Ei ole mitään nuuta Jumalaa kuin sinä, apu hädässä, itsestään oleva.

FRENCH

Je suis témoin, ô mon Dieu, que Tu m'as créé pour Te connaître et pour T'adorer. J'atteste en cet instant mon impuissance et Ton pouvoir, ma pauvreté et Ta richesse.

Il n'est pas d'autre Dieu que Toi, Celui qui secourt dans le péril, Celui qui subsiste par Lui-même.

FRISIAN (*The Netherlands*)

Ik tsjûgje, o myn God, dat Jo my skepen hawwe om Jo te kennen en to aanbidden. Ik bitsjûgje op dit pas myn machteleazens en Jou macht, myn earmoede en Jou rykdom.

Der is gjin oare God as Jo, de Helper yn need, de Troch-Himsels-Bisteande.

GAELIC (*Scotland*)

Tha mi toirt fianuis, O mo Thighearna, gun do chruthaich Thu mi gu eòlas a chur ort agus gu aoradh a dheanamh Dhuit. Tha mi ag aideachadh, aig an àm seo, mo laigse fhìn agus Do chumhachd, mo ainnis agus T'ionmhaissa.

Chan' eil Dia eile ann ach Thu, ar Còmhnuidh ri àm gàbhaidh, an Uile-bheò.

GERMAN

Ich bezeuge, o mein Gott: Du hast mich erschaffen, Dich zu erkennen und Dich anzubeten. Ich bezeuge in diesem Augenblick meine Ohnmacht und Deine Macht, meine Armut und Deinen Reichtum.

Es ist kein anderer Gott ausser Dir, dem Helfer in Gefahr, dem Selbstbestehenden.

GREEK

Μαρτυρῶ, ὦ Θεέ μου, ὅτι με δημιούργησες γιὰ νὰ Σὲ ἀναγνωρίζω χαί νὰ Σὲ λατρεύω. Ἐπιβεβαιῶνς αὐτὴν τὴν στιγμήν τὴν ἀδυναμίαν μου μπρὸς στήν ἰσχύν Σου, τὴν πενίαν μου μπρὸς στὸν πλοῦτον Σου. Δὲν ὑπάρχει ἄλλος Θεὸς ἔχτος ἀπὸ Σένα, τὸν βοηθὸ στὸν χίνδυνον, τὸν Ἀυτοσυντήρητο.

GREENLANDIC

Upernarsauvunga, Gûtiga â, Ivdlit píngortíkangma ilisariniásagavkit patldorfiginiásagavkitdlo.

Mānakorpiak navsuerpunga piginauniki-ningnut ivdlitdlo píssaunekarnernut, pítsúningnut ivdlitdlo píssjújunerut.

Avdlamik Gutíkángilak Ivdlit kisivít, navianartune ikiortek, tamanut sapigakángitsok.

HUNGARIAN

Oh Uram, oh Istenem! Tanusága vagyok annak, hogy Te teremtetted engem, hogy megismerjelek és imádjalak. Beismerem a jelen pillanatban gyengeségemet és a Te Hatalmadat, szegénységemet és a Te Gazdagságodat. Rajtad kívül nincs más Isten csak Te, a Védelmező, az Önmagában Létező.

ICELANDIC

Ég ber þess vitni, Ó Guð minn, að Þú hefir skapað mig til þess að þekkja Þig og tilbiðja Þig. Ég staðfesti á þessu augnabliki, vanmátt minn og mátt Þinn, fátækt mína og auðlegð Þína.

Enginn er Guð nema Þú, Hjálpin í Nauðum, hinn Eilífi.

ITALIAN

Io faccio testimonianza, o mio Dio, che Tu mi hai creato per conoscerTi e adorarTi.

Io attesto in questo momento la mia debolezza e la Tua potenza, la mia povertà e la Tua ricchezza.

Non v'è altro Dio all'infuori di Te, l'Aiuto nel pericolo, Colui che Esiste da Sè.

LULESAMISKA (LULE LAPP)

Mån vattau vihtenastemau, Jupmelam, tan pirra, aht Tån läh sjiunjetam mu, vai mån táptáu Tu ja ráhkátalau Tunji. Mån táptástau talle ietjam famotisvuotau ja Tu famov, mu hádjovuotau ja Tu pántavuotau.

I läh ietja Jupmel ká Tån, viehкке vata aiken kuhti läh ietjanat.

LUXEMBOURGISH

Esh bezeien, O mei' God, dass Dû mēch erschaffen heust Dech ze erkennen an Dech unzeibeden. Esh bezeien an dessem Ableck meng Schwächhēt an Deng Macht, meng Armut an Dein Reichtom.

Et gēt ken anere God ausser Dier, dem Hēllefer a Gefohr, den dûrch sech selwer beste't.

NORDSAMISKA (NORTHERN LAPP)

Mán addán duodaštusa, Ibmilan, dan ala, atte Dán læt siv'dnidan mu, vai mán dâvdan Du ja gâbmirdan Du. Mán duodaštan dál ieččan haeddjovuoda ja Du fâmo, ieččan gefudaga ja Du rig'gudaga.

Ii læt iežá Ibmil gâ Dán, væk'ki hæđi áigis, gutte læt ieš-aldád.

NORWEGIAN/LANDSMÅL (NYNORSK)

Eg vitnar, o min Gud, at Du har skapa meg så at eg kan kjenna Deg og tilbe Deg. Eg vitnar i denne stund om mi maktesløyse og Din styrke, om min fattigdom og Din rikdom.

Der er ingen annan Gud enn Deg, Hjelparen i fare, den Evig Sjølvstående.

NORWEGIAN/RIKSMÅL

Jeg bevitner, o min Gud, at Du har skapt meg for at jeg kan kjenne Deg og tilbe Deg. Jeg vitner i denne stund om min maktesløshet og Din styrke, om min fattigdom og Din rikdom.

Der er ingen annen Gud enn Deg, Hjelperen i fare, den Selvbestående.

PIEDMONTESE (*Northwestern Italy*)

Mi faso testimoniansa, ò Nòsgnor, che Ti 'T l'has creame pèr conòssTe e adoreTe. Mi diciaro ant còst móment mia debòlessa e Tòa pòtensa, mia pòvertà e Tòa richèssa.

A j'e gnun àutr Signor che Ti, l'Agiut ant èl perìcol, Col ch'a esist daspèrchièl.

POLISH

Swiadczę, O Panie, Boże mój, iześ mnie stworzył, ażebym znał Cię i wielbił. Swiadczę w tej chwili mojej słabości a Twojej mocy, memu ubóstwu a Twemu bogactwu. Nie ma Boga prócz Ciebie, Obrońcy, Samoistnego.

PORTUGUESE

Dou testemunho, ó meu Deus, de que Tu me criaste para eu Te conhecer e adorar.

Confesso neste momento, minha incapacidade e Teu poder, minha pobreza e tua riqueza.

Não há outro Deus além de Ti, o amparo no perigo, o que existe por si próprio.

ROMANI

Penáu, Devla, ke Tute sas ka kerdyán ma te žanáu Tut, hai te rudživ Tuke. Penáu akana, ke

me süm slábo 'ai Tu san zoraló; ke me süm čoró 'ai Tu san barwaló. Nai kavér Devél, feri Tu hínka; o ažutimós and'e prikáza. Tu kai kórkoro ažutís Tu, či trubúl Tuke avrén.

ROMANI (Anglo-Romani) (*Canada, United Kingdom, United States*)

Mandy's acai te sikka as it 'uz Tooty as caired mandy te jin Tooty, ta te del cooshty borra lavs to Tooty sasky Tooty's morra Divvel. Ocknaw mandy's rokkarin trustel mandy's bee-roozlo ta Tooty's tacherly roozlo, ta mandy's chorro and Tooty's barvallo. There's kakkava Divvel ner Tooty, morra haskipen canna mendy's dray waffody cherras, Tooty con kakka coms chommany te get along.

ROMANI (Sinto dialect) (*Italy*)

Me crava zaiga, o Mur Devel, che Tu kerdal man Ti pingiarap tut unt camap tut. Me ginava in cava ziro miri schwacha unt tiri zor, miri elenta unt tiri barvapen. Na hi vavrò Devel har Tu vri Tuter, holfa an u ferlocho, cova cai hi peske.

ROMANIAN

Stau mărturie. O Stăpâne, pentru a Te cunoaște și a Te slăvi. Mărturisesc în clipa aceasta slăbiciunea mea și Puterea Ta, sărăcia mea și Imbelsugarea Ta. Nu e alt Dumnezeu decât Tine, Cel Ocrotitor, Cel de Sine Stătător!

ROMANSCH (Puter dialect) (*Switzerland*)

Eau fatsch testimoniaunza, o mieu Dieu, cha Tü am hest creó per At recugnuoscher e per At adorer.

Eau attest in quaist momaint mia deblezza e Tia potenza, mia poverted e Tia ricchezza.

I nu do üngün Dieu oter co Te, quel chi güda nel priewel, quel chi exista in Se stess.

RUSSIAN

Я свидетельствую, о мой Боже, что Ты сотворил меня, чтобы я познал Тебя и поклонялся Тебе. Я подтверждаю в эту минуту свое бессилие и Твою мощь, свою скудность и Твое обилие.

Нет Бога, кроме Тебя, помощника в опасности, Творителя самосущего.

SARDINIAN

Deo fatto distimonia, Deus meu, chi Tue mi has fattu omine / femina, pro Ti conoscher e pro Ti adorare.

In custu momentu, deo attesto sa debilesa mia e i-sa potenzia Tua, sa poberesa mia e i-sa ricchesa Tua.

Non b'hat atteru Deus a in foras de a Tie, Azudu in su perigulu, Cussu chi est solu dae Se.

SERBO-CROATIAN (*Yugoslavia*)

Ispovedam se, o Gospode, Bože moj! Ti si stvorio mene da spoznam i obožavam Tebe. Ispovedam u trenutku ovom slabost moju a moć Tvoju, siromaštvo moje a bogatstvo Tvoje. Nema drugog Boga sem Tebe, Svespašavajući Samopostojeći!

SLOVENE (*Yugoslavia*)

Priznavam, o moj Bog, da si me ustvaril, da Te spoznavam in molim. Priznavam v tem trenutku svojo šibkost in Tvojo moč, svojo revščino in Tvoje bogastvo.

Ni Boga razen Tebe, Zaščitnika, Večno-bivajočega.

(Moli se opoldne!)

SPANISH

Soy testigo, oh mi Dios, de que Tú me has creado para conocerte y adorarte. Atestiguo en este momento mi impotencia y Tu poder, mi pobreza y Tu riqueza.

No hay otro Dios más que Tú, el Que Ayuda en el Peligro, el Que Subsiste por Sí Mismo.

SWEDISH

Jag bär vittnesbörd om, O, min Gud, att Du har skapat mig för att lära känna Dig och för att tillbedja Dig. Jag betygar i detta ögonblick min svaghet och Din styrka, min fattigdom och Din rikedom.

Det finnes ingen annan Gud utom Du, Hjälpn i farans stund, den i sig själv Varande.

SYDSAMISKA (SOUTHERN LAPP)

Manne vitt'enusteb, O muv Jubméele, dan bijre, atte Dadne manneb leäh šugniedamme, juktie manne dabdeb Dadneb jih rukkedalleb Dadneb. Manne dabdesteb dálie jež'ene viešiesvuodeb jih Duv fámuob, jež'ene giehviesvuodeb jih Duv boádnaavuodeb.

Ij leäh jež'áh Jubméele guh Dadne, gutt'e leäh viekkie várán ájgien, gutt'e leäh jež'esisnie árruomienie.

UKRAINIAN

Я є свідком, о мій Боже, що Ти мене сотворив на те, щоб я пізнав(ла) Тебе і поклонявся(лась) Тобі. Я свідчу в цій хвилині про мою слабкість і Твою силу, про мою вбогість і Твоє багатство.

Нема іншого Бога, лише Ти, Помічник в нещастю, Самобутний.

WELSH (CYMRAEG)

Tystiaf, O fy Nuw, mai Ti a'm creaiſt i'th adnabod aci'th addoli. Tystiaf, y funud hon, i'm gwendid fy hun aci'th nerth Dithau, i'm tlodi i ac i'th gyfoeth Di. Nid oes Dduw arall ond Tydi, y Cynorthwywr mewn Perygl, yr Hunanfodolwr.

INVENTED LANGUAGES

ESPERANTO

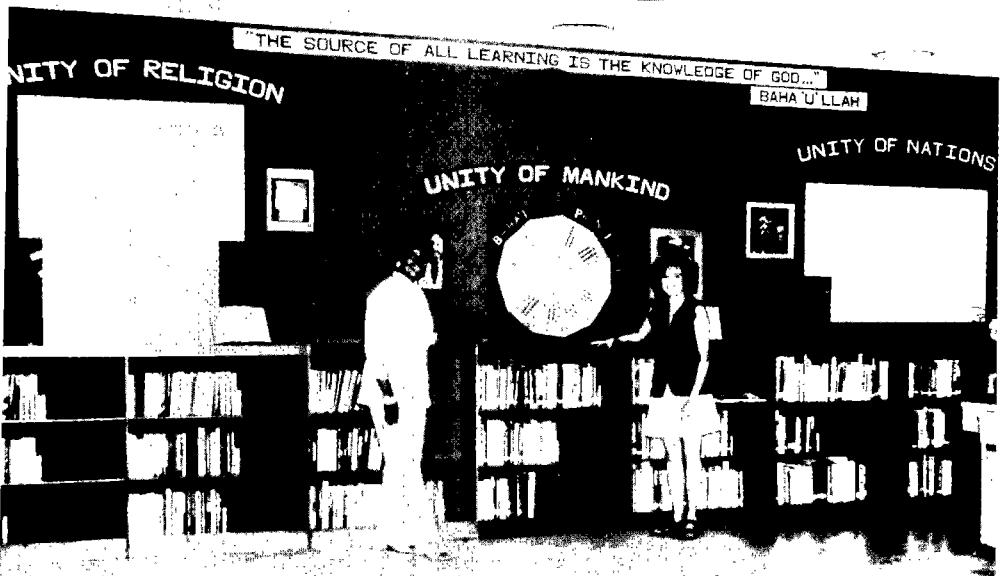
Mi atestas, ho Sinjoro, mia Dio, ke Vi kreis min, por ke mi konu kaj adoru Vin. Mi atestas ĉi-momente pri mia senforteco kaj pri Via Potenco, pri mia malriĉeco kaj pri Via Riĉeco. Ne ekzistas alia Dio krom Vi, la Defendamo, la Mem-Ekzistanto.

INTERLINGUA

Io testimonia, o mie Deo, que tu me ha create, pro Te cognoscer e adorar. Io testimonia in iste instante a mie debilitate e a Tie potentia, a mie paupertate e a Tie ricchezza. No existe áltere Deo salvo Tu, le adjutor en perículo, le in se mesmo-existente.



Facsimile of the Short Obligatory Prayer in Braille (English), Grade II.



A Bahá'í exhibition and literature display sponsored by the Bahá'ís of Roxboro, North Carolina, U.S.A.; 1975.

8. MAJOR WORKS AND PARTIAL LIST OF LANGUAGES IN WHICH THEY ARE AVAILABLE

Riḍván 1976

1 – Arabic 3 – French 5 – Persian 7 – Spanish
2 – English 4 – German 6 – Portuguese

A. WORKS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

<p><i>Epistle to the Son of the Wolf</i>: 2, 3, 4, 5 <i>Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh</i> (Compilation): 2, 3, 4, 7 <i>The Hidden Words</i>: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 <i>Kitáb-i-Íqán</i> (The Book of Certitude): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7</p>	<p><i>Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh</i> (Com- pilation): 1, 2, 4, 5 <i>The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh</i> (Compilation): 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 <i>The Seven Valleys and The Four Valleys</i>: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7</p>
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B. WORKS OF 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

<p><i>Foundations of World Unity</i>: 2, 7 <i>Paris Talks</i>: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 <i>The Secret of Divine Civilization</i>: 2, 3, 4, 5 <i>Some Answered Questions</i>: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 <i>Tablet to the Central Organization for a Durable Peace, The Hague</i>: 1, 2, 4, 5</p>	<p><i>Tablets of the Divine Plan</i>: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 <i>The Talks of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in America and Europe</i>, vols. I, II: 1, 5 <i>A Traveller's Narrative</i>: 1, 2, 5 <i>Will and Testament</i>: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 <i>Memorials of the Faithful</i>: 2, 5</p>
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C. WORKS COMPILED FROM THE WRITINGS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, THE BÁB AND 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

<p><i>Bahá'í Prayers</i>: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 <i>The Bahá'í Revelation</i>: 2, 6 <i>Bahá'í World Faith</i>: 2, 3 <i>The Divine Art of Living</i>: 2, 3, 4, 7</p>	<p><i>A New Way of Life</i> (<i>What it means to be a Bahá'í Youth</i>): 2, 6 <i>The Pattern of Bahá'í Life</i>: 2, 3, 4, 6 <i>The Reality of Man</i>: 2, 7</p>
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D. WORKS OF SHOGHI EFFENDI

<p><i>The Advent of Divine Justice</i>: 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 <i>The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh</i>: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7</p>	<p><i>God Passes By</i>: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 <i>The Promised Day is Come</i>: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7</p>
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Some Compilations from his Writings

Bahá'í Holy Places at the World Centre: 2, 5
Principles of Bahá'í Administration: (U.K.): 2, 3,
4, 6, 7
The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh: 2

9. A SELECTION OF INTRODUCTORY AND EXPOSITORY WORKS AND PARTIAL LIST OF LANGUAGES IN WHICH THEY ARE AVAILABLE

Riḍván 1976

1 – Arabic 3 – French 5 – Persian 7 – Spanish
2 – English 4 – German 6 – Portuguese

A. GENERAL

- BALYUZI, H. M.**
Bahá'u'lláh: 2, 6
The Báb: 2
'Abdu'l-Bahá: 2
Muḥammad and the Course of Islám: 2
Edward Granville Browne and the Bahá'í Faith: 2
- BLOMFIELD, LADY**
The Chosen Highway: 2, 4
- BRUGIROUX, ANDRÉ**
La terre n'est qu'un seul pays: 3
- COBB, STANWOOD**
Security for a Failing World: 2, 3, 5, 6
- ESSLEMONT, J. E.**
Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
- FADL, MÍRZÁ ABU'L**
Bahá'í Proofs: 1, 2
- FAIZÍ, GLORIA**
The Bahá'í Faith: 2, 4, 7
Fire on the Mountain Top: 2
- FATHEAZAM, HUSHMAND**
The New Garden: 2, 3, 6, 7
- FERRABY, JOHN**
All Things Made New (rev. ed.): 2
- GAIL, MARZIEH**
Dawn Over Mt. Hira, and other essays: 2
The Sheltering Branch: 2
- GIACHERY, UGO**
Shoghi Effendi—Recollections: 2
- GRÖSSMANN, HERMANN**
Der Bahá'í und die Bahá'í-Gemeinschaft: 4
- HOFMAN, DAVID**
Commentary on the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá: 2
The Renewal of Civilization: 2, 3, 6, 7
- HOLLEY, HORACE**
Religion for Mankind: 2
- HUDDLESTON, JOHN**
The Earth is But One Country: 2
- IVES, HOWARD COLBY**
Portals to Freedom: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
- MARTINEZ, EMILIO EGEA**
La Gran Promesa: 7
- MAXWELL, MAY**
An Early Pilgrimage: 2
- MEHRABKHANI, R.**
Transcendencia del Kitáb-i-Íqán: 7
La Aurora del Día Prometido: 7
Noches Navidenas: 7
- NAKHJAVÁNÍ, VIOLETTE**
Amatu'l-Bahá Visits India: 2
- PAVÓN, RAÚL**
La Voz de Dios: 7
- RABBÁNÍ, RÚHÍYYÍH**
The Good Message: 2
Prescription for Living: 2, 4, 6, 7
The Priceless Pearl: 2, 3, 5, 7
- SABET, HUSCHMAND**
Der Gespaltene Himmel: 2, 4
- SEARS, WILLIAM**
Release the Sun: 2, 6
Thief in the Night: 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
The Wine of Astonishment: 2, 3
The Flame: 2
(with Robert Quigley)
The Prisoner and the Kings: 2
- SHOOK, GLENN**
Mysticism, Science and Revelation: 2
- TAHERZADEH, ADIB**
The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, vol. I: 2
- TOWNSHEND, GEORGE**
Christ and Bahá'u'lláh: 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
The Glad Tidings of Bahá'u'lláh: (A compilation of Bahá'í Writings with notes and introduction by George Townshend): 2
The Heart of the Gospel: 2, 3
The Mission of Bahá'u'lláh and Other Literary Pieces: 2, 7
The Promise of All Ages: 1, 2, 3

WOOLSON, GAYLE

Divina Sinfonia: 2, 7

Rumbo Hacia el Futuro: 7

ZARANDÍ, NABÍL-I-

The Dawn-Breakers (Translated by Shoghi Effendi): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7

(Note: Bahá'í Publishing Trusts and National Spiritual Assemblies throughout the world constantly issue pamphlets and leaflets on various aspects of the Teachings.)

B. FOR CHILDREN

CHRISTIAN, ROBERTA K.

A Bahá'í Child's ABC: 2, 3, 4

HOFMAN, DAVID

God and His Messengers: 2, 3, 4, 7

LINDSTROM, JANET

The Kingdoms of God: 2, 3, 4

MEHRABI, JACQUELINE

Stories for Children: 2, 3

MEYER, ZOE

Stories from 'The Dawn-Breakers': 1, 2, 3, 4, 7

TRUE, MARGUERITE

Living Today for Tomorrow's World: 2, 3

Bahá'í Prayers for Children (Compilation): 2, 4, 6, 7

WALCOTT, CYNTHIA K.

The Gift: 2, 7

Compilation: *O God Guide Me* (Prayers): 2, 7

C. PERIODICALS

World Order Magazine: 2

Published by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States.

Editorial Office: 2011 Yale Station

New Haven, Connecticut

06520, U.S.A.

Herald of the South: 2

Published by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Australia.

Editorial Office: P.O. Box 285, Mona Vale

New South Wales 2103

Australia

La Pensée Bahá'íe: 3

Published by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Switzerland.

Editorial Office: P.O. Box 175

1260 Nyon, Switzerland

Maailmankansalainen

(World Citizen): Finnish

Published by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Finland.

Editorial Office: c/o P.O. Box 423

SF-00101 Helsinki 10

Finland

Opinioni Bahá'í: Italian

Published by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Italy.

Editorial Office: c/o Centro Bahá'í

Via A Stoppani, 10

00197 Roma

Italia

(Note: There are, in addition, numbers of domestic organs, issued by National Spiritual Assemblies or their Committees, for use by the Bahá'í communities.)

D. INTERNATIONAL RECORD

The Bahá'í World, vols. I–XVI (1925–1976): 2

III

ORIENTAL TERMS

1. TRANSLITERATION OF ORIENTAL WORDS FREQUENTLY USED IN BAHÁ'Í LITERATURE

'Abá	'Azíz	Farrásh-Báshí	'Iráqí
Ábádih		Fárs	'Iráq-i-'Ajam
'Abbás	Báb	Farsakh	Işfahán
'Abdu'l-Bahá	Bábí	Fatḥ-'Alí	'Ishqábád
'Abdu'l-Ḥamíd	Bábu'l-Báb	Firdaws	Ishráqát
'Abdu'l-Ḥusayn	Baghdád	Firdawsí	Ishtihárd
'Abdu'lláh	Bahá		Islám
Abhá	Bahá'í	Ganjih	Ismá'íliyyih
Abu'l-Faḍl	Bahá'u'lláh	Gílán	Istarábád
'Adasiyyih	Bahíyyih	Gul	'Izzat
Aḍhán	Bahjí	Gulistán	
Ádhirbáyján	Balúchistán	Gurgín	
Afnán	Bandar-'Abbás		Jalál
Aghşán	Báqir	Ḥabíb	Jamádiyu'l-Avval
'Ahd	Baqíyyatu'lláh	Ḥadíth	Jamál
Aḥmad	Bárfurúsh	Ḥaḍrat	Jamál-i-Mubáarak
Aḥsá'í	Başrih	Ḥájí	Jamál-i-Qidam
Ahváz	Báţúm	Ḥájí Mírzá Áqásí	Jásb
Akbar	Bayán	Ḥájí	Jubbih
'Akká	Bayt	Hamadán	
'Alá'	Big	Ḥaram	Ka'bih
'Alí	Birjand	Ḥasan	Kad-Khudá
'Alí-Muḥammad	Bishárát	Hawdaj	Kalántar
Alláh-u-Abhá	Bismi'lláh	Ḥaydar-'Alí	Kalimát
Alváḥ	Bukhárá	Haykal	Kamál
Alváḥ-i-Saláţín	Burújird	Ḥazíratu'l-Quds	Karand
Amatu'l-Bahá	Búshih	Ḥijáz	Karbilá
Amín	Buşhrú'í	Hijrat	Káshán
Amír	Buşhrúyih	Himmat-Ábád	Kashkúl
Amír-Nizám		Ḥujjat	Kawmu's-Şa'áyyidih
Amru'lláh	Chihriq	Ḥusayn	Kawthar
Ámul			Kázim
Anzalı	Dalá'il-i-Sab'ih	Ibráhím	Kázimayn
Áqá	Dárughih	Íl	Khalkhál
Aqdas	Dawlat-Ábád	'Ilm	Khán
'Arabistán	Dhabih	Imám	Kháníqayn
Asmá'	Duzdáb	Imám-Jum'ih	Khaylí Khúb
'Aváshiq		Imám-Zádih	Khurásán
Ayádí	Fará'id	Íqán	Khuy
Azal	Farán	Írán	Kirmán
'Ażamat	Farmán	'Iráq	Kirmánsháh

Kitáb-i-'Ahd	Mujtahid	Qurbán	Sultán
Kitáb-i-Aqdas	Mulk	Qurratu'l-'Ayn	Sultán-Ábád
Kitáb-i-Asmá'	Mullá		Sultánu'sh-Shuhadá'
Kitáb-i-Badí'	Muníríh	Rafsinján	Sunni
Kitáb-i-Íqán	Muṣṭafá	Raḥím	Súratu'l-Haykal
Kuláh	Mustagháth	Raḥmán	Súrih
Kurdistán	Muzaffari'd-Dín	Raḥmat	Súriy-i-Damm
		Ra'ís	Súriy-i-Ghuṣṣ
Láhiján	Nabíl	Ramaḍán	Súriy-i-Ra'ís
Lár	Nabíl-i-A'ẓam	Rasht	Súriy-i-Şabr
Lawḥ	Najaf	Rawḥání	
Luristán	Najaf-Ábád	Riḍván	Ṭabarsí
	Náqiḍín	Rúhu'lláh	Ṭabriz
Madrisih	Naşír		Ṭáhirih
Maḥbúbu'sh-Shuhadá'	Náşiri'd-Dín	Sabzivár	Tajalliyát
Mahd-i-'Ulyá	Navváb	Sadratu'l-Muntahá	Tákur
Máh-Kú	Naw-Rúz	Şáhibu'z-Zamán	Taqí
Maḥmúd	Nayriz	Şahífatu'l-Ḥaramayn	Ṭarázát
Maláyir	Nishápúr	Sa'íd	Tarbiyat
Man-Yuzhiruhu'lláh	Nuqṭih	Salsabíl	Tashkand
Maqám	Núr	Samarqand	Tawḥíd
Marághih		Sangsar	Ṭhurayyá
Marḥabá	Pahlaví	Sári	Ṭíhrán
Marv	Páran	Saysán	Túmán
Masá'il		Sha'bán	Turkistán
Maşhad	Qáḍí	Sháh	
Maşhiyyat	Qádiyán	Shahíd	'Ulamá
Maşriqu'l-Adhkár	Qahqahih	Shahmírzád	Urúmiyyih
Masjid	Qá'im	Sháhrúd	'Uthmán
Maydán	Qájár	Sharaf	
Mázindarán	Qalyán	Shari'ah	Vaḥíd
Mihdí	Qamşar	Shaykh	Valí
Mihráb	Qaşr-i-Shirín	Shaykh-Ṭabarsí	Valí-'Ahd
Mílán	Qawl	Shaykhu'l-Islám	Varqá
Mi'ráj	Qayyúm	Shí'ah (Shí'ih)	Vazír (also Vizír)
Mírzá	Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'	Shíráz	
Mishkín-Qalam	Qazvín	Shushhtar	Yá-Bahá'u'l-Abhá
Mu'adhḍhin	Qiblih	Simnán	Yahyá
Muftí	Qúchán	Sistán	Yazd
Muḥammad	Quddús	Siyáh-Chál	
Muhammad-'Alí	Qudrat	Siyid	Zanján
Muḥammarih	Qum	Şúfi	Zarand
Muḥarram	Qur'an	Sulaymán	Zaynu'l-Muqarrabín

2. GUIDE TO TRANSLITERATION AND PRONUNCIATION OF THE PERSIAN ALPHABET

ا	.....á	ک	.....kh	س	.....s	گ	.....k
ب	.....b	د	.....d	ذ	.....d	گ	.....g
پ	.....p	ر	.....dh	ت	.....t	ل	.....l
ت	.....t	ز	.....r	ث	.....z	م	.....m
ث	.....th	س	.....z	ع	.....‘	ن	.....n
ج	.....j	ش	.....zh	غ	.....gh	ه	.....h
چ	.....ch	س	.....s	ف	.....f	ی	.....y
ح	.....h	ش	.....sh	ق	.....q	و‘

a . . . as in account	i . . . as (e) in best	u . . . as (o) in short	aw . . . as in mown
á . . . as in arm	í . . . as (ee) in meet	ú . . . as (oo) in moon	

The ‘í’ added to the name of a town signifies ‘belonging to’. Thus Shírází means native of Shíráz.

3. NOTES ON THE PRONUNCIATION OF PERSIAN WORDS

The emphasis in Persian words is more or less evenly distributed, each syllable being equally stressed as in French. For example, do not say *Tabríz* or *Ṭabarsí*; stay as long on one syllable as on the next; *Tabríz*; *Ṭabarsí*. (While there are many exceptions to this rule, it is the most generally correct method of treating the question of stress.)

A frequent mistake is the failure to distinguish between broad and flat ‘a’s.’ This differentiation makes the language especially musical and should be observed: in the word *Afnán*, for example, pronounce the first ‘a’ as in

account, and the second syllable to rhyme with on. Americans are apt to pronounce short ‘a’ plus ‘r’ like the verb form are; this is a mistake; ‘ar’ should be pronounced as in the word hurry—cf. *Tarbiyat*.

The same differentiation should be observed in the case of long and short ‘i’ and long and short ‘u’. As the guide to the transliteration indicates, short ‘i’ is like ‘e’ in best, and long ‘í’ like ‘ee’ in meet; for example, *Ibráhim* is pronounced *Eb-ráheem*; *Islám* is *Ess-lahm*. Short ‘u’ being like ‘o’ in short, and long ‘ú’ like ‘oo’ in moon, the following would be pro-

nounced: Quddús—Qod-dooss; Bárfurúsh—Bár-foroosh.

Pronounce 'aw' to rhyme with low, or mown; Naw-Rúz is No-Rooz.

The following consonants may be pronounced like z: dh, z, z, đ.

The following consonants may be pronounced like ss: th, s, ş.

Zh is pronounced like the 's' in pleasure. Kh is pronounced like 'ch' in Scottish *loch* or German *nacht*. Do not pronounce it as 'k'. Westerners often experience difficulty pronouncing 'gh' and 'q'; a guttural French 'r' will serve here; otherwise use hard 'g' as in good.

H and ħ, approximately like the English aspirate 'h', should never be dropped. Tīhrán is Teh-ron; madrisih is mad-res-seh; Miḥráb is Meh-rob.

In the case of double letters pronounce each separately: 'Ab-bás.

The character transliterated (') represents a pause; it is not unlike the initial sound made in pronouncing such a word as every. The word Bahá'í is phonetically as follows: 'a' as in account; 'á' as in hall; ('), pause; 'í' as ee in meet.

The character transliterated (') may also be treated as a pause.

N.B. As Persian often indicates no vowel sounds and as its pronunciation differs in different localities throughout Persia and the Near East as well as among individuals in any given locality, a uniform system of transliteration such as the above, which is in use by Bahá'í communities all over the world, is indispensable to the student.



Calligraphic arrangement by *Mishkín-Qalam* of the invocation: O Thou 'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás!

4. DEFINITIONS OF SOME OF THE ORIENTAL TERMS USED IN BAHÁ'Í LITERATURE

- Ab: Father.
- Abá, Abú, Abí: Father of.
- 'Abá: Cloak or mantle.
- 'Abdu'l-Bahá: Servant of Bahá.
- Abhá: Most Glorious.
- Adhán: Muslim call to prayer.
- Adíb: literally 'the learned'.
- Afnán: literally 'twigs'. Denotes the relations of the Báb.
- Aghsán: literally 'branches'. Denotes sons and male descendants of Bahá'u'lláh.
- A.H.: 'Anno Hejirae'. Year of Muḥammad's migration from Mecca to Medina, and the beginning of the Muslim era.
- 'Ahd: Covenant.
- Aḥsanu'l-Qiṣaṣ: One of the commentaries on the Qur'án revealed by the Báb, on the Súrih of Joseph, translated by Ṭáhirih.
- Akbar: 'Greater', 'greatest'. (See 'Kabír'.)
- A'lá: 'The Most Exalted One', a title of the Báb.
- 'Alá': 'Loftiness'. Nineteenth month of the Badí' calendar.
- 'Alí: The first Imám, the rightful successor of Muḥammad; also the fourth Caliph.
- Alláh: 'God'.
- Alláh-u-Abhá: 'God is All-Glorious'. The Greatest Name, adopted during the period of Bahá'u'lláh's exile in Adrianople as a greeting among Bahá'ís.¹
- Alláh-u-Akbar: 'God is the Most Great'. Superseded by 'Alláh-u-Abhá' during the Adrianople period.²
- Al-Madínah: The city to which Muḥammad migrated. (See 'A.H.')
- Amin: literally 'the trusted'. Trustee.
- Amír: 'Prince', 'ruler', 'commander', 'governor'.
- Áqá: 'Master'. Title given by Bahá'u'lláh to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Also 'Mister' when preceding a name.
- Aqdas: 'The Most Holy'.
- Asmá: 'Names'. Ninth month of the Badí' calendar.
- Ayyám: (See Há).
- A'zam: 'The greatest'.
- 'Azamat: 'Grandeur'. Fourth month of the Badí' calendar.
- Báb: 'Gate'. Title assumed by Mírzá 'Alí-Muḥammad, after the declaration of His Mission in Shíráz in May 1844 A.D.
- Bábí: Follower of the Báb.
- Bábu'l-Báb: 'The Gate of the Gate'. Title of Mullá Ḥusayn, the first Letter of the Living.
- Badí': literally 'the wonderful'.
- Bahá: 'Glory', 'splendour', 'light'. Title by which Bahá'u'lláh (Mírzá Ḥusayn-'Alí) is designated. First month of the Badí' calendar.
- Bahá'í: Follower of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Bahá'u'l-Abhá: 'The Glory of the Most Glorious'.
- Bahá'u'lláh: 'The Glory of God'. Title of Mírzá Ḥusayn-'Alí; born Ṭíhrán, Persia, 12 Nov. 1817; ascended Bahjí, Palestine (now Israel), 29 May 1892.
- Bahjí: literally 'delight'. Denotes that part of the Plain of 'Akká (Israel) where the Shrine and the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh are situated.
- Baní-Háshim: The family from which Muḥammad was descended.
- Baqíyyatu'lláh: 'Remnant of God'; title applied both to the Báb and to Bahá'u'lláh.
- Bayán: 'Exposition', 'explanation'. Title given by the Báb to His Revelation, and to two of His Writings, one in Persian the other in Arabic.
- Baytu'l-'Adl-i-A'zam: The Universal House of Justice.
- Big: Honorary title; lower title than *Khán*.
- Bishárát: literally 'Glad-tidings'. Title of one of the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Caravansary (also 'caravanserai', 'caravan-sera'): An inn for caravans.
- Dárúghih: 'High constable'.
- Dawlih: 'State', 'government'.
- Dhí'b: 'The Wolf', *Shaykh* Muḥammad-Báqir.
- Dhíkr: 'Remembrance', 'commemoration', 'mention'; praise or glorification of God; recital of His Names; religious exercise or ceremony; (plural *adhkár*).
- El-Abhá: 'The Most Glorious'.
- Farmán: 'Order', 'command', 'royal decree'.
- Farrásh: 'Footman', 'licitor', 'attendant'.
- Farrásh-Báshí: The head-farrásh.
- Farsakh: Unit of measurement. Approximately three miles or five kilometres.

¹ *God Passes By*, p. 176. ² *ibid.*, p. 18.

- Fatvá: Sentence or judgement by Muslim muftí.
- Ghuṣn: 'Branch'. Son or male descendant of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Há, (Days of): Ayyám-i-Há. The Intercalary Days, so named by Bahá'u'lláh in the Book of Aqdas, where He also ordained that they should immediately precede the month of 'Alá', i.e. the month of fasting which closes the Bahá'í year. Every fourth year the number of the Intercalary Days is raised from four to five.
- Ḥadīth: Tradition. The whole body of the sacred tradition of the Muslims is called the ḥadīth. (Plural aḥādīth.)
- Ḥaḍrat: literally 'threshold'. Courtesy title sometimes translated as 'His Holiness'.
- Ḥájí: A Muslim who has performed the pilgrimage to Mecca.
- Ḥaram-i-Aqdas: The Most Holy Sanctuary, a designation given by the Guardian to the north-western quadrant of the garden surrounding the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Hawdaj (Howdah): A litter carried by a camel, mule, horse or elephant for travelling purposes.
- Ḥaẓiratu'l-Quds: 'The Sacred Fold', official title designating headquarters of Bahá'í administrative activity.
- Hijrat (also 'Hijra', 'Hegira'): literally 'migration'. The basis of Islamic chronology. The date of Muḥammad's migration from Mecca to Medina.
- Huqúqu'lláh: 'Right of God'; payment by believers instituted in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*.
- Ḥusayniyyih: Place where martyrdom of Ḥusayn is mourned, or where Muslim passion plays may be presented. Designation given by Shí'ahs to Bahá'u'lláh's Most Great House in Baghdád, forcibly occupied by them.
- Ibn: 'Son'.
- Íl: 'Clan'.
- 'Ílm: 'Knowledge'. Twelfth month of the Badí' calendar.
- Imám: Title of the twelve Shí'ah successors of Muḥammad. Also applied to Muslim religious leaders.
- Imám-Jum'ih: Chief of the mullás, who recites the Friday prayers for the sovereign.
- Imám-Zádih: Descendant of an Imám or his shrine.
- Inshá'alláh: 'If God wills it'.
- Íqán: literally 'certitude'. The title of Bahá'u'lláh's Epistle to one of the uncles of the Báb.
- Ishráqát: literally 'splendours'. Title of one of the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Isráfíl: The angel whose function is to sound the trumpet on the Day of Judgement.
- 'Izzat: 'Might'. Tenth month of the Badí' calendar.
- Jáhiliyyih: The dark age of ignorance among the Arabs before the appearance of Muḥammad.
- Jalál: 'Glory'. Second month of the Badí' calendar.
- Jamál: 'Beauty'. Third month of the Badí' calendar.
- Jamál-i-Mubáarak: literally 'the Blessed Beauty', applied to Bahá'u'lláh.
- Jamál-i-Qidam: literally 'the Ancient Beauty', applied to Bahá'u'lláh.
- Jihád: Holy war, as specified in Qur'án.
- Jináb: Courtesy title sometimes translated 'His Honour'.
- Jubbih: An outer coat.
- Ka'bih: Ancient shrine at Mecca. Now recognized as the most holy shrine of Islám.
- Kabír: literally 'great'. (See 'Akbar'.)
- Kad-khudá: Chief of a ward or parish in a town; headman of a village.
- Kalántar: 'Mayor'.
- Kalím: 'One who discourses'.
- Kalímu'lláh: 'One Who converses with God'. Title given to Moses in the Islamic dispensation.
- Kalimát: 'Words'. Seventh month of the Badí' calendar.
- Kamál: 'Perfection'. Eighth month of the Badí' calendar.
- Karbilá'í: A Muslim who has performed the pilgrimage to Karbilá.
- Kawthar: A river in Paradise, whence all the other rivers derive their source.
- Khádímu'lláh: 'Servant of God', title of Mírzá Áqá Ján.¹
- Khán: 'Prince', 'lord', 'nobleman', 'chieftain'.
Khán: similar to a caravansary.
- Khiḍr: literally 'The Green One'.
- Khuṭbih: Sermon delivered on Fridays at noon in Islamic religion.
- Kitáb: 'Book'.
- Kitáb-i-Aqdas: literally 'The Most Holy Book'. Title of Bahá'u'lláh's Book of Laws.

¹ *God Passes By*, p. 115.

- Kuláh: The Persian lambskin hat worn by government employees and civilians.
- Madrisih: 'Seminary', 'school', 'religious college'.
- Man-Yuzhiruhu'lláh: 'He Whom God will make manifest'. The title given by the Báb to the Promised One.
- Marhabá: 'Bravo! Well done!'
- Masá'il: 'Questions'. Fifteenth month of the Badí' calendar.
- Mashhadí: A Muslim who has performed the pilgrimage to Mashhad.
- Mashfiyyat: 'Will'. Eleventh month of the Badí' calendar.
- Mashriq'l-Adhkár: literally 'the dawning place of the praise of God'. Title designating Bahá'í Houses of Worship.
- Masjid: Mosque; Muslim place of worship.
- Maydán: A square or open place.
- Mihdí: Title of the Manifestation expected by Islám.
- Mihráb: The principal place in a mosque where the Imám prays with his face turned towards Mecca.
- Mi'ráj: 'Ascent'. Used with reference to Muḥammad's ascension to heaven.
- Mírzá: A contraction of 'Amír-Zádih', meaning son of Amír. When affixed to a name it signifies prince; when prefixed, simply mister.
- Mishkín-Qalam: literally 'the musk-scented pen'. Title applied to a famed Bahá'í calligraphist.
- Mu'adhdhin: The one who sounds the Adhán, the Muslim call to prayer.
- Muftí: Expounder of Muslim law; gives a fatvá or sentence on a point of religious jurisprudence.
- Muḥarram: First month of the Muslim year, the first ten days of which are observed by Shí'ahs as part of their mourning period for the Imáms. The tenth day, 'Áshúrá', is the day of the martyrdom of Ḥusayn.
- Mulk: 'Dominion'. Eighteenth month of the Badí' calendar.
- Mujtahid: Muslim doctor-of-law. Most of the mujtahids of Persia have received their diplomas from the most eminent jurists of Karbilá and Najaf.
- Mullá: Muslim priest.
- Mustagháth: 'He Who is invoked', the numerical value of which has been assigned by the Báb as the limit of the time fixed for the advent of the promised Manifestation.
- Mutişarrif: 'Governor'.
- Nabil: 'Learned', 'noble'.
- Naw-Rúz: 'New Day'. Name applied to the Bahá'í New Year's Day; according to the Persian calendar the day on which the sun enters Aries.
- Nuqtih: 'Point'.
- Núr: 'Light'. Fifth month of the Badí' calendar.
- Pahlaván: 'Athlete', 'champion'; term applied to brave and muscular men.
- Páshá: Honorary title formerly given to officers of high rank in Turkey.
- Pishkish: 'Present', 'tip', 'douceur'.
- Qáđi: 'Judge'; civil, criminal and ecclesiastical.
- Qá'im: 'He Who shall arise'. Title designating the Promised One of Islám.
- Qalyán: A pipe for smoking through water.
- Qawl: 'Speech'. Fourteenth month of the Badí' calendar.
- Qiblih: 'Point of Adoration'; prayer-direction toward which the faithful turn in prayer. The Most Holy Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí is 'the Heart and Qiblih of the Bahá'í world'.¹
- Qurbán: 'Sacrifice'.
- Qudrat: 'Power'. Thirteenth month of the Badí' calendar.
- Qur'an: 'The Reading'; 'that which ought to be read'. The Book revealed by Muḥammad.
- Rabb-i-A'lá: 'Exalted Lord'. One of the designations of the Báb.
- Raḥmat: 'Mercy'. Sixth month of the Badí' calendar.
- Ra'is: 'President', 'head'. Lawḥ-i-Ra'is, a Tablet addressed to the Prime Minister of Turkey by Bahá'u'lláh.
- Riḍván: 'Paradise'; also the name of the custodian of Paradise. The holiest and most significant of all Bahá'í festivals commemorating Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration of His Mission to His companions in 1863, a twelve-day period beginning on 21 April and celebrated annually.
- Sadratu'l-Muntahá: The Divine Lote Tree; the Tree beyond which there is no passing.
- Şadr-i-A'zam: 'Prime Minister'.
- Şáhibu'z-Zamán: 'Lord of the Age'; one of the titles of the promised Qá'im.
- Salám: 'Peace', 'salutation'. Muslim greeting. Word used to end a thesis.
- Salsabíl: A fountain of Paradise.
- Samandar: literally 'the phoenix'.

¹ *God Passes By*, pp. 110, 277.

Sarkár-Áqá: literally 'The Honourable Master', applied to 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Sháh: 'King', especially of Persia.

Sháh-Bahrám: World Saviour and Promised One of the Zoroastrians. Fulfilled by Bahá'u'lláh.

Shahíd: 'Martyr'. Plural of martyr is 'Shuhadá'.

Sharaf: 'Honour'. Sixteenth month of the Badí' calendar.

Sharí'ah, Sharí'at: Muslim canonical law. The law.

Shaykh: Venerable old man; man of authority; elder, chief, professor, superior of a dervish order, etc.

Shaykhí: School founded by Shaykh-Aḥmad-i-Aḥsá'í. Among his doctrines, in addition to the imminent dual Advent, was that the Prophet Muḥammad's material body did not ascend on the night of the Mi'rāj.

Shaykhu'l-Islám: Head of religious court, appointed to every large city by the Sháh.

Shí'ah, Shí'ih, Shi'ite: Party (of 'Alí). Partisan of 'Alí and of his descendants as the sole lawful 'Vicars of the Prophet'. The Shí'ahs reject the first three Caliphs, believing that the successorship in Islám belonged rightfully to 'Alí (first Imám and fourth Caliph) and to his descendants by divine right. Originally, the successorship was the vital point of difference, and Islám was divided because Muḥammad's (albeit verbal) appointment of 'Alí was disregarded.

Shirát: literally 'bridge' or 'path'; denotes the religion of God.

Siyáh-Chál: Black Pit in Tíhrán where, in August 1852, Bahá'u'lláh was chained in the darkness three flights of stairs underground, with some 150 thieves and assassins. Here He received the first intimations of His world Mission. Holiest place in Persia's capital.

Siyyid: Descendant of the Prophet Muḥammad.

Šúffí: Mystics or mystical doctrine in Islám.

Sultán: 'Sovereignty'. Seventeenth month of the Badí' calendar.

Sunní, Sunnite: From 'Sunná' (the Way or Practice of the Prophet, as reported in the hadíth.) By far the largest sect of Islám, this includes the four so-called orthodox sects: Hanbalites, Hanafites, Malikites, Shafites.

Súrih: Name of the chapters of the Qur'án.

Súriy-i-Mulúk: 'Súrih of Kings'; Tablet revealed by Bahá'u'lláh in Adrianople.

Tá: Letter 'T' standing for Tíhrán.

Táj: literally 'crown'; tall felt headdress adopted by Bahá'u'lláh in 1863, on the day of His departure from His Most Holy House.

Tajalliyát: literally 'effulgences'. Title of one of the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh.

Takyih: Religious establishment; usual place of observance of the martyrdom of Imám Ḥusayn.

Ṭarázát: literally 'ornaments'. Title of one of the Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh.

Túmán: Unit of Iranian currency.

'Ulamá: Plural of 'one who knows'; 'learned', 'a scholar'.

'Urvatu'l-Vuthqá: literally 'the strongest handle'; symbolic of the Faith of God.

Váhid: 1. A 'unity' or section of the Bayán. The Persian Bayán consists of nine Váhids of nineteen chapters each, except the last, which has only ten chapters. 2. The eighteen Letters of the Living (constituting the Báb's first disciples) and the Báb Himself. 3. Each cycle of nineteen years in the Badí' calendar. The word, signifying unity, symbolizes the unity of God. The numerical values of the letters of this word total nineteen.

Vaḥíd: 'Unique'.

Válí: 'Governor'.

Valí: 'Guardian'.

Valí-'Ahd: 'heir to the throne'.

Varaqiy-i-'Ulyá: literally 'the Most Exalted Leaf', applied to Bahá'íyyih (Bahíyyih) Khánum, sister of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.¹

Varqá: literally 'the dove'.

Vazír (Vizir, Vizier): Minister of State. Grand Vazír; Prime Minister.

Viláyat: 'Guardianship'.

Waqf: Muslim endowments; in Persia, the landed property of the expected Imám.

'White Path': Symbolizes the religion of God.

Yá: 'O'—e.g., Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá (O Thou the Glory of the Most Glorious!)

Zádih: 'Son'.

Zawrá: 'Black mountain'; the land of Rayy.

Zaynu'l-Muqarrabín: literally 'the Ornament of the favoured'.

Zamzam: Sacred well within the precincts of the Great Mosque at Mecca. Though salty, its water is much esteemed for pious uses, such as ablutions, and drinking after a fast.

¹ *The Bahá'í World*, vol. V, p. 205; 'Genealogy of Bahá'u'lláh'.

PART SEVEN
LITERARY AND MUSICAL WORKS

I

ESSAYS AND REVIEWS

1. THE SUFFERINGS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

GEORGE TOWNSHEND, M.A.

THE *Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh* which the beloved Guardian has given us is in large measure an intimate remembrance of the Redeemer's sufferings. And Bahá'u'lláh wished us to meditate on these sufferings. In the *Tablet of Ahmad* He says: 'Remember My days during thy days, and My distress and banishment in this remote prison.'

In a great poem known as the Fire Tablet He records at length the tale of His calamities and writes at the close:

'Thank the Lord for this Tablet whence thou canst breathe the fragrance of My meekness and know what hath beset Us in the path of God.' He adds: 'Should all the servants read and ponder this, there shall be kindled in their veins a fire that shall set aflame the world.'

True religion in all ages has called on the faithful to suffer. On the one hand it brings to mankind a happiness in the absolute and the everlasting which is found nowhere but in religion. No unbeliever knows any joy which in its preciousness can be compared to the joys of religion. 'The true monk,' it has been said, 'brings nothing with him but his lyre.'

On the other hand Heaven is walled about with fire. This bliss must be bought at a great price. So it has ever been in all religions of mankind.

An ancient hymn of India proclaims a truth as real now as it was in distant times:

The way of the Lord is for heroes. It is not meant for cowards.

Offer first your life and your all. Then take the name of the Lord.

He only tastes of the Divine Cup who gives his son, his wife, his wealth and his own life.

He verily who seeks for pearls must dive to the bottom of the sea, endangering his very existence.

Death he regards as naught; he forgets all the miseries of mind and body.

He who stands on the shore, fearing to take the plunge, attains naught.

The path of love is the ordeal of fire. The shrinkers learn from it.

Those who take the plunge into the fire attain eternal bliss.

Those who stand afar off, looking on, are scorched by the flames.

Love is a priceless thing only to be won at the cost of death.

Those who live to die, those attain; for they have shed all thoughts of self.

Those heroic souls who are rapt in the love of the Lord, they are the true lovers.

All the founders of religions have had to endure rejection and wrong, and as mankind grew more and more mature and the victory of God nearer, these wrongs, these sufferings have grown more and more severe continually.

We read little if anything of martyrdom in the Old Testament. But the New opens with Herod's slaughter of the innocents, his beheading of John the Baptist; its central figure is a Man of Sorrows acquainted with grief. The Gospels close with the agony in Gethsemane and with the Cross, the Nails, the Spear, and history follows with the martyrdom of all the eleven apostles. The Báb Himself was martyred and His followers gave up their lives for love of Him, not by dozens only but by hundreds and by thousands. In establishing

the victory of God Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá drank the cup of suffering to the dregs.

It is said there are three kinds of martyrdom: one is to stand bravely and meet death unflinchingly in the path of God without wavering or under torture denying for an instant one's faith. The second is little by little to detach one's heart entirely from the world, laying aside deliberately and voluntarily all vanities and worldly seductions, letting every act and word become a speaking monument and a fitting praise for the Holy Name of Bahá'u'lláh. The third is to do the most difficult things with such self-sacrifice that all behold it as your pleasure. To seek and to accept poverty with the same smile as you accept fortune. To make the sad, the sorrowful your associates instead of frequenting the society of the careless and gay. To yield to the decrees of God and to rejoice in the most violent calamities even when the suffering is beyond endurance. He who can fulfill these last conditions becomes a martyr indeed.

None can attempt to delineate the variety or to analyze the nature of the afflictions which were poured upon Bahá'u'lláh. Repeatedly He has Himself summarized them in a few brief powerful sentences. In one place He calls our particular attention to the fact that it was not the Black Dungeon of Tíhrán, for all its horrors and chains, which He named the Most Great Prison. He gave that name to 'Akká. We are left to surmise why, and we reflect that in the Black Pit His sufferings were chiefly personal and physical; His enemies were external foes, the hope of redeeming the Cause was still with Him. But when He went down to 'Akká in 1868, the traitor Mírzá Yaḥyá had done his deadly work; the kings and leaders had definitely rejected the Message, He was definitely cast out and silenced. Not He Himself alone but the Cause of God was in prison.

We can never imagine what numberless possibilities of immediate redemption the mad, sad, bad world had wantonly flung away; nor can our less sensitive natures know what the anguish of this frustration must have been to the eager longing of a heart as divinely centered, divinely loving as His.

But this much is abundantly plain; that the pains, the griefs, the sorrows, the sufferings, the rejections, the betrayals, the frustrations which were the common lot of all the High Prophets reached their culmination in Him.

Yet through all He remained calm, confident, His courage unshaken, His acquiescence forever radiant.

No one is to imagine that the excess of His tribulations means that at any time the power of evil had prevailed against Him. Pondering as He would have us to do, over the significance of these afflictions, we are shown that the truth is quite otherwise. He reveals:

'Had not every tribulation been made the bearer of Thy wisdom, and every ordeal the vehicle of Thy providence, no one would have dared oppose Us, though the powers of heaven and earth were to be leagued against Us.' He writes that God had sacrificed Him that men might be born anew and released from their bondage to sin. He praises God for His sufferings, He welcomes them, and even prays that for God's sake the earth should be dyed with His blood and His head raised on a spearpoint. He continually protests that with every fresh tribulation heaped upon Him He manifests a fuller measure of God's Cause and exalts more highly still God's Word.

How bitterly felt were His tribulations, how acute His anguish, how real His grief and pain is shown a hundred times in His laments. His high divinity did not protect Him from human sensibility, but never did He quail nor blanch, never did He show resentment.

Many of His laments are not over His woes themselves but over the effect they produce on the faithful whose hearts they sorely shook or on the enemies of the Cause whom they fill with joy.

Nothing could exhaust His patience nor dampen His spirit. 'Though My body be pained by the trials that befall Me, though it be afflicted by the revelation of Thy decree, yet My soul rejoiceth.' He affirms that the tribulations that He and the faithful are made to endure are such as no pen in the entire creation can record, nor anyone describe. Yet 'We swear by Thy Might, every trouble that toucheth us in our love for Thee is an evidence of Thy tender mercy, every fiery ordeal a sign of the brightness of Thy light, every woeful tribulation a cooling draught, every toil a blissful repose, every anguish a fountain of gladness.'

How then is it that 'by Thy stripes we are healed'?

It is because the intensity, the magnitude, the volume of the sufferings of Bahá'u'lláh called

forth the fullest possible expression and outpouring of the infinite mercy and love of God.

Wrongs done to the founder of a religion have two inevitable effects: one is that of retribution against the wrong done—the severity of which we may judge from the two thousand year exile of the Jewish people. The other is that of reward to the High Prophet whom they enable to release fresh powers of life that would have otherwise lain latent, to pour forth Divine energies which in their boundlessness will utterly overwhelm the forces of evil and empower Him to say: ‘Be of good cheer. I have overcome the world.’

The sufferings of Bahá’u’lláh enable us in some degree to measure the immensity of His love for mankind, to appreciate the sacrifice He made for love of us. The story of them enables us to keep in remembrance the heinous blackness and cruelty of the world of man from which He saved us; it enables us to realize the meaning and the need of Divine redemption, it proves to us the invincibility of God and the lone majesty of God’s victory over evil.

It is for the sake of learning more fully the love and the glory and the might of God that we contemplate this story of Bahá’u’lláh’s tribulations.

In that spirit we are to read it, and as a proof of His triumphant inviolable love He keeps the picture before us in many forms that we may be fortified and uplifted in our poor human struggle with the tests and afflictions of life.

The Fire Tablet adds all the poignancy and impassioned power of divine poetry to the story of the boundless suffering He and His beloved followers had to endure. In language of torrential eloquence He tells of the longing of the faithful for reunion with God being ungratified, He tells of the casting out of those most near to His heart, of dying bodies, of frustrated lovers left afar to perish in loneliness, of Satan’s whisperings in every human ear, of infernal

delusions spreading everywhere, of the triumph of calamity, darkness, and coldness of heart. He tells of the sovereignty in every land of hate and unbelief while He Himself is forbidden to speak, left in the loneliness of His anguish, drowning in a sea of pain with no rescue ship to come and save Him. The lights of honour and loyalty and truth are put out; slander prevails and no avenging wrath of an outraged God descends to destroy the wicked and vindicate God’s messenger.

He calls to God for an answer. And the answer comes, showing the inner significance of God’s seeming to forsake His righteous ones.

Man’s evil sets off God’s goodness. Man’s coldness of heart sets off the warmth of God’s love.

Were it not for the night, how would the sun of the Prophet’s valour show forth the splendour of its radiance? Through His loneliness, the unity of God was revealed; through His banishment, the world of divine singleness grew fair.

‘We have made misery,’ said God to Him, ‘the garment of Thy glory, and sorrow the beauty of Thy temple. O Thou treasure of the worlds! Thou seest the hearts are filled with hate, and shalt absolve them, Thou Who dost hide the sins of all the worlds! Where the swords flash, go forward, where the shafts fly, press onward, O Thou victim of the worlds.’

In that battle which we—all of us—wage with pain and suffering and sorrow, those are God’s last words to us:

‘Where the swords flash, go forward;
Where the shafts fly, press onward.’

For love is a priceless thing, only to be won at the cost of death. Those who live to die, those attain; for they have lost all thoughts of self. Those heroic souls who are rapt in the love of the Lord, they are the true lovers.

2. THE FRAGRANCE OF SPIRITUALITY: AN APPRECIATION OF THE ART OF MARK TOBEY

ARTHUR LYON DAHL

ART has long been one of the highest expressions of human culture, and particularly of its religious and spiritual dimensions. The cave paintings of early man, the temples and tombs of the Egyptians, Greeks, Hindus and Buddhists, the churches, cathedrals and mosques of more modern times, are so often the greatest examples of a culture's artistic heritage, and still communicate their spirit to us today. Yet what survives is generally the reflection of a mature culture; there is seldom any trace of those creative attempts in periods of rapid cultural change and in particular in the early days of a new religious dispensation to break free from the confines of a traditional heritage and to seek fresh means of expression for the new beliefs.

Mark Tobey, the American painter who died in 1976 at the age of 85, lived and worked in what will probably be judged by history to be one of those periods of social and cultural transition. As one of the first Bahá'ís to achieve world recognition for his artistic accomplishments, especially for the creativity with which he sought to express the intangible and spiritual in human experience, it is appropriate to examine his contribution to art, with particular reference to the influence of the Bahá'í Faith.

Mark Tobey's development as a painter involved a slow maturation marked by many stages of creative synthesis and discovery as he explored new concepts and drew on new experiences. His rural childhood and almost complete lack of formal training isolated him from the customary European artistic heritage. Early success as a portraitist demonstrated his innate talent, and his evolution from figurative through symbolic to abstract forms of expression resulted more from his intense inner motivation and his cumulative life experiences than from any attempt to follow the trends of modern art. Since he was neither geographically nor emotionally in the mainstream of cultural fashion, his accomplishments were slow to be

generally recognized, particularly in his own country where, in the artistic capital New York, it was inconceivable that an outsider could indeed be ahead of its own *avant-garde*. A few perceptive individuals supported his efforts, but the general reaction was one of vague interest, indifference or contempt. Tobey's first real acclaim came at an age when most people are ready for retirement. The first prize for painting at the Venice Biennale in 1958 (when he was 67), major retrospective exhibitions at the Louvre (Musée des Arts Décoratifs) in Paris in 1961 and at the New York Museum of Modern Art in 1962, and many other awards and exhibitions demonstrated the growing recognition of his accomplishments and the widespread acknowledgement that he was probably America's greatest living artist.¹ In the most significant study of Tobey to date, William Seitz calls him 'the most internationally-minded painter of importance in the history of art.'² Yet this recognition failed to divert him from his dedication to art. He resented the demands of fame which distracted him from his painting, and indeed continued to produce major works and to explore new forms of expression nearly to the end of his life.

In 1918, Tobey was already a fashionable portraitist in New York when he was introduced to Juliet Thompson, who arranged for him to travel to Green Acre and to meet the Bahá'ís gathered there. It did not take long for the spirit of the Faith to touch his heart, and he became a Bahá'í, a step that profoundly altered his life and art. He immediately began a lifelong search for means to express his beliefs and experiences in his paintings, a search that led him to abandon the glitter and tinsel of New York society for the quieter climate of Seattle, with extensive periods

¹ See for instance Alexander Watt, 'Paris Commentary', *The Studio*, December 1961, pp. 222-224 and 235.

² William C. Seitz, *Mark Tobey*, New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 1962, p. 53.

of travel and residence in Europe, the Far East, and elsewhere. He attended Bahá'í classes with a teacher sent to America by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and all his life was active in his service to the Cause, teaching, giving lectures, writing articles for *World Order* magazine, serving on administrative bodies, deputizing a pioneer to Europe in the second Seven Year Plan, and eventually moving himself to Basel, Switzerland, where he served as chairman of the Local Spiritual Assembly. His poems, letters, and the quotations frequently included in exhibition catalogues reflect a deep understanding of Bahá'í principles and contain many references to the Faith.

Indeed, he struggled with the often difficult choices involved in balancing his responsibility to his art and his direct service to the Bahá'í Faith, sometimes abandoning his painting for months at a time to undertake Bahá'í activities. Yet Bahá'u'lláh wrote: *The possessors of sciences and arts have a great right among the people of the world,*¹ and 'Abdu'l-Bahá has added: *... when the studying of art is with the intention of obeying the command of God this study will certainly be done easily and great progress will soon be made therein; and when others discover this fragrance of spirituality in the action itself, this same will cause their awakening.*²

It is at this level that the Bahá'í Faith has had the most profound and pervasive impact on Tobey's paintings. His dedication to art was reinforced by his beliefs. Indeed, his entire approach to art was conditioned by this potent combination. He wrote: 'This universal Cause of Bahá'u'lláh which brings the fruition of man's development, challenges him and attracts him to see the light of this day as the unity of all life; dislodges him from a great deal of automatic and environmental inheritance; seeks to create in him a vision which is absolutely necessary for his existence. The teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are themselves the light with which we can see how to move forward on the road of evolution.'³

Tobey was dislodged from his surrounding artistic inheritance by his discovery of the Bahá'í Faith, and launched a new direction in the evolution of art. For him, 'my whole idea of my painting is experiencing my life in paint,'⁴ and

this of course included the new spirit he had found, a spirit which he felt had died out of the art world.⁵ 'To me an artist is one who . . . portrays the spirit of man in whatever condition that spirit may be. We can't expect too much of him when the rest is negligent of spiritual values such as today.'⁶ He spent his life in a quest for means of expressing this new spirit, a spirit reflected not only in his Faith but also in the dramatic changes being wrought by science in society. 'At a time when experimentation expresses itself in all forms of life, search becomes the only valid expression of the spirit. . . .'⁷ 'I am accused often of too much experimentation, but what else should I do when all other factors of man are in the same condition? Shall any member of the body live independently of the rest? I thrust forward into space as science and the rest do. My activity is the same, therefore my end will be similar. The gods of the past are as dead today as they were when Christianity overcame the Pagan world. The time is similar, only the arena is the whole world.'⁸ He tried to balance his external and internal experiences: 'One is so surrounded by the scientific naturally one reflects it, but one needs (I mean the artist now) the religious side. One might say the scientific aspect interests the mind, the religious side frees the heart. All are interesting.'⁹ Yet this was not basically a conscious process, but a reflection of the whole man. 'The development of my work has been I feel more subconscious than conscious. I do not work by intellectual deductions. My work is a kind of self-contained contemplation.'¹⁰

The Bahá'í Faith also gave Tobey a world view, an openness to the diversity of human experience both in the subjects he depicted and in the cultural traditions which he searched for techniques and inspiration. His openness to Oriental art and his synthesis of elements of that art into his own were some of the early creative achievements underlying his later development,

⁵ Tobey, 'The Dot and the Circle'.

⁶ Letter to Arthur and Joyce Dahl, 26 April 1957, in *Mark Tobey: Paintings from the Collection of Joyce and Arthur Dahl*, Stanford, California, Stanford Art Book 7, 1967, p. 15.

⁷ Exhibition catalogue, Willard Gallery, New York, 1949, quoted in Seitz, pp. 13-14.

⁸ Mark Tobey, 'Statement by the Artist', *Paintings by Mark Tobey*, Portland Art Museum, San Francisco Museum of Art, Detroit Institute of Arts, 1945-1946.

⁹ Stanford Art Book 7, p. 15.

¹⁰ *Mark Tobey*, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 1966, Catalogue no. 393.

¹ Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í World Faith*, Wilmette, Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1956, p. 189.

² *ibid.*, p. 377.

³ Mark Tobey, 'The Dot and the Circle', *World Order*, Vol. 14, no. 12, pp. 412-416, March 1949.

⁴ Tape-recorded conversation with Arthur L. Dahl, 1962.

leading some critics to consider this the fundamental aspect of his art. To this he responded: 'as to the content of my own work, well, in spite of the comments regarding my interest in Zen, it has never been as deep as my interest in the Bahá'í Faith.'¹ He was particularly attracted to cultural periods where the expression of faith or inner spiritual states was important, not only in Oriental art but also in the earliest Christian art (Byzantine and medieval) and that of the American Indians, and he frequently drew on themes from such art in his own work.

There is also in the Bahá'í Writings a new perspective on the history of man, the evolution of human society, and the particular point at which we find ourselves today, and this too helped Tobey to place his own accomplishment. 'New seeds are no doubt being sown which mean new civilizations and, let us hope, cultures too. If I do anything important in painting some age will bring it forth and understand. One naturally looks forward to the time when absolutes will reign no more and all art will be seen as valid. . . . Shall we, as we view the increasingly darkening sky, not hope for a Byzantium, some spot to keep alight the cultural values? For what else shall we live?'²

It is almost impossible to summarize Mark Tobey's accomplishments in art. He has treated such a wide range of subjects in an incredible diversity of styles and media that for every generality there are immediately exceptions. Most of his paintings are relatively small, intended for an intimate rapport with the viewer. Recognizable figures or forms become less and less evident as his art has evolved, yet there is still a strong feeling of 'representation' in the majority of his paintings. He was capable of selecting the most visually significant elements of a scene and concentrating them onto the paper in a way that would re-create in the viewer a more complete experience. It might be the colour and movement of blades of grass in a field, the flash of lights in night traffic, or stars and mists in an evening sky. He would search out striking visual impressions and natural beauty of every kind, the surface of a squashed tin can, radio beacons, old walls of buildings, the veins of a leaf, often noting similarities between disparate elements in a leap of creative recognition.

After an experience imagining himself to be a fly moving around a room, he was able to develop a kind of multiple space, a personal version of cubism, in which the viewer has no fixed perspective, but finds that his eyes wander through the painting as though viewing a three-dimensional object from many angles. This can be most easily understood in a painting like *Gothic*, in which the architectural elements are so concentrated that one wanders visually through the painting discovering new perspectives as though walking through a Gothic cathedral.

In his explorations of Oriental art, he learned the subtleties of expression of which the brush is capable in calligraphy, the art developed from Oriental writing in both the Far East and in the Arabic and Persian cultures associated with the early Bahá'ís. This discovery gave him freedom of form in artistic expression, and he first applied it to express what especially interested him in the life of cities, 'the lights, the electric cables of the trolleys, the human streams directed by, through and round prescribed limits.'³ This was the beginning of his 'white writing' and of a concentration on the many characteristics of light which developed a larger symbolism. 'White lines in movement symbolize light as a unifying idea which flows through the compartmented units of life bringing a dynamic to men's minds, ever expanding their energies toward a larger relativity.'⁴ He could capture certain qualities of light, soft moonlight or the bright lights of a carnival, and would often use this to convey a larger message. It is interesting to note the parallel with the frequent symbolic use of light for spirit in the Bahá'í Writings.

Tobey also developed the technical means for expressing space, energy and motion. His paintings can represent an empty, infinite depth as in *Void*, or burst with explosive energy as in *New Genesis*, a work that may well express the creative force of the new Manifestation. They often contain multiple layers of elements, charged with movement or submerged in a placid calm.

With this new artistic vocabulary at his disposal, Tobey was able to create, on his two-dimensional surface, images communicating normally non-visual concepts and even emo-

¹ Conversation with Arthur L. Dahl, 1962.

² Tobey, 'Statement by the Artist'.

³ *Retrospective Exhibition Mark Tobey*, Whitechapel Gallery, London, 1962, pp. 11–12.

⁴ *Mark Tobey*, California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco, vol. 8, no. 11–12, March–April 1951.

tions. In *Edge of August*, for instance, the shimmering heat and saturated greenish light of summer fades out into a nearly empty autumn in a potent depiction of the changing seasons. '*Edge of August* is trying to express the thing that lies between two conditions of nature, summer and fall. It's trying to capture that transition and make it tangible. Make it sing. You might say that it's bringing the intangible into the tangible.'¹ *Remote Field* (1944) conveys the emptiness and desolation of war, while a lighter touch is evident in such pictures as *Calligraphic Still Life* #3, a humorous play on normal concepts of perspective.

He explained his lack of a regular progression in his work in a 1955 letter. 'Over the past 15 years, my approach to painting has varied, sometimes being dependent on brush-work, sometimes on lines, dynamic white strokes in geometric space. I have never tried to pursue a particular style in my work. For me, the road has been a zigzag into and out of old civilizations, seeking new horizons through meditation and contemplation. My sources of inspiration have gone from those of my native Middle West to those of microscopic worlds. I have discovered many a universe on paving stones and tree barks. I know very little about what is generally called "abstract" painting. Pure abstraction would mean a type of painting completely unrelated to life, which is unacceptable to me. I have sought to make my painting "whole" but to attain this I have used a whirling mass. I take up no definite position. Maybe this explains someone's remark while looking at one of my paintings: "Where is the center?"'²

Since there were no precedents for him to follow, the creation of a successful painting was often a matter of trial and error under appropriately-creative conditions, and Tobey's letters often refer to many paintings wiped off or discarded as failures, and to periods when conditions were not right for advancing his work. 'A State of Mind is the first preparation and from this the action proceeds. *Peace of Mind* is another ideal, perhaps the ideal state to be sought for in the painting and certainly preparatory to the act.'³ 'What matters most is

keeping the eyes open for experience in new directions. Perhaps the Orient is inclusive of what we term the accidental. The accidental can lead one back toward the conscious again if accepted and used; it can lead to art.'⁴

A key to appreciating Mark Tobey's painting is a recognition of the effort he expected on the part of the viewer. He described his own experience in learning how to approach Oriental art: 'When I resided at the Zen monastery I was given a sumi-ink painting of a large free brush circle to meditate upon. What was it? Day after day I would look at it. Was it selflessness? Was it the Universe—where I could lose my identity? Perhaps I didn't see its aesthetic and missed the fine points of the brush which to a trained Oriental eye would reveal much about the character of the man who painted it. But after my visit I found I had new eyes and that which seemed of little importance became magnified in words, and considerations not based on my former vision.'⁵ For him, understanding art meant exchanging human experiences: '... unless the person is willing to go through some of the actual experiences of the living artist and of those whose paintings are left behind in art museums all over the world as living symbols of their own experience, they remain as persons uninitiated.'⁶ But he knew that the result could be highly enriching. 'The old Chinese used to say: "It is better to feel a painting than to look at it." So much today is only to look at. It is one thing to paint a picture and another to experience it: in attempting to find on what level one accepts this experience, one discovers what one sees and on what level the discovery takes place. Christopher Columbus left in search of one world and discovered another.'⁷ Indeed, Tobey's friends and critics have often likened his paintings to the more emotional arts of poetry and music: 'Like poetry and music, his pictures have the time element, they unfold their contents gradually. With an active imagination they have to be approached, read, and their symbols interpreted. They reveal their tenor if one listens

Pavillon de Marsan, Paris, 1961, and Whitechapel catalogue, pp. 18–19.

⁴ Mark Tobey in Colette Roberts, *Mark Tobey*, New York, Grove Press and London, Evergreen Books, 1959, p. 41.

⁵ Louvre catalogue and Whitechapel catalogue, pp. 18–19.

⁶ Mark Tobey, 'Art and Community', *World Order*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 33–34, April 1939.

⁷ Tobey in Roberts, pp. 41–42.

¹ Mark Tobey in Selden Rodman, *Conversations with Artists*, New York, Devin-Adair, 1957, p. 17, quoted in Seitz, pp. 39–40.

² Extract from a letter dated 1/2/55, Whitechapel catalogue, p. 13.

³ *Mark Tobey*, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Palais du Louvre,

with the inner ear, "the ear of the heart," as Jean Paul calls it.¹

The most fundamentally significant of Mark Tobey's artistic accomplishments, underlying and indeed motivating much of his technical development, is his depiction of the spiritual dimension of man. For many years this side of his work was not understood and was either ignored or attacked, but it is now beginning to be appreciated. It was only natural that he should express his Bahá'í experiences and emotions both explicitly and implicitly in his paintings, and during the long development of his artistic career he returned again and again to Bahá'í themes.

In *Conflict of the Satanic and Celestial Egos* (1918), painted shortly after he became a Bahá'í, he uses the artistic language of William Blake and Michelangelo to convey the struggle between man's physical and spiritual natures. As in the past, human forms are used to represent spiritual realities.

The 1930s, when he was making the major breakthroughs in his artistic development, saw a number of Bahá'í works produced. *Rising Orb* (1935) symbolically depicts the coming of a new Revelation. 'When we wake up and see the inner horizon light rising, then we see beyond the horizon (and) break the mold of men's minds with the spirit of truth. Then there will be greater relativity than before. This light will burn away the mist of life and will become very, very great.'² *The Seekers*, probably done in this period although dated 1950, shows nine figures gathered on either side of a fountain of flowing waters, while another figure looks on.

The martyrdoms which so marked the early history of the Bahá'í Faith provided a recurring subject for Tobey, even though, as he put it, 'I know that martyr subjects aren't popular . . .'.³ *Day of the Martyr* (1942) captures in its enclosed spaces, sombre reddish coloration and restrained figures, the anguish and oppression yet spiritual calm that must have surrounded the martyrs and their families. *The Red Tree of the Martyr* (1940), long one of Tobey's favourites,

communicates the reverence and respect that the Bahá'ís feel for those who have given their lives for their Faith. 'It has the same inner spirit as the *Emerald Hill* (see below) but clearer—in beautiful dark warm reds. . . . The rise of the grey wall behind is beautiful. Two Bahá'ís bow on either side. It is certainly expressive of the beauty of the Bahá'í Religion . . .'.⁴

A similar historical foundation, but viewed in a different spirit, can be found in *The New Day* (1945?), in which scattered architectural elements and figures in nineteenth century Persian dress are enmeshed in a white writing based on Persian calligraphic motifs. Since Tobey has said that 'multiple space bounded by involved white lines symbolize higher states of consciousness, or dimensions spoken of in the Father's Kingdom,'⁵ the white writing may represent the enveloping power of the Word of God as brought in the Bahá'í Revelation, while the scenes seem derived from *The Dawn-Breakers* (Nabil's Narrative). The result concentrates the spirit of the early years of the Bahá'í Faith. *The Retreat of the Friend* (1947) seems similarly based on events associated with the early history of the Faith. Even in a less representational work like *Extensions from Baghdád* (1944), the spirit of Bahá'u'lláh's declaration in Baghdád is suggested in the 'fragments of the East, elements which writhe and coil, drawn into the western zones and evoking, for eternity, the unity of the human spirit.'⁶

A broader scope, that of the cultural development that comes with progressive revelation, is condensed into *Arena of Civilization* (1947). 'The idea of layers of cultures or strata of civilizations existed from the moment of the picture's conception: this idea being that such layers break up and are disclosed so that the next layer can expand. This painting is a kind of miniature and for this reason is connected with the art of the Near East, but the subject uses material of both the east and the west: east in origin and west in manifestation ('Abdu'l-Bahá). In the same way one religion originates in the cradle of another religion, Christianity in that of Judaism, Buddhism in that of Hinduism, and reaches maturity with time and exerts an influence accordingly. The new makes its appearance and

¹ Julia and Lyonel Feininger, 'Comments by a fellow artist', *Paintings by Mark Tobey*, Portland Art Museum, San Francisco Museum of Art, Detroit Institute of Arts, 1945-1946.

² Mark Tobey in Betty Bowen, 'Introduction', *Tobey's 80, A Retrospective*, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle and London, University of Washington Press, 1970.

³ Letter to Marian Willard, October 1947, Louvre catalogue.

⁴ Letter to Arthur L. Dahl, 28 July 1966, Stanford Art Book 7, p. 12.

⁵ Whitechapel catalogue, p. 16.

⁶ Whitechapel catalogue, p. 21.

is liberated; the old founders and becomes exhausted with time.

‘The draped forms of the East symbolize the spirit of Bahá’í which I believe to be the religion of our time and of the future, even if it is little known at the moment. . . .

‘The upper part of the painting symbolizes the new and higher forces of our age, those which we call modern; for this reason they are less formed but will take shape in the course of growth. These symbols do not only refer to the efficient machines of our modern age, but also to the spiritual and mental concepts connected with material progress. “Everything becomes evident by degrees.” (‘Abdu’l-Bahá). It is the same with civilizations, and I personally think that man always ends up experimenting with truth. In Bahá’í the stress on “the unity of human beings” is something new, it is even the crux of the matter if we are to have peace. This is an age of new communications which necessitate a fresh kind of perspective or a new kind of eye with which to see. And so I have composed this picture from the richly loaded Writings of Bahá’u’lláh and His son ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.’¹

The Bahá’í view of the dangers of material civilization carried to excess is graphically depicted in *Void Devouring the Gadget Era* (1942), in what might be termed a spiritual interpretation of the effects of war. It represents an interesting development of Tobey’s earlier paintings of the forms associated with modern material society.

In a more positive vein, *Concourse* (1943) symbolically depicts the ‘army of light’, the rank upon rank of the Supreme Concourse marshalled by the saints and prophets of bygone ages, waiting to come to the aid of those who arise to serve the Cause. An even more joyful and harmonious heavenly celebration is captured in the warm colours and active brushstrokes of *Celestial Concert* (1954).

The subdued coloration of *The Emerald Hill of Faithfulness* (1952) reinforces the calm strength of the clustered forms seemingly anchored in place and bowed but not broken, set on a vast plain under an energy-charged sky. The faithful appear even more solidly placed than the green hill on the horizon in the distance. The four scenes of *New World Dimensions I, II, III and IV* (1954), with their strong composition and

harmonious colours, suggest states of society in a new world brought to fruition by the observance of the Divine teachings for today. They radiate a dynamic peace in which the human forms and their surroundings are dimly perceived, as becomes our images of the future society.

One of the most difficult subjects for a painter would seem to be prayer and meditation, yet even here Mark Tobey has succeeded in capturing a profound sense of a spiritual state, particularly in his *Meditative Series* of 1954, of which William Seitz has said: ‘Visual prayers, these small, profound communions with God, nature, and the self transcribe the *activity*, as distinct from the subject matter, of meditation.’² Of *Meditative Series VIII*, Tobey said it ‘can suggest so much—cosmic or just minute forces of nature.’³ ‘I try to make of each picture a world in itself, and perhaps this one seems uninteresting however much one looks at the variations in the relations of lines and in the accents of touch which I have used in the center. A much vaster world can be found here than would appear at first glance. The use of many entwining rhythms indicates my search for height and depth. One must search while one is contemplating or else there will be no reward.’⁴ In the exquisite *Lovers of Light* (1960), painted when Tobey was 70 years old, the ‘white writing’ with which he has depicted both physical and spiritual light is refined to a crystalline delicacy and clarity, while being condensed into an unbelievably small space (the painting measures 12·2 × 17·2 cm; 4¾ × 6¾ in.). The technical perfection of the extremely fine brushwork creates a complex of interconnected space and line that absorbs the viewer into an intimate spiritual communion.⁵

It was only natural that Tobey’s interest in spiritual subjects would go beyond the explicitly Bahá’í to draw on the great periods of spiritual expression in earlier cultures. He once wrote: ‘I wouldn’t mind revisiting the old beauties of Europe although my tendencies tend toward the Orient, or if in Europe, to the medieval where the two strains and attitudes meet in the abstraction of the human and divine ideas,’⁶ and referring to a 12th century sculpture, ‘somewhere in this

² Seitz, p. 31.

³ Letter to Arthur L. Dahl.

⁴ Whitechapel catalogue, p. 24.

⁵ When at one point a portfolio of reproductions of Tobey’s work was proposed for distribution to Bahá’ís, this was the one painting that he specifically mentioned for inclusion.

⁶ Letter to Marian Willard, February 1953, Louvre catalogue.

¹ Whitechapel catalogue, p. 22.

spirit I'd like to find an art which would represent the age to come. . . .¹ He frequently painted Christian and Biblical subjects such as the Last Supper, Adam and Eve, Jacob and the angel, or the dormition of the Virgin, drawing often on Byzantine or Gothic sources. He said with reference to one such painting: 'I have used some of the identical forms in improvisation similar to musicians using a motif by earlier or contemporary musicians. I did not have any specific painting in mind, rather more or less the feeling of these paintings upon and into which I built a modern complex structure.'² Tobey's experience here would seem to parallel that of many Bahá'ís; his new Faith clarified and purified his understanding of the spiritual realities of earlier religious traditions as expressed in his own field of art.

Even beyond the obviously religious themes in Tobey's work, almost everything that he has done can be seen as an expression of the joy of discovering the beauties and attributes of God reflected visually as well as spiritually in the entire creation. As he himself wrote in *World Order* magazine in 1935, 'When we attempt to contemplate the *One Spirit* we come to an abstraction unknowable in any manner akin to our three-dimensional state of being or existence. So we look to Its manifestations, numberless pluralities of Its rich reflections, Its valleys of grandeur, the powers of Its exuberance as forms flow from forms—expressing this same richness in massive rocks or opening to us in some delicate blossom, as though an eye of extreme beauty had opened, fresh on its birth from harder and less reflecting substances but fed and related to them by some secret stream of life.'³

It is generally agreed that Mark Tobey was a unique figure in contemporary art, standing aloof from yet often pioneering in the trends and directions of twentieth century painting. The distinctive character of his work is obviously due not only to his innate talent and sensitivity, but also to his experience of the Bahá'í Faith, which provided him with a philosophical basis and approach totally different from that of his contemporaries. Indeed, even his move towards abstraction came from a different motivation,

the search for an artistic language capable of expressing the spiritual and intangible.

He knew that only time could decide how his life and work related to history and human society, and how much influence the Bahá'í Faith exercised on his painting. 'I can only say that it has brought a tremendous impulse to me which I have tried to use without propaganda. . . .'⁴ He believed there would never be a 'Bahá'í art', but rather an evolution towards an acceptance of all art and a universality of expression. 'Of course we talk about international styles today, but I think later on we'll talk about universal styles . . . the future of the world must be this realization of its oneness, which is the basic teaching as I understand it in the Bahá'í Faith, and from that oneness will naturally develop a new spirit in art, because that's what it is. It's a spirit and it's not new words and it's not new ideas only. It's a different spirit. And that spirit of oneness will be reflected through painting.'⁵ Mark Tobey pioneered in the expression of that oneness and thus endowed his work with the 'fragrance of spirituality'.

⁴ Conversation with Arthur L. Dahl, 1962.

⁵ Conversation with Arthur L. Dahl, 1962, *Stanford Art Book* 7, p. 15.

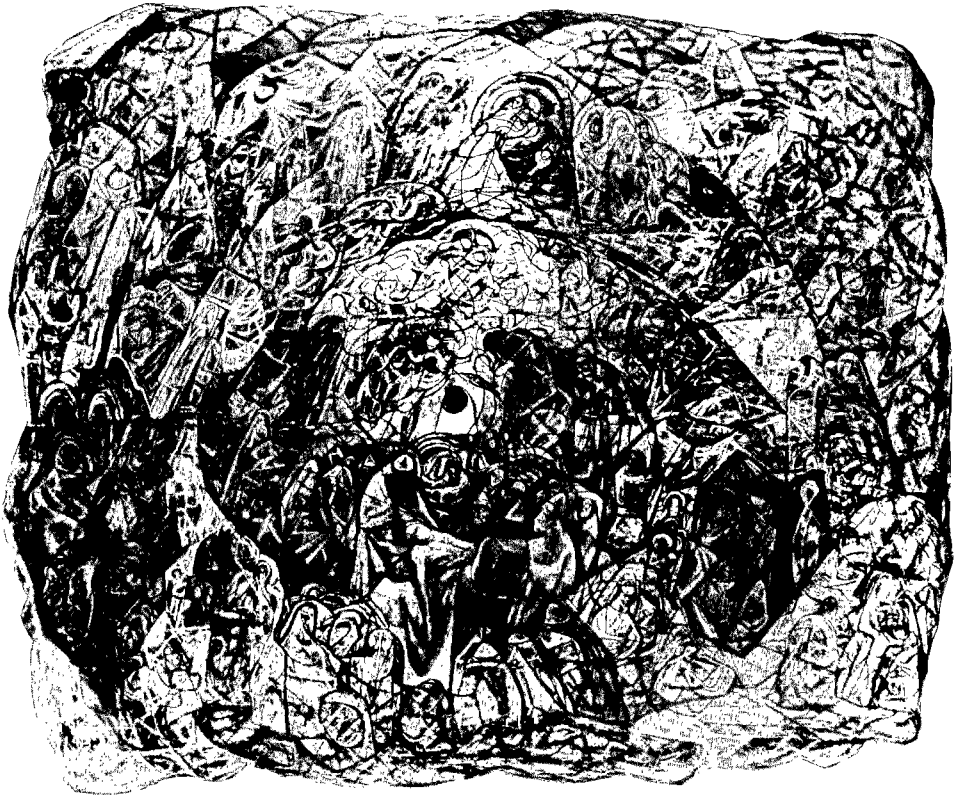
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3. EXCERPTS FROM 'BEYOND EAST AND WEST'¹

BERNARD LEACH

IT was at Dartington Hall, in Devonshire, that a warm friendship began with Mark Tobey, which grew closer over the years. He was the resident artist; I came as a potter. We talked of everything—all arts, all beliefs, and especially that one to which he adhered through all vicissitudes. He spoke of a Persian Prophet, Bahá'u'lláh (The Glory of God), Who declared Himself in 1863 in the garden of Ridván in Baghdád, Whose claim was no less than that of the return of Christ. After my loss of faith at about the age of eighteen, following a long period of uncertainty, this was more than I could take. Yet I read the books Mark lent me and often went to the meetings of Bahá'is—followers of Bahá'u'lláh. I was deeply challenged. Buddhist thought and life in Japan, and ten years of inter-religious thought through Mitrinovic in London, not to mention the writings of mystics of both East and West, had certainly widened my mind.

Of His message of unity Bahá'u'lláh wrote, '*A new life is, in this age, stirring within all the peoples of the earth . . . The fundamental purpose animating the Faith of God and His religion is to safeguard the interests and promote the unity of the human race . . . The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established. . . So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth.*'

My friend Reginald 'Reggie' Turvey² came up from St. Ives later. As well as coming to Mark's classes, Reggie, with his wife, Topsy, shared my interest in Mark's religious conviction and went to all the Bahá'í gatherings. Both he and Topsy accepted this Faith some years before I could. Looking back, the quiet strength of Mark's belief had its effect, but the idea of a new revealed religion was too much for my acceptance whilst he remained at Dartington. It was not until after

he and I made our journey by ship to the East in 1934 that, left to my own judgement, I later realized that the Central Figures of the Bahá'í Faith—the Báb, the Forerunner; Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder; and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Interpreter—were totally without egocentricity. I found myself convinced, almost against my will, that the absence of self implied the presence of Truth—the Universal 'I am that I am'. This new apprehension was like the click of a ward in a lock. A new door opened, not only between Buddhism and Christianity, but also between East and West. I asked a knowledgeable Persian believer if it was sufficient to consider Bahá'u'lláh as a spiritual genius. He paused; then said, 'Yes'. Perhaps his pause may have indicated that this was a minimal part of the reflection in the Mirror of God which is our concept of a Manifestation.

This volume is not intended to be what might be called a 'religious' book, but to be silent about one's gropings for meaning and truth is not my intention either. Throughout life, friends—living and dead—have been my educators, opening the doors of perception. Mark Tobey was one of a succession all down the years. How fortunate I have been!

The following is quoted from a paper by Mark which he read at his first drawing class at Dartington in 1930:

'What I am seeking in you, and endeavouring to help as much as I can, is the furthering towards the realm or identity of being; so that we may be better equipped to know of what a real unity is composed—not uniformity, but the unity of related parts. I have no hesitancy in including philosophical colourings, any more than I would hesitate to say that back of any person, and I mean each person, there must be his or her metaphysics.

'First of all I want the desire to create; for therein lies the will to continue to live in a new way—to add to your house more vistas of being. For I believe that back of all great achievement is richness of being.

¹ From *Beyond East and West*, Faber and Faber Ltd., Publishers, 3 Queen Square, London; 1978. Reprinted by permission.

² See 'In Memoriam', *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIV, p. 385.

‘There will be for all of us in this class—and myself not excluded—periods of disintegration and of integration. Many avenues will open up, all at once. Perhaps there will appear too many before the bewilderment of our astonishment will cause us to integrate in a new way.

‘For me, a person is constantly being educated—at home—with friends—on journeys—alone with oneself—at all times and at every odd moment that he may be conscious. We are constantly receiving many impressions—some of which we can become conscious of and accept, or exclude, as the case may be. What is wrong with finding a voice of our own? I should say fear. Fears governed by public opinion, by ideas of friends, by accepted patterns of traditional modes of thought. From where can the release from all this rigidity of pattern come? To me it must come from the Creative Life. That life which, drawing upon the vital forces within us, gives us power to begin to think and to feel for ourselves, in our own individual way. The beginning of the creative life is the beginning of faith in oneself; the will to experience and order the phenomena about us.

‘Now, why should a class like this—a so-called drawing class—enable us, in any way, to do this, or set us on the road? I think: First, because we are taking the creative point of view, however puny or weak the results—and to me, the immediate results should not be dwelt upon too long—they are like steps on a ladder, experiences through which we grow and move onwards to the next stage.

‘Many are afraid to begin: but the start must be made somewhere—some time. How subtle the forces are that pull against a keeping of our vision clear. I am sure that if we were able to look deeply within ourselves, as well as to observe the effect of many things and people upon us, we should reach for the first weapon available and try to clear away these obstacles that prevent us seeing with ever greater clarity.

‘Again I want you to feel that in this class you are, through making an effort to express your ideas on paper, freeing yourself—opening up greater powers for living the life of the artist within us all, and can see and know greater subtleties of colour and of form and wider experiences in other dimensions than you have ever known before. To me all the phenomena we observe should result in a heightening of consciousness—of your imagination; you can

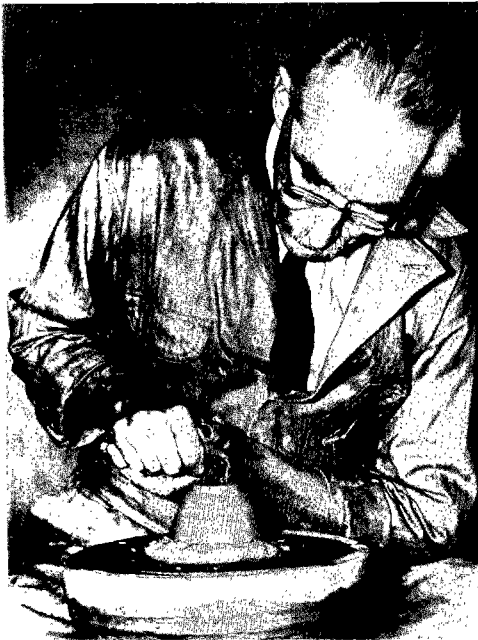
recall them, touch them, hear them, and see them, but they are in a world far more subtle than the one immediately around you. The future, as soon as you have experienced it, will, may I say, become the raw material of your consciousness.

‘No doubt I am seeming to some of you to be far from the object of your presence here. Very well, but the things you create here will in the end help create new and other states of consciousness within yourself.

‘I may perhaps have travelled a little further than you on this particular road, but I am also undergoing similar experiences to your own and I am attempting to readjust this mechanism of my own so as to let in more light; for that to me is the object of life—the enlargement of consciousness; and without light and more light, how shall we see?’

Mark Tobey, Reg Turvey and I made a promise to meet, come what may, in 1963 on the centenary of the Declaration of Bahá’u’lláh’s Prophethood. During the intervening years I often doubted the possibility or likelihood, nevertheless it did come to pass. For five days representatives of the Bahá’í Faith from every corner of the earth met in the Albert Hall in London in an incredible unity, despite lack of a common language, demonstrating before our eyes the possibility of the meeting of all men in common faith and love. Speeches were instantaneously translated into four languages. There came a moment when Amatu’l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, the wife of the Guardian of the Bahá’í Faith, the late Shoghi Effendi, recalling her memories of him, broke down in tears, and the whole of that great hall became utterly silent. Slowly, spontaneously, the Africans seated in the centre began to sing gently in their rich voices ‘Alláh-u-Abhá’; gradually the volume increased to include everybody present—all were one. Rúhíyyih Khánum, uplifted, continued her talk unperturbed. I recalled the Guardian’s words to me, ‘See the heart of humanity in the iris of the eye of the African.’ At that moment came the conviction that we were passing through the end of one epoch into another—the beginning of the unity of mankind in adult maturity; the prophecies of a long past out of the Old and New Testaments and the Qur’án of Muḥammad were being fulfilled before our eyes.

I had come to know Rúhíyyih Khánum when I



Bernard Leach at work ; San Francisco, 1950.

visited the World Centre of the Bahá'í Faith in Haifa, on the way home from Japan in 1954. Every evening of my ten days' stay was spent with her and Shoghi Effendi, the great grandson of Bahá'u'lláh, who listened to my many questions with an open mind. One concerned Bahá'í architecture—the point I made being that it was not specifically Bahá'í, but either derived from the Near East or from Greece. His answer was of importance because it made clear that architecture, as well as other art forms expressive of a new great religion, takes centuries to blossom. Despite this, for the African Temple to be erected in Kampala, he asked me to select the best architect I could recommend from England, with whom he communicated, but when I later saw the plans I found, as did Shoghi Effendi, that they were neither expressive of this new Faith nor, for that matter, good architecture. The spiritual wholeness of mankind was absent.

One evening an older Persian Bahá'í, Luṭfu'lláh Ḥakím, asked if he might show me the interior of the Holy Shrines, and I gladly assented. He unlocked a very large room covered with Persian carpets; one light was over that area where the remains of the Báb lie. He invited me to come nearer, but such a sense of awe overwhelmed me that, laying aside my shoes at the

door, I knelt down and poured out my heart with irrepressible tears.

Later I climbed high up the steep slopes of Mount Carmel and sat amongst the wild white and purple autumn crocuses, in meditation. I still have my written thoughts:

'I am sitting on a rock on Mount Carmel just above the tombs of the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The sun is shining upon olives and cypresses and the golden dome of the Shrine, upon the town and harbour of Haifa six hundred feet below, upon the blue end of the Mediterranean and the prison fort of Acca (St. Jean d'Acre of the Crusades), where Bahá'u'lláh was imprisoned for so many years and from which He spread the Gospel of the Father—the unity of man and the maturity of the human race.

'For the second time I have entered that carpeted room with its bare walls and arches, and again been overcome and beaten down to my knees in tears, with my lips to the floor in adoration of God, through the power of that Young Man Whose martyred remains lie below that red and central rug . . .

'We were driven this morning up to the western promontory near the cave of Elijah, over which stands the Carmelite church and monastery, and to the acres of the crest where the Bahá'í Temple is to be built: from of old these heights were known as the "Mountain of God". We stood in the sun on the summit, and read some prayers written by Bahá'u'lláh.'

Rúhíyyih Khánum one afternoon accompanied a group of us round the bay to the prison at 'Akká in which the Holy Family were incarcerated. It was being used as an asylum for the insane. On one side of the room occupied by Bahá'u'lláh a small window from which He was only permitted to wave a handkerchief to pilgrims who had come from Persia on foot, looked across the bay to Haifa and Mount Carmel.

The whole of the experience at the heart of this new world Faith was a turning point in my life. This was Reality—no dream.

From time to time whilst writing this book, more particularly as it closes towards an end, I have been increasingly aware that in the background of my life there have been two vocations. The first began at the age of six when I became conscious of a persistent love for drawing, nor did I ever waver in my desire to become an artist. The second from about the age of seventeen, after

reading William Blake, was the search for truth, which grew stronger in the Buddhist background of Japan. There was even a question whether the latter might not swallow up its predecessor. Gradually this fear disappeared, and I later discovered that instead of having to abandon one in favour of the other, it was simply an expansion of the search for a meaning of life and what the East called enlightenment, which I have here called stepping stones towards belief.

In this final chapter my object is to summarize the conclusions arrived at during the footsteps of my life at the deepest level of which I am capable. Who am I? Who are you? Are we not the 'fruits of one tree'¹? 'I think, therefore I am.'² I am, therefore I think; two sides of one coin! We choose; with five or more senses connected to a central brain, we seem to be at the apex of life on this planet. What then is life? What can we say of life itself but that it exists? We are part of it—it must contain all that we are; within it we may choose. The night sky and the hedgerow seem to tell of infinity, so does William Blake:

'To see the world in a grain of sand
And Heaven in a wild flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an hour'.

Infinity: with our minds can we reach it? With ever-growing expansion we desire it. As to our means of knowing, there seem to be two approaches—intellect and intuition—the first dualistic, the second direct and absolute. Both are at the root of our thought and consequent action from day to day—the one measures by inches and calipers; the other by instantaneous recognition of inherent truth. The genuine artist requires and uses both all the time, and finds that to place intellect above intuition is simply to misguide his footsteps: count your footsteps and you may fall down the stairs. Again Blake said 'What is now proved was once only imagined', thereby indicating the precedence of intuition. Intellect is a very good servant but a very bad master.

'The Word of God is the storehouse of all good, all power and wisdom. It awakens within us that brilliant intuition which makes us independent of all tuition, and endows us with an all-embracing power of spiritual understanding.'³

What is the oil of the wheel of life—is it love? What is love? Attraction, harmony, the great plus. By contrast its apparent opposite, hate, is the minus which nevertheless makes this world possible, like shadow the light. Thus we learn the relation of these and all opposites—the right tension, strung as we are on a tightrope between agony and ecstasy: thus only are they harmonized. The scientist will tell you with faithfulness that nothing can be utterly destroyed. How then can we destroy the flower of living, or, if I may call it so, spirit—spirit over matter—eternal life?

I hope that my readers will have from time to time noted that in the search for the meeting place of aspirations between two hemispheres, has lain the further unification of our concepts of truth and beauty. I do not mind whether it is called philosophy or religion, but a growing feeling in later years has convinced me steadily of the need of communication and understanding as the ambience of a united world. A clearer comprehension between all peoples is essential, to raise a spiritual protection against disaster of a kind never hitherto experienced by man.

It is only ten years since that young American President John Kennedy, during a ghastly three weeks of tension, averted the possibility of a Russian attack with rockets from Cuba on the United States, which might well have precipitated a world war. People just don't know what to do about it. The majority don't even dare to think about it, and yet there is an unrest all over the world, especially amongst the 'opt-out' young. By recent public acknowledgement there is now in two parts of the globe stockpiling of atomic bombs sufficient to destroy all life on this earth. What have we learned from two world wars? What have we learned but greater fear—now the only deterrent to the ending of life on earth? When did fear change the hearts of men? Ordinary human wisdom seems unequal to this task. Love on such a scale we have not hitherto conceived. From what other source should we receive assistance and guidance than from those Beings Whom I have called inspired spiritual Geniuses? The only hope lies in the field of intuitive perception and understanding possessed alone in full measure by these Divine Mirrors of Truth. Is it possible that in this hour of greatest need such a Being should *not* be born to this end?

If ever the human race needed help it is now. It

¹ Bahá'u'lláh

² Descartes

³ 'Abdu'l-Bahá

has barely begun to realize the responsibility of either achieving its own unity or reaching intelligent maturity on this planet. In Heaven's name why should we spend so much concentration on exploring outer space and at the same time as much or more on stockpiling of atomic weapons, when one-third of the human race has not enough food to live on and by far the greater part has no idea of its destiny? It is almost impossible to believe that in our own spiral nebula there are not far more developed intelligent beings than ourselves. What can they think of the antics of man on this obscure planet? If they have observed us during infinite time, no wonder they are not in any particular hurry to make our acquaintance—unless perchance through the Manifestations of God.

The reader may well ask who then are the Manifestations of God? The Shepherds, the Healers, Who have led, Who have enlightened. Founders of the world's religions, interpreting God to man. At no previous time in history has there been such a need of Divine guidance—of the great wisdom and insight of one of these Beings.

This time the call came out of ancient Persia, in the East where all great Prophets have been born, where three continents meet in exchange and intercommunication. Bahá'u'lláh, Who knew and knew that He knew, taught unity as the fulfilment of creation and justice as its means and that the object of evolution is to glorify God, the Essence of Being, with one voice. With the discovery of instantaneous means of communication a bond of spiritual unity around the globe has become possible—love and understanding replacing hate and rejection.

The story of 'Alí-Muhammad, the Báb, the Forerunner of Bahá'u'lláh, as told in close detail by Nabil in his book called *The Dawn-Breakers*, attracted me from the first days when in close contact with Mark Tobey at Dartington Hall. The lone figure of the Báb upholding both Jesus and Muḥammad makes clear how Islám had fallen into decay as the Mosaic teaching had done at the time of Christ and as Christianity had done in our time. The similarities of Jesus and the Báb—their ages—the Báb announced His mission at the age of twenty-four and He was killed after only six years' ministry—the common purpose of both to re-vivify the spiritual purpose of a new age. The complete and innate courage and authority of each shook me into

acceptance and brought me to a first realization of the Oneness of all search for truth and beauty in human life. These were the footsteps in the line of great Prophets called Adamic, which ushers in the long-awaited culmination of that One referred to by Jesus as the 'Son of Man' who 'shall come in the glory of His Father' and Whose Day has been described by Muḥammad as the 'Day of God', the 'Day when mankind shall stand before the Lord of the world'.

The full implication had come upon me on Mount Carmel, that there had been in my lifetime a new revelation, a new leading forward, towards the unification of all men, in a single embracing ecumenical teaching. What else could heal our desperate need? Consider what saved the world after Roman Nero. With the memory of the slaughter of Christians in the Coliseum, who could have guessed the development of Christianity to its height through the clarity of platonic Greek thought meeting with the heart of Christianity in the first great Gothic building of Chartres Cathedral, when Europe was afire with faith and Counts and Countesses worked alongside the villagers pulling the carts of stones from the valley below? I stood there in 1929 with Hamada, Yanagi, and our first American friend, Henry Bergen, gazing upwards—silent; twin towers and pointed arches, elongated figures reaching to Heaven¹; flying buttresses; the Old and New Testaments in glass and stone for the simple who could not read. Out of the quiet came Yanagi's voice: 'That is what you have lost . . . You need a new gospel.'

Did Jesus Christ ever claim to be the only Son of God? He referred to prophecy continually, particularly to Moses, to the fulfilment of the scriptures and to His own return at the time of the end. He said: 'I have yet many things to say unto you but ye cannot bear them now, howbeit when He the Spirit of Truth is come He will guide you into all truth.'

2 June 1974: Now in old age when sight is leaving my eyes, there is no loss, only gain. This early morning I peeped into another world, comparing the expanding vision of the great Prophets: the ten commandments of Moses; Gautama the Buddha, 'There is no East, there is no West, where then are North and South?'; Christ's Sermon on the Mount and His prophecy, 'When He the Spirit of Truth is come He

¹ Twelve were carved by the genius Suger.

will guide you into all truth', in fulfilment of all previous prophecies; the whisper from the Upanishads, 'That Thou art'; Muḥammad's raising of the wild Arabs to the status of a great culture and its contribution to the development of European progress; the nineteenth century words of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Ye are the fruits of one tree'. Thus all roads meet on the Mountain of God. There all opposites are solved in perfect tension; there we are in the presence of the Master of Infinities; words fail, yet the ever-expanding Vision grows.

Where is journey's end? There can be no end. What matters it to the Master of Infinities whether from above or below? In the West, Christ reaches down from Heaven. In the East, the perfected man Gautama Buddha reaches

upwards to Heaven—Buddhists do not even speak of God. What is the difference between their 'Thusness' and the 'I am that I am' of the Bible? The barriers are down. The oneness of mankind *is* the kingdom of God on earth, when man will meet man in happiness, joy and love from end of this our world. The time is about to come. Bahá'u'lláh *was* the foretold return of Christ to complete His work on earth.

*The time fore-ordained unto the peoples and kindreds of the earth is now come. The promises of God, as recorded in the holy Scriptures, have all been fulfilled . . . This is the Day whereon the unseen world crieth out: Great is thy blessedness, O earth, for thou hast been made the foot-stool of thy God . . .*¹

¹Bahá'u'lláh

4. LA FOI MONDIALE BAHÁ'IE : RELIGION PLANETAIRE DE L'AVENIR ?¹

JACQUES CHOLEUR

SUR une planète que les autoroutes, les jets, le petit écran et les satellites de télécommunication ont considérablement rétrécie au cours des dernières décennies, le problème d'une religion universelle, d'une religion pour l'ensemble de l'espèce humaine, doit forcément se poser un jour ou l'autre. Certes, de nombreux individus, ainsi que plusieurs écoles de pensées philosophiques, nient la nécessité et même l'utilité d'une quelconque religion, et l'image ternie qu'offrent aujourd'hui d'elles-mêmes les grandes confessions traditionnelles ne peut guère que renforcer un tel jugement. Le Christianisme, notamment, donne de plus en plus l'impression d'être parvenu au terme de son efficacité historique, d'être atteint par cette 'limite d'âge' après laquelle tout mouvement s'épuise en de vaines commémorations de ses gloires disparues, ou de non moins vaines cures de rajeunissement et séances de réanimation. L'entreprise œcuménique, pour louable qu'elle soit, arrive bien tardivement. On peut d'autre part se demander légitimement si une addition de faiblesses constituera jamais une force nouvelle et régénératrice. D'un autre côté, le besoin d'une religion, d'une nourriture spirituelle, apparaît chez les hommes comme aussi fondamental et éternel que le besoin qu'il ont de l'air, de l'eau, du pain et du soleil. Il y a sans doute quelque chose de 'religieux' dans les philosophies athées et humanistes, religions du progrès, religions de l'homme . . . Elles exigent de leurs partisans une foi pure et dure telle que la société de consommation occidentale paraît bien incapable d'en susciter chez les siens. Elles se donnent également pour éthique la recherche d'une civilisation juste et fraternelle. Il n'y a cependant pas de vraie fraternité sans commune paternité, aurait dit Monsieur de la Palice, et c'est justement l'absence de ce père commun qui met en péril les structures de la famille humaniste. Les religions, elles, proposent à tous les hommes

une fraternité effective fondée sur l'acceptation d'un père commun, et peu importe qu'on l'appelle Jéhovah ou Alláh ou d'autres noms encore. Les églises naïvement modernistes qui s'efforcent de minimiser cette 'dimension verticale' pour ne retenir que celle, horizontale, du service du prochain, se brisent sur la fatale contradiction d'une fraternité sans paternité commune. Elles se défont de leurs attributions et attributs sacrés, abaissent la religion au niveau de la politique, et la communauté ecclésiale au rang de la société de bienfaisance, du syndicat, ou du parti.

Il est par ailleurs évident que l'œcuménisme ne parviendra pas à fondre les diverses églises existantes en une organisation unique. Chaque organisation, pour déclinante et usée qu'elle soit, tend naturellement à persister dans son être et à se crispier sur son identité propre. Il est également évident qu'une vague alliance de confessions que leurs vues théologiques, leurs traditions culturelles, leur histoire ont jusqu'ici engagées sur des voies divergentes ne saurait tenir lieu de véritable religion universelle, d'une religion créatrice d'une civilisation nouvelle à la dimension planétaire. Il est enfin évident qu'aucune des grandes religions actuelles n'a les moyens d'absorber toutes les autres. Les Juifs, les Chrétiens, les Musulmans, les Hindouistes et les Bouddhistes demeurent attachés à leurs bergeries respectives parce que les autres n'exercent sur eux qu'une attirance trop limitée pour justifier en conscience une conversion qui serait aussi une trahison. Bien plus que dans l'association ou la fusion des églises existantes, c'est dans l'adhésion dynamique à une formule vraiment neuve que la formation d'une éventuelle religion planétaire doit être recherchée. L'Évangile lui-même ne dit-il pas que les vieilles outres ne conviennent guère au vin nouveau ?

Mais cette religion du futur, cette religion pour toutes les femmes et tous les hommes de demain, existe-t-elle déjà ? Dans l'affirmative, et puisqu'il ne saurait s'agir des organisations majoritaires actuelles, quelle minorité agissante

¹ Publié par *Les Annales Universitaires* de la Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines d'Avignon; No. 2, Novembre 1975.

serait donc susceptible de prendre la relève? Notre époque est caractérisée par un étonnant pullulement de sectes de toute sorte. Certaines, comme les Adventistes du Septième Jour ou les Témoins de Jéhovah, ont leurs racines dans le fondamentalisme biblique anglo-américain du XIX^{ème} siècle, et il est manifeste que leur littéralisme étroit, leur hérédité puritaine, leur vision quasi médiévale du monde ne les prédisposent guère à une conquête spirituelle de notre globe, quels que soient par ailleurs la sincérité et le zèle missionnaire de leurs adeptes. D'autres rameaux originaux du Christianisme, tels que le Swedenborgianisme ou la Science Chrétienne, paraîtraient a priori mieux qualifiés, car ils se situent sur un plan intellectuel élevé et proposent une explication rationnelle de notre univers, mais leurs ambitions en matière de prosélytisme sont à peu près nulles. Les Mormons, nombreux, modernes, dynamiques, fortement organisés, disposant de ressources financières impressionnantes et mûs par une volonté d'expansion sans limites, paraissent capables de s'imposer en de nombreux pays. A leur actif, il y a la doctrine de l'unité éternelle du couple conjugal et de la cellule familiale, et celle de la progression éternelle des esprits des justes, aboutissant à leur conférer dans l'au-delà un statut véritablement divin, ce qui ne dispense nullement les hommes de chercher à bâtir dès ici-bas la Nouvelle Jérusalem de droiture, de lumière et d'équité dont rêvaient les vieux prophètes. A leur passif, il y a le fondamentalisme biblique aggravé par la présence d'Écritures supplémentaires purement mormones, aux origines incertaines, la croyance obligée aux visions et révélations assez problématiques des dirigeants de l'Église, le spectre de la théocratie musclée, et sans doute aussi le caractère trop nettement yankee de cette phalange des Saints des Derniers Jours. Quant aux multiples courants religieux importés de l'Inde ou de l'Extrême-Orient, de la Soka Gakkai à la Méditation Transcendantale de Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, du Bouddhisme Zen à la 'Lumière Divine' de l'adolescent richissime et joufflu Gourou Maharaj Ji, ils diffèrent considérablement entre eux par le sérieux ou le manque de sérieux qui les caractérisent. Tous sont néanmoins trop prisonniers d'une culture particulière, d'un folklore national ou régional particulier, pour prétendre à l'universalisme. En Occident, à qui fera-t-on croire qu'il faille se

raser le crâne (en préservant une longue touffe pileuse au sommet de la tête), s'affubler de robes safran et psalmodier sans fin 'Hare Krishna, Hare Rama . . .' en frappant un tambourin et en agitant des clochettes pour mériter la vie éternelle?

Une religion 'nouvelle', la Foi Mondiale Bahá'ie, me paraît en revanche assez bien placée dans la compétition pour l'accession au statut de religion universelle du futur. Le mot religion n'est d'ailleurs pas totalement exact en l'occurrence, puisque les responsables de ce mouvement lui ont préféré celui de foi, moins exclusif et plus dynamique. Devenir Bahá'í ne signifie nullement renier sa religion d'origine. Bien au contraire, les Bahá'ís fondent leur philosophie tout entière sur le principe de la vérité et de l'identité foncière de toutes les religions. Il ne s'agit pas de simple 'tolérance', mais d'une reconnaissance raisonnée du caractère divin de l'inspiration manifestée aussi bien dans les synagogues, les temples, les chapelles, les mosquées, les pagodes aux quatre coins de la planète. Pour les Bahá'ís, la religion est Une, parce que Dieu est Un, et que l'humanité est Une. A l'Hindouiste, au Bouddhiste, au Zoroastrien, au Juif, au Catholique, au Protestant, au Musulman, le Bahá'í ne dit pas: «Votre religion est fausse; la nôtre est vraie; il faut vous convertir!» Il leur dit: «Votre religion est vraie, du moins dans son essence et sous sa forme d'origine, mais elle est maintenant dépassée. Elle était valable pour une tribu, un peuple, une ethnie, dans un certain contexte culturel et à un certain moment de l'histoire, mais il faut maintenant faire craquer les barrières pour parvenir à une perception globale de l'unité sous-jacente. Votre religion est vraie, mais elle n'est pas la seule vraie. Elle n'exprime qu'une parcelle de la vérité, et cette vérité n'est une vérité que pour une période donnée de l'histoire des civilisations. Voyez au-delà des préjugés et des frontières! Voyez au-delà du siècle présent! Construisez avec nous la religion planétaire, la religion de la race humaine tout entière, la religion de notre temps et des temps à venir». C'est à un élargissement de notre horizon religieux, non à une apostasie, que nous convie la Foi Mondiale Bahá'ie.

Comme nous le verrons bientôt, c'est en terre d'Islam que la Foi Bahá'ie a vu le jour. Dans l'immédiat, ceci importe peu, pour la simple raison que les Bahá'ís reconnaissent comme

prophètes véridiques des personnages aussi divers que Zoroastre, Abraham, Moïse, Jésus, Mahomet, Ils n'excluent pas non plus Krishna et Bouddha, sans toutefois se prononcer avec la même assurance, et n'écarter pas l'hypothèse de prophètes ignorés des temps antiques, dont l'humanité aurait perdu jusqu'au souvenir. Pour les Bahá'ís, tous ces prophètes sont des 'Manifestations de Dieu', des êtres d'élite envoyés en ce monde à intervalles plus ou moins réguliers pour enseigner ou rappeler aux hommes les grandes vérités essentielles. La première de ces vérités est l'amour. Tous les fondateurs de religions authentiques ont prêché la compassion, la tendresse, la charité, l'entraide, le pardon, la justice, la fraternité. A la loi éternelle fondamentale: «Tu aimeras le Seigneur, ton Dieu, de tout ton cœur, de toute ton âme, et de toute ta pensée . . . Tu aimeras ton prochain comme toi-même» (1), les prophètes ont pu ajouter des ordonnances valables pour une certaine fraction de l'humanité à un certain stade de son évolution historique. Les successeurs des prophètes, les prêtres, les théologiens, les églises ont pu multiplier à plaisir les décrets relatifs à l'organisation ecclésiastique, à l'organisation sociale, aux rites, aux mœurs, etc., aboutissant de ce fait à creuser sans cesse davantage le fossé entre des peuples différents et des confessions différentes. C'est ainsi que les Juifs pratiquent la circoncision et s'abstiennent de viande de porc, deux commandements ignorés des Chrétiens; que les Musulmans s'abstiennent de boissons alcoolisées, commandement ignoré des Chrétiens comme des Juifs; que les Chrétiens sont baptisés et participent à l'Eucharistie, deux rites ignorés des Juifs comme des Musulmans. Les uns prient à genoux, les autres se prosternent. Les uns prient tournés vers la Mecque, d'autres vers Jérusalem. Certains se recueillent le vendredi, d'autres le samedi, d'autres encore le dimanche. Toutes ces différences sont, selon les Bahá'ís, mineures et superficielles. Certaines ont eu leur raison d'être, généralement d'ordre symbolique, dans un contexte donné, alors que d'autres ne sont que des excroissances stériles et ridicules dont l'arbre de la religion a été progressivement affligé au cours d'une longue croissance aux mille péripéties. Il faut préserver l'arbre, non ses branches mortes, ou les verrues qui enlaidissent son écorce. D'autre part, les véritables enseignements des prophètes ont pu être censurés, infléchis, modifiés, dénaturés dans

une certaine mesure par les fidèles des générations ultérieures. De ces successives Manifestations de Dieu, le message qui est parvenu jusqu'à nous a pu être altéré, déformé, amputé, compliqué. D'où cette nécessité de nouvelles Manifestations, lorsqu'une religion entre dans ce que les Bahá'ís appellent sa saison d'hiver, lorsqu'elle a dépassé son âge d'or et ne produit plus de fruits. On pense aux célèbres versets de la *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*:

«Chaque fois que le dharma s'efface et que monte l'injustice, alors Je prends naissance.

Pour la libération des bons, pour la destruction de ceux qui font le mal, pour mettre sur le trône la Justice, Je prends naissance d'âge en âge.» (2)

Et, si la *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* paraît trop exotique ou trop ésotérique à nos esprits cartésiens, citons alors Balzac.

« . . . Si les cultes ont eu des formes infinies, ni leur sens ni leur construction métaphysique n'ont jamais varié. Enfin l'homme n'a jamais eu qu'une religion Pour qui se jette dans ces fleuves religieux, dont tous les fondateurs ne sont pas connus, il est prouvé que Zoroastre, Moïse, Bouddha, Confucius, Jésus-Christ, Swedenborg ont eu les mêmes principes, et se sont proposé la même fin.» (3)

Les Manifestations diverses ne sont que des êtres humains, mais l'Esprit les habite et les illumine. Ce sont les messagers de Dieu, les interprètes de sa volonté parmi les hommes. Pour les Bahá'ís, les deux dernières Manifestations de Dieu sont, dans l'ordre chronologique, Siyyid 'Mírzá 'Alí-Muḥammad, surnommé le Báb (c'est-à-dire la Porte) et Mírzá Ḥusayn-'Alí, qui prit le titre de Bahá'u'lláh, la Gloire de Dieu. Ils étaient tous deux Persans, élevés dans la religion musulmane, branche Shi'ite. Le premier de ces deux personnages fut un réformateur religieux, hardi et plein de générosité, qui s'insurgea contre le ritualisme stérile et le fanatisme chauvin de ses corréligionnaires. Le sháh et le clergé s'inquiétèrent de l'agitation suscitée par les 'Bábís', comme on appelait les disciples du Báb. Il y eut d'abominables persécutions, au cours desquelles des milliers de personnes furent massacrées après d'horribles tortures. Le Báb fut arrêté, condamné à mort et finalement exécuté en 1850. Il mourut criblé de balles, fusillé par un bataillon entier de l'armée

impériale, après avoir été miraculeusement laissée indemne par une première salve. Dans la perspective Bahá'ie, le Báb n'était que l'annonciateur et le précurseur de 'Celui que Dieu devait manifester', à savoir Bahá'u'lláh (1817-1892). Il fut à son successeur ce que Jean le Baptiste fut à Jésus, celui qui prépare la voie. Bahá'u'lláh, fils d'un haut fonctionnaire du Sháh à Téhéran, avait manifesté une nette sympathie pour la personne et l'action du Báb. Cela lui valut d'être arrêté en 1852, et jeté dans une affreuse prison sans air et sans lumière, en compagnie de dizaines d'autres victimes entassées en ces lieux dans des conditions d'hygiène épouvantables. Il y resta quatre mois, le cou cerclé d'un anneau supportant une énorme chaîne, les jambes également entravées, attendant chaque jour son exécution. Mais les persécutions s'apaisèrent quelque peu, et Bahá'u'lláh fut finalement tiré de son tombeau et exilé. Ernest Renan a plusieurs fois manifesté son admiration et sa compassion pour les Bábis, et leurs successeurs les Bahá'is. Le Comte de Gobineau a exprimé des sentiments analogues à leur égard.

Expulsé de Perse, Bahá'u'lláh entreprit une longue marche qui, par Bagdad, Istanbul et Andrinople, le conduisit à St. Jean d'Acre, en Palestine, où il arriva en 1868. A Baghdád, il avait hautement proclamé qu'il était la nouvelle Manifestation de Dieu, une certitude qui lui était venue au cours de sa captivité. Les autorités turques, soupçonneuses, et d'ailleurs prévenues contre cet 'agitateur' par celles de Téhéran, emprisonnèrent à nouveau Bahá'u'lláh, sa famille et quelques disciples dans la caserne de la lugubre cité de St. Jean d'Acre. Au long des années, cependant, la rigueur de la détention s'atténuait. Le prophète persan fut autorisé à résider dans une maison particulière, et à recevoir à peu près librement les visites de ses partisans, sans cesse plus nombreux. Parmi ses hôtes, il faut mentionner le Professeur Edward Granville Browne, un orientaliste anglais réputé, Fellow du Pembroke College à Cambridge. Il fit beaucoup pour faire connaître la personnalité de Bahá'u'lláh et les doctrines bahá'ies en Occident. Par la suite, des personnalités aussi éminentes et diverses que Léon Tolstoï, Auguste Forel, Helen Keller, le Président Masaryk, le Président Benes, devaient exprimer publiquement leur sympathie pour le vénérable opprimé et la cause qu'il défendait. La reine Marie de Roumanie alla

même jusqu'à adhérer officiellement à la Foi Bahá'ie.

De sa résidence forcée et surveillée de St. Jean d'Acre, non loin de ce Mont Carmel célébré dans toutes les Ecritures Saintes comme le lieu prédestiné de la victoire des forces du bien sur les ténèbres, Bahá'u'lláh vit grandir et se fortifier l'armée pacifique de ceux qui croyaient en sa mission. Cette armée il l'organisa, la dirigea, l'inspira de ses multiples 'Tablettes' (ou Epîtres) et surtout de l'exemple de sa propre vie, toute de dignité, de modération et de bonté. Les nombreux complots de ses ennemis, dont certains (et ceci est très oriental . . .) étaient d'ailleurs de ses proches parents, se brisèrent tous sur son tranquille courage.

A sa mort, survenue en 1892, son fils 'Abdu'l-Bahá lui succéda à la tête de la communauté bahá'ie. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, à qui un visage très noble et une longue barbe blanche donnèrent dans sa vieillesse une allure très biblique et patriarcale, se révéla un chef en tous points remarquable. Il fut, lui aussi, un prisonnier perpétuel, assigné à résidence à St. Jean d'Acre par les Turcs. Pendant la première guerre mondiale, la soldatesque turque, exaspérée par une succession de revers militaires, décida de se débarrasser de l'hérétique en le crucifiant avec toute sa famille! Heureusement, l'avance trop rapide des troupes britanniques les empêcha de mettre à exécution ce sinistre projet. 'Abdu'l-Bahá fut ensuite anobli par les Britanniques, en hommage à sa bienfaisante autorité morale, et devint Sir 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Il mourut en 1921. Dans les dernières années de sa vie, il avait profité de sa liberté retrouvée pour aller porter personnellement jusqu'en Europe et en Amérique la bonne parole. Cette semence rencontra surtout aux Etats-Unis un terrain fertile, et les Bahá'is américains furent bientôt à la pointe avancée de l'expansion du mouvement, grâce à leur dévouement d'abord, mais aussi à ces vertus très américaines que sont le sens de l'organisation et le souci d'efficacité. A la mort d'Abdu'l-Bahá, son petit fils Shoghi Effendi devait présider aux destinées de la Cause. Il avait fait ses études chez les Jésuites français de Haïfa, puis au Collège Américain de Beyrouth, et enfin à l'Université d'Oxford (Balliol College). Par rapport à ses prédécesseurs, il avait donc été davantage marqué par les influences occidentales. C'est sous sa direction compétente que la Foi se répandit dans la plupart des pays du monde. Il y eut

bientôt des Bahá'ís jusque chez les Esquimaux, les Indiens d'Amérique et les Polynésiens. Shoghi Effendi quitta ce monde en 1957. Personne ne lui succéda, la direction du mouvement étant devenue collective, assurée par une 'Maison Universelle de Justice' qui est l'émanation démocratique de la communauté internationale bahá'ie tout entière.

Il est difficile d'évaluer avec précision l'importance numérique du mouvement bahá'í. Les autorités bahá'ís se refusent à fournir des statistiques sur le nombre d'adhérents à la Cause. S'agit-il de modestie, de timidité, ou plus vraisemblablement de prudence? L'ère des persécutions n'est peut-être pas absolument close, et les Bahá'ís doivent se faire invisibles dans la plupart des pays d'Islam, notamment. Les derniers massacres de Bahá'ís en Iran ne remontent qu'à 1955! Les Bahá'ís préfèrent dresser des listes des 'territoires ouverts à la Foi', et aussi de leurs 'Assemblées Spirituelles'. Une politique de présence absolument universelle, impliquant l'existence d'au moins une cellule bahá'ie dans la moindre des îles du Pacifique, le plus désolé des territoires du Grand Nord Canadien, le plus sous-développé des pays du Sahel ou du Sud-Est asiatique, leur paraît préférable à une action de recrutement ponctuel massive. Il y a des centaines de milliers de Bahá'ís, peut-être même plusieurs millions, et ils sont disséminés sur toute la surface de la planète. La seule exception est celle des pays communistes, depuis la fermeture et la confiscation, en 1928, du premier né de tous les Temples Bahá'ís, celui d'Ishqabad, dans le Caucase, en territoire russe.

La communauté bahá'ie est avant tout une communauté multi-nationale, multi- raciale, et profondément anti-raciste. Bahá'u'lláh avait proclamé en son temps l'égalité totale et la fraternité inconditionnelle de toutes les races humaines. Mais au lieu de manifester l'anti-racisme par des défilés, des tracts vengeurs, des protestations solennelles et autres procédés tapageurs, les Bahá'ís s'efforcent calmement de vivre en groupes multi-raciaux. Apprendre à vivre ensemble, à surmonter les réflexes racistes dont chaque être humain est malheureusement capable, leur paraît plus courageux et plus réaliste que de dénoncer bruyamment le racisme des autres. Une des grandes vertus bahá'ies réside justement dans l'absence d'accusations, de condamnations, de sarcasmes

à l'égard du prochain, que ce soit un parent, un ami, un voisin, un collègue, un inconnu dans la rue ou un homme politique apparaissant sur l'écran de la télévision. Bien sûr, on peut toujours déplorer ou critiquer certains actes d'autrui, mais il ne faut le faire qu'avec mesure et courtoisie, en cas de nécessité seulement, et en conservant présent à l'esprit le dicton de la paille et de la poutre! Pour en revenir à la question raciale, remarquons qu'un groupe bahá'í typique est constitué de personnes appartenant à des groupes ethniques différents. Aux Etats-Unis, par exemple, le groupe comprendra non seulement des 'Caucasiens' (c'est-à-dire des Blancs, dans le jargon administratif américain) et des Anglo-Saxons, mais aussi des Noirs, des Porto-Ricains, des Japonais Nisei, des Chicanos, etc. . . selon le peuplement local. Une égalité absolue caractérise la répartition des tâches et des responsabilités. La cellule bahá'ie tend ainsi à constituer la maquette, le modèle vivant du type de société que le mouvement voudrait promouvoir pour les siècles futurs. Les mariages inter-raciaux, loin d'être découragés, sont considérés avec sympathie, et volontiers encouragés. En même temps, les Bahá'ís insistent sur l'idée que chaque ethnologie doit conserver son identité propre, la diversité des apports ne pouvant qu'être bénéfique à l'édifice total. Une telle attitude est certainement facilitée par la foi religieuse en un Père commun.

Lutter sans trêve contre les préjugés, repousser les tentations de la haine et du mépris, tels sont les premiers devoirs d'un Bahá'í. Les Bahá'ís s'opposent aux discriminations selon la richesse et le rang social tout autant qu'à celles du racisme. Ils s'abstiennent de prendre parti dans la controverse capitalisme-socialisme, mais affirment qu'une société saine devrait abolir les inégalités criardes, les «extrêmes de la richesse et de la pauvreté». Ils se refusent par ailleurs à entrer dans les luttes politiques. Un Bahá'í n'a pas le droit d'appartenir à un parti, puisque le concept même de parti implique forcément l'idée de fraction, de division, d'opposition . . . Les Bahá'ís reconnaissent l'autorité du pouvoir civil, quelle que soit la forme de gouvernement du pays, démocratique ou autoritaire, populaire ou aristocratique. Ils essaient cependant de propager leur idéal de justice, de tolérance et de paix. Le chauvinisme, le nationalisme agressif, le bellicisme sont aux antipodes de la pensée bahá'ie. On conseille aux jeunes Bahá'ís de

solliciter leur incorporation militaire uniquement dans les unités non-combattantes, mais cette attitude ne va pas jusqu'à l'insoumission, qui serait en contradiction avec le principe de l'obéissance aux autorités légales du pays. Sur un autre plan encore, les Bahá'ís œuvrent pour l'égalité des êtres humains: ils proclament en effet l'égalité absolue des droits de l'homme et de la femme. Qu'ils l'aient fait dès le milieu du XIX^{ème} siècle, et en pays musulman, est une preuve de leur originalité, de leur sincérité et de leur audace. Il y avait une femme dans le premier cercle des partisans du Báb. C'était une poétesse persane appelée Táhírih (la Pure). Elle eut la première l'audace de paraître à visage découvert, sans le voile musulman traditionnel, dans une assemblée d'hommes. Ce geste lui valut d'être l'une des premières martyres des persécutions de 1852. Elle fut étranglée, et son cadavre fut jeté dans un puits. Les femmes bahá'ís jouissent dans les assemblées de la Cause des mêmes privilèges et de la même autorité que les hommes. Cette égalité vraie n'a rien à voir avec les attitudes excessives et hargneuses de cette fraction du 'Women's Lib' qui prône à la fois la haine de l'homme et . . . la masculinisation de la femme. Les Bahá'ís considèrent le mariage comme une noble institution, et l'amour conjugal comme la plus admirable des choses. Ils admettent le divorce, mais le déplorent, et imposent une année de réflexion à ceux des leurs qui font part de leur intention de divorcer. L'éducation des enfants, d'autre part, est un souci majeur de la Foi Bahá'íe, et le droit à une véritable éducation pour tous, femmes et hommes, est hautement revendiqué.

La théologie bahá'íe, pour autant qu'on puisse parler de théologie, est d'une grande simplicité. Il y a un Dieu unique. Il est le Père de tous les hommes. Il est inconnaissable, et pourtant, selon la formule de Coran «. . . plus près de l'homme que ne l'est sa veine jugulaire». Il est le Dieu d'Abraham et de Jacob, de Moïse et de Jésus, mais aussi celui de Mahomet. Comme Alláh, il est éternel, tout-puissant, miséricordieux et plein de sagesse. Il est à la fois transcendant et immanent, pour employer la terminologie chrétienne, mais les Bahá'ís ne s'attardent guère à discuter de ce genre de problème métaphysique. Dieu est le soleil spirituel de l'univers. Il rayonne d'amour pour tous les êtres, mais exige en retour un amour non moins ardent. Il agit sur le monde par ses

Manifestations. Les Chrétiens s'irriteront sans doute de constater que la seconde personne de leur Trinité n'a pas chez le Bahá'í de statut privilégié, que ceux-ci n'acceptent les mots de 'Fils de Dieu' que dans un sens figuré, sans faire aucune mention d'une naissance et d'une résurrection miraculeuses. Les Bahá'ís sont peu tentés par le 'merveilleux' des miracles et des prodiges. Ils n'ont pas de mythologie. Ils croient en la Science. Pour eux, Science et Religion ne devraient jamais être en conflit. Selon les paroles du prophète bahá'í, elles sont les deux ailes de l'envol humain vers le progrès, et.. on vole très mal avec une seule aile . . . Pas de superstition, pas d'obscurantisme, pas d'attachement morbide à la lettre des Ecritures. Les Ecritures de toutes les grandes religions humaines sont d'ailleurs également lues dans les Temples bahá'ís.

Les Bahá'ís sont nombreux en Iran, mais doivent user de prudence dans l'exercice de leurs droits religieux, reconnus par la Constitution mais souvent menacés par la frange fanatique de la population musulmane, dans les campagnes surtout. De nombreux Iraniens expatriés sont Bahá'ís. Il y en a en Angleterre, en France, en Suisse, en Allemagne . . . Il y a également de nombreux Bahá'ís en Egypte et en Inde. En Afrique, c'est surtout en Ouganda qu'ils sont concentrés. Peu nombreux en Europe, ils voient sans cesse croître leurs effectifs en Australie, en Nouvelle-Zélande, au Canada, en Amérique Latine et surtout aux Etats-Unis.

Les Bahá'ís n'ont pas de clergé. Dans chaque localité ou région où ils sont représentés, les Bahá'ís élisent une 'Assemblée Spirituelle' de neuf membres, renouvelée chaque année. Les délégués des Assemblées Spirituelles Locales élisent les membres de l'Assemblée Spirituelle Nationale. Les Assemblées Spirituelles Nationales, à leur tour, délèguent certains membres éminents à l'organe suprême de la pyramide, la 'Maison Universelle de Justice', à Haïfa, en Terre Sainte. Le processus est donc parfaitement démocratique, mais sans les tares habituelles de la démocratie: en effet, il n'y a ni campagnes électorales, ni factions, ni rivalités de tendances et de personnes. Il y a prière, concertation amicale, vote, et acceptation sereine, par tous, du verdict majoritaire.

N'ayant ni églises ni mosquées, les Bahá'ís prient chez eux, trois fois par jour obligatoirement, mais toute leur vie est en fait une prière. Il

existe des Temples bahá'ís, cependant, dont certains sont fort beaux, mais ce sont des pôles de rassemblement mystique, des témoignages symboliques de la présence bahá'ie plus que des lieux de culte au sens habituel du mot. On peut s'y recueillir (ils sont ouverts à tous), y prier silencieusement, y méditer, mais on n'y entend ni sermons ni musique instrumentale. En 1975, on les trouve à Wilmette, près de Chicago; à Panama en Amérique Centrale; à Kampala, en Ouganda; à Sydney, en Australie; et enfin à Francfort, en Allemagne. Le premier objectif a donc visiblement été la construction d'un Temple par continent, mais ce n'est qu'un premier pas. Certains temples sont d'une architecture classique, d'autres, comme à Francfort et à Panama, résolument modernes. Mais tous ont un dôme, évocateur des origines islamiques de la Foi, et tous sont construits autour d'un cercle brisé en neuf côtés de longueur égale. Chaque côté possède une porte, chaque porte symbolisant l'une des grandes religions de l'humanité. Les fidèles pénétrant par ces portes convergent tous vers un centre unique, et le symbolisme de cette marche convergente vers la Religion Unique, le Dieu Un de l'Humanité Unifiée, est immédiatement apparent. A cette série de Temples, il faut ajouter les divers sanctuaires bahá'ís de Palestine à Haïfa. Ce sont les fameux 'Jardins Persans' signalés par les guides touristiques, et où s'élèvent notamment le Mausolée du Báb et le bâtiment des Archives bahá'ies, qui ressemble à un temple grec.

La vie des Bahá'ís est soumise à un rythme particulier, du fait de l'existence d'un calendrier particulier à cette religion. A intervalles réguliers (tous les dix-neuf jours . . .), les Bahá'ís d'une localité ou d'une région donnée se rencontrent amicalement en ce qu'il est coutume d'appeler une 'Fête des 19 Jours'. La réunion est en trois parties: un temps consacré à la prière et à la lecture des Ecrits Saints (c'est-à-dire de Bahá'u'lláh et de 'Abdu'l-Bahá), un temps consacré à la discussion des affaires spirituelles et matérielles de la communauté, un temps enfin pour la récréation, les chants, la musique, les jeux, les rafraîchissements. En pays chrétiens, les Bahá'ís profitent des week-ends pour organiser des sorties, des excursions, des repas ou des pique-niques en commun, dans une atmosphère joyeuse et détendue. Signalons qu'il n'y a pas de tabous alimentaires, mais que les boissons

alcoolisées sont cependant interdites. Bahá'u'lláh avait également pros crit le tabac, mais l'interdiction du tabac s'est relâchée par la suite, alors que celle des drogues demeure absolue.

On devient Bahá'í sur simple demande. On le reste en s'efforçant de vivre selon les principes de la Cause, et le mouvement se montre très tolérant envers ceux de ses membres qui ne progressent que lentement vers la perfection visée par ces principes. On cesse d'être Bahá'í par simple démission. Quitter les rangs bahá'ís ne se traduit par aucun ostracisme, aucun anathème, et les amis restent les amis. La démission est jugée préférable à la subversion intérieure. Ceux qui complotent pour infléchir dans le sens de leurs ambitions ou désirs personnels les enseignements de la Cause sont appelés les 'Covenant-breakers' (briseurs de l'Alliance Divine) et évidemment exclus.

Les Bahá'ís ignorent les sacrements. Il n'y a pas de baptême, pas de communion. Le mariage bahá'í est d'une grande simplicité, et personne ne 'marie' les Bahá'ís: les fiancés annoncent simplement qu'ils se donnent l'un à l'autre devant Dieu. Chaque année, les croyants observent une sorte de Ramadan, un jeûne de dix-neuf jours à la manière arabe, pendant lesquels aucune nourriture liquide ou solide n'est absorbée entre le lever et le coucher du soleil. La fin du jeûne est marquée par une fête spéciale, un grand festin et des réjouissances diverses.

Il ne m'appartient pas de dresser un bilan moral de la Foi Bahá'ie. Le bilan que je proposerai serait plutôt celui des attraits et des écueils présentés par cette formule religieuse, attraits et écueils qui influenceront certainement les destinées de la Foi dans son projet d'expansion universelle. Les écueils, d'abord. Une théologie trop simple, trop imprécise, peut rebuter les adeptes des dénominations très 'théologiques' comme le Catholicisme romain. Certains déplorent que le sort de l'homme après sa mort soit trop vaguement indiqué dans la perspective bahá'ie, où l'on se contente d'affirmer l'immortalité de l'âme et la récompense des justes, sans plus de détails (mais la résurrection physique semble exclue). L'affirmation de l'unité des religions, et de la similitude des enseignements des envoyés de Dieu, peut laisser rêveur ceux qui comparent d'un peu près les paroles attribuées à Jésus, à Mahomet ou à Gautama Bouddha. Le Christ

tendait l'autre joue, Mahomet prêchait la Guerre Sainte. Jésus était (vraisemblablement ...) célibataire, et le prophète de l'islam polygame, alors que Bouddha conseillait de s'éloigner des femmes, créatures selon lui inférieures... Jésus enseignait la Résurrection et la Vie Eternelle, alors que l'Hindouisme parle de Réincarnation, et que le Bouddhisme considère la vie comme un malheur auquel l'extinction définitive dans le Nirvana est hautement préférable. L'affirmation de l'égalité qui régnerait entre les diverses Manifestations de Dieu peut choquer ceux qui jugent, non sans raison peut-être, que tel ou tel de ces grands fondateurs était supérieur à tel autre par l'élévation de ses principes ou la ferveur de son sacrifice. Si toutes les 'Manifestations' sont venues dire la même chose, pourquoi alors aller à Bahá'u'lláh, puisqu'il n'a pu que répéter ce que disait Jésus, ou Mahomet, ou Moïse? Comment, d'autre part, accepter sans réserves la qualité de prophète, d'envoyé de Dieu, que s'attribue Bahá'u'lláh? Sa vie fut pleine de courage et de dignité, sa personne rayonnait de bonté et de générosité, mais sont-ce là des preuves suffisantes? Où sont ses miracles, ajouteront certains, mais l'absence de 'miracles' spectaculaires me semblerait plutôt militer en faveur de Bahá'u'lláh! Les historiens pourront s'interroger sur la filiation réelle entre le Ministère du Báb et celui de Bahá'u'lláh. Les deux hommes ne se sont jamais rencontrés, en effet, et il n'est pas impossible de voir dans l'entreprise de Bahá'u'lláh une tentative de récupération illégitime du mouvement Bábi. Sur un autre plan, le calendrier bahá'í, loin d'être une source d'unité, peut apparaître comme une complication inutile. Les écrits bahá'ís, notamment les textes rédigés par Bahá'u'lláh lui-même, témoignent certes d'une indéniable grandeur d'âme, mais leur style, très fleuri, très alambiqué, très solennel, très précieux à la manière orientale, risque d'agacer beaucoup de lecteurs occidentaux. Il y est sans cesse question d'effluves embaumés, d'aubes radieuses, des chants mélodieux du rossignol, de brises délicieuses, etc. etc. . . . , et Juifs et Chrétiens préféreront sans doute la sobriété des versets bibliques. Enfin, la crédibilité de la Foi Bahá'ie en tant que religion universelle majeure reste contestable. Une poussière de croyants, une poignée de 'Pionniers de la Cause', parviendront-elles à constituer un jour une majorité, ou même un ensemble

minoritaire assez fort et assez considérable pour jouer un rôle déterminant dans la création d'une civilisation supérieure?

D'un autre côté, l'actif du bilan est assez remarquable. L'unité de l'humanité est un objectif exaltant. C'est un objectif susceptible d'enflammer les enthousiasmes de la jeunesse. L'unité religieuse et spirituelle des peuples est aussi une idée dynamique qui ne peut que rencontrer des échos favorables. L'idée d'une religion sans clergé, sans rites, sans sacrements, sans églises, sans mythologie, sans superstitions, sans arguties théologiques est séduisante. Elle rejoint les conceptions des Quakers, qui eux aussi avaient fait de la Lumière Intérieure, de la tolérance et de la fraternité des hommes leurs principes directeurs. La Foi Bahá'ie, malgré son rejet des dogmes et des liturgies, est néanmoins une véritable foi en un Dieu vivant et vrai, en une âme immortelle, en une vie transformée par la conscience de sa signification profonde. Elle donne un sens à la vie; elle en nie l'absurdité. Que l'humanité entière ne soit qu'une seule et même famille, et les hommes «les gouttes d'un même océan, les feuilles d'un même arbre . . . » selon les paroles poétiques et, espérons-le, prophétiques de Bahá'u'lláh, voici ce à quoi tout humaniste, même religieusement incroyant, ne peut que souscrire en son âme et conscience. La Foi Mondiale Bahá'ie a donc ses chances de s'imposer un jour. D'un point de vue simplement humaniste, reconnaissons que notre petite planète n'aurait vraisemblablement qu'à s'en féliciter . . .

NOTES

(1) Matthieu, 22, verset 37 à 40.

(2) *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*. Editions Albin Michel (Paris, 1970, 369 pages) commentée par Shri Aurobindo (Paris, 1970, 369 pages). Chapitre 4, page 99, versets 7 et 8.(3) Balzac. *Louis Lambert*, pages 134 et 135 de l'édition Broce-liande (Strasbourg, 1959).

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5. THE FLOWERING OF THE PLANET¹

GUY MURCHIE

IF you look around you in the world, at the countryside, the cities and the highways, you may get the impression that things are going along as usual, that nothing is happening today very different from what happened in times past, although of course most educated people have been taught that mankind changes and evolves slowly from century to century, from age to age. But the world isn't what it seems and I would like to speak of something drastic that is happening here on Earth right now that never happened before and may never happen again. One could call it the flowering of the planet, although 'germination' may be a better word than 'flowering' because it is more fundamental and perhaps easier to believe since the coming blossoms of Earth have not yet convincingly revealed themselves to many of us. All viable worlds must eventually germinate and flower, moreover, and to future historians it could well be that this twentieth century will become known as the century of the Flowering of the Earth.

I am referring to this century, and this period in history, because Bahá'u'lláh said in His clear voice that this is the day when all the atoms of the earth will attest to its greatness and that this is the day for which mankind has so long and so patiently been waiting. Prophets of old must have had some age in mind when they spoke, as recorded in the Bible, of 'the latter days' and 'the time of the end.' So why shouldn't we believe Bahá'u'lláh, the Prophet of today, when He tells us they meant now, our very own time? I know there are many people in the world not convinced of this, and some are still awaiting 'the second coming' which, they suppose, may yet be centuries if not millennia away. And they haven't noticed anything special happening in these so-called 'troubled times' that seem to be just a continuation of the troubled times of all ages.

But I have some facts I would like to present to you on the subject. My scientific studies and the thirteen years I have just spent in writing a book

about life on this planet may have given me awareness of a few things some of you may have missed. Specifically, I would like to tell you about fifteen evidences of the germination of Earth, which Bahá'u'lláh must have intuitively known would lead to her future flowering. All of them, as you will see, are unique historical events.

1. The first of my fifteen evidences of the germination of Earth is the explosion of man's population in the twentieth century. To put it in perspective, visualize the human species a million years ago as composed of something like 100,000 inquisitive furry creatures living in the most fertile parts of Africa, Asia and perhaps Europe. There was land enough for the average family to occupy an expanse as big as Long Island² all by itself. But naturally most of them gravitated into the valleys favored with the best water and game, leaving other regions almost empty. They did not live in villages though (for villages had not been invented) but rather roamed about in small groups hunting meat and gathering vegetables to feed themselves.

After another 990,000 years, which would bring us to 8000 B.C., this species, with its newly evolving brain and growing awareness that it was basically different from other creatures, had multiplied to an estimated three million people and was steadily, if slowly, increasing in numbers, stimulated by such developments as farming and its forthcoming discovery that cattle, horses and buffalo could be persuaded to plow, the wind to sail a ship, or a river to grind grain—miracles never before seen on planet Earth. And yet man's unprecedented growth in the past few thousand years is as nothing compared with his veritable explosion today. What I am coming to is that our population has suddenly spurted after growing at a leisurely long-range rate of .002 percent per year for millions of years. For now we wake up to find it growing at the rate of 2 percent a year or about 1,000 times faster than before agriculture.

¹ Author's note: This is a talk based on a chapter called 'The Germination of Worlds' that describes the Sixth Mystery in a book entitled *The Seven Mysteries of Life*, by Guy Murchie; Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1978. Reprinted by permission. (This condensation first appeared in United States *Bahá'í News*, October 1974.)

² Island, south-east of New York and south of Connecticut, lying between Long Island Sound on the north and the Atlantic Ocean on the south; 118½ miles long, 23 miles at greatest width.

Of course explosions of population happen among animals too. You must have heard of the lemmings exploding in Scandinavia and swimming in the sea, of locust plagues, of blackbirds in Maryland suddenly exceeding the human population of a small town by an alarming thousand times! But the human population change, which directly affects us all, far exceeds in importance anything the animals have ever done, partly because of the extraordinary effects of its by-product in human pollution. These I call the three B's: for babies, bombs and blight. Did you know that cars are multiplying three times as fast as the people who drive them and five times as fast as the roads they move upon? That there is something called mental pollution in publications, books and ideas, a phenomenon we will come to again presently? Of course pollution is so much discussed these days that I hardly need describe it further.

2. So let's move on to my second evidence of germination, which is man's winning of the tournament of evolution which has now for the first time given him clear dominance over all other creatures on Earth. A century ago if you went to Africa you would have been in real danger of being killed by the wild beasts, but today it is the beasts who are in even greater danger of being killed by the humans. Most of the big animals now are under some kind of control in zoos, game preserves, national parks or (in the case of certain fish and whales) international treaties. Even insects and microbes are coming more and more under human control. In many cases, as you know, man's competition has led to the extinction of other species of life in recent centuries or millennia: notably of a dozen kinds of mammoth and mastodon and the woolly rhinoceros, followed by the quagga, the aurochs and such birds as the dodo, the moa, the passenger pigeon, the heath hen and the great auk.

But before that, more than 99.9 percent of all the species that ever lived on Earth had already disappeared (presumably naturally) with only the meagerest fossilized trace left to prove it. For species are not static but come and go and flow like waves on a river. Indeed out of billions of species estimated to have foliated Earth in her five billion years of evolution to date, only a couple of million exist at any one time because each lasts scarcely a fleeting million years before it finally branches, withers or in some way loses its

identity. Nor are we running out of them since scientists continue to discover new ones: bird species at the rate of one a week, mammals at the rate of one every two weeks, insects and new smaller species by the dozens every day, the overall rate of gain in species exceeding the loss by a good two hundred times. And if you look closely into this bubbling river of evolution, you can see that man is influencing it more and more, not only usurping the breeding of dogs and other domesticated animals and vegetables, but in this century virtually taking over the main burden of it, including very soon the breeding of himself!

3. The third of my fifteen factors of germination is man's virtual completion of the exploration of his planet in this century. Only 500 years ago the map makers knew nothing of what was on the other side of the earth, or even if it had another side. America was unknown even to itself and the extent of Africa was a wild conjecture. Explorers presumed the tropics were made of fire and the earth flat so that ships would risk falling off its edge if they ventured out of sight of shore. The Dutch did not discover Australia until the seventeenth century and the ocean depths and polar regions remained largely unknown even up to the beginning of the twentieth.

In the first decades of this century when I was a child and young man, nobody had been to the North Pole or the South Pole or to the top of the highest mountain or the bottom of the sea. But all these goals have been attained in this century and man has charted not only every detail of every land and ocean deep, not missing the inner heart of the atom, but flown through the whole atmosphere and into space and beyond it, including in person to Earth's satellite, the moon—with rocket cameras to the neighbouring planets and hundreds of sophisticated new telescopes, spectrosopes and other instruments to the very horizon of the freshly conceived Universe. What could more dramatically demonstrate Bahá'u'lláh's declaration that this is the day when something unprecedented is happening to the little world called Earth?

4. My fourth evidence of germination is that man's speed of travel has increased a thousand-fold in less than a hundred years. After about five millennia during which the fastest a human could go was at the gallop of a horse, what might be called an oats barrier was passed in 1839 when a railroad locomotive hit 59 miles an hour,

decisively beating the horse, and a succession of locomotives held the record until I was born in 1907. As a matter of mystic coincidence, I recently found out that it was indeed the very day I was born, January 25, 1907, that the record finally left the rails and passed to automobiles when a man named Frank Marriott drove a Stanley Steamer 150 miles an hour on Ormond Beach in Florida. And that record stood for more than 10 years until airplanes surpassed it in World War I. From then on airplanes held the record continuously for over 40 years until Yuri Gagarin, the Russian, went into orbit April 12, 1961, at a speed of better than five miles a second. And it was less than eight years later that Frank Borman, going to the moon for the United States in 1968, went almost seven miles a second. Such translunar speed (slightly exceeded in later Apollo flights to the moon) will probably remain man's approximate limit for quite a while because one doesn't need much more speed to go anywhere in the solar system, which is as far as we are likely to go until we head for the stars—and that is untold centuries off.

5. The fifth in this series of evidences is man's speed of communication which, in case you hadn't noticed, has increased even faster than his speed of travel, multiplying itself ten million times in a single step upward in 1844 when the first 'instantaneous' message was sent on Earth, in one leap raising the speed of the railway mail pouch to that of the telegram flashing along wire at 186,282 miles a second! There was something divinely mystic about this event which, as most of you know, coincided with the announcement of the coming of the Bahá'í Faith by the Báb in Shíráz, Persia, on May 23 of that historic year which was likewise the day 'Abdu'l-Bahá was born and the thousandth anniversary of the disappearance of the Twelfth Imám of Islám. And the engineering miracle has been firmly consolidated by successive development of the telephone, radio and television during the ensuing germinal century in which, although these later inventions have not increased the transmission velocity (speed of light), they have suddenly for the first time made Earth capable of communicating with outside worlds, particularly since powerful television waves began to be broadcast regularly from America and Europe shortly after World War II, resulting in the planet's radiating out a continuously expanding sphere of TV waves—an abstract

bubble of radiation with current radius of 30 light years that already reaches beyond some thousand of the nearer stars and their planetary systems.

6. The sixth evidence is the explosion of knowledge. The earth's Tree of Knowledge has burst into bloom in this century and Earth can never again be the same. Man's mind is, you might say, the fovea of this planet's consciousness, the fovea being the part of the retina that is keenly focused on a book when one is reading it. An example of this sudden change in man's mind might be that in the first decade of this century *The New York Times* published an editorial saying: 'The flying machine which will really fly might be evolved by the combined and continuous efforts of mathematicians and mechanics in from one to ten million years.' The date was 1903, the very year in which two unknown bicycle mechanics named Wilbur and Orville Wright completed a seemingly harebrained experiment at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, news of which *The New York Times* did not deem fit to print.

Within a few decades of course things began to look very different and it became evident that any good engineering firm, even in 1903, given a million dollars to research and develop a flying machine, might have done as well as the Wright boys. Some believed better. But the fact is that no one in 1903 had thought flying was worth a million dollars or, for that matter, a thousand, even though in a few decades almost every big corporation and government on Earth would be putting a major portion of its budget into research and development.

Meanwhile, during and after World War I, flying developed at an accelerating pace and knowledge germinated explosively all over the planet while fundamental revolutions occurred in most of the main branches of science. And this sudden pooling of knowledge was measurable statistically as an outburst of information that greatly exceeded the increase in population. Indeed in terms of books, pamphlets, journals, maps, photographs, etc. housed in the world's libraries, the accumulation is already estimated to total something like a billion items and to be growing at the rate of 3 percent per year and therefore rapidly pulling away from the people who are multiplying at only 2 percent.

One of the consequences of this interrelation is that, by the time a baby born today finishes

college, the amount of information available to him will have quadrupled. This imposes an unprecedented strain on twentieth century children comprehensible only in light of the volatility of the knowledge now overflowing upon Earth, knowledge that is accumulating so much faster than it is evaporating that a major task of the next century may well be man's taming and harnessing it in the service of his newly germinated world.

7. A major offshoot from the Tree of Knowledge of course is automation, which in one generation has revolutionized the management and technology of the world. At its heart is the computer, whose relation to the Earth's explosions in speed and information is obvious in the fact that man now not only doubles his computation rate (a blend of speed, complexity and accuracy) every year but, through electronic miniaturization, annually halves its equipment size and (to some degree) its cost. Thus the mental work of multiplying two 14-digit numbers, which took a trained mathematician with pencil and paper twenty minutes in World War II, can now be done electronically in less than 1/100th of a second and with much less chance of error.

Predicting the future of automatic computation is admittedly difficult and controversial but it is interesting to contemplate the extravagant extrapolation of a leading authority, Marvin Minsky of MIT's Artificial Intelligence Laboratory, who predicted in 1970 that in a decade or so 'we will have a machine with the general intelligence of an average human being. . . . a machine able to read Shakespeare, grease a car, play office politics, tell a joke, have a fight.' He added that 'at that point the machine will begin to educate itself with fantastic speed. In a few months it will be at genius level' and, not long after, 'its powers will be incalculable.'

8. The eighth factor of germination is the sudden shift of poverty towards prosperity on Earth. At the beginning of this century only 1 percent of humanity, called the 'haves', had an annual income as high as a few hundred dollars. Today half the world's population averages \$2,000 annually and, by the year 2000, the 'haves' (even with inflation) should reach 90 percent of the world's population. Although a serious problem has so far persisted throughout the worldwide industrial revolution of an

'ineradicable' disparity between the wealth of the 'haves' and the 'have-nots', the overall average wealth has been steadily growing. Thus while the average American has increased his consumption of energy a hundredfold in one hundred years until he is now using fifty times as much of it as the average Hindu in India, the Hindu has also increased his consumption by at least five or ten times and, when education enables him to take advantage of his proliferating opportunities, he may well begin to close the gap.

Another aspect of the surging wealth is the abrupt, almost cancerous, growth of cities on this planet that never had a village until a dozen millennia ago, hardly a real town before the fifth century B.C., and as recently as 1800 A.D. only fifty cities with populations as big as 100,000 people. But in the nineteenth century came the ignition point when industry, machines, plumbing, transport, electricity and the telephone really germinated the urban seeds so that by 1970 Earth was rich enough to have more than fifteen hundred cities of over 100,000 and a good hundred between 1,000,000 and 10,000,000. In the United States now, in consequence, country land is being paved over and urbanized at the unheard of rate of 5 square miles a day and it appears that the majority of all humans will be living in cities by 1990.

9. Evidence number nine of germination is that during the past century a great movement to liberate the captive people of Earth has swept the planet and now, for the first time, women are being given equal rights with men almost everywhere and not only slaves but exploited races and minorities of nearly every sort are progressively gaining equal status with other citizens in all but a few totalitarian states.

Slavery is an ancient social perversion that goes back further than history, even into animal and vegetable orders like the ants, but it evidently evolved among humans only with agriculture, villages, property ownership, animal domestication and particularly the invention of war which, after all, is what provided the prisoners who became the first slaves. It reached peaks in the days of Solomon who built his temple with 153,600 slaves (Chronicles II, 2, 17-18) and in Roman times when it was so widespread it necessitated constant raiding into 'barbarian' countries and began to be abused with distressing con-

sequences like gladiatorial exhibitions and the revolt of Spartacus, the slave who trained and led an army of 90,000 slaves against Rome. Indeed it seemed such an ingrained aspect of nature that the great philosophers of the day accepted it, including Socrates, Plato (rather reluctantly) and Aristotle. Even Christ is not known to have spoken against it for, as Paul wrote to the Corinthians: 'Every man has his own calling; let him keep to it.'

In the nineteenth century, however, almost like magic, slavery, which had become big business, especially among seafaring nations, was abolished and virtually disappeared from democratic societies. At the same time enslaved women were removing their veils, led by such heroic pioneers as Ṭáhirih, the great woman martyr of the early days of the Bahá'í Faith in Persia, and increasingly they demanded the right to *own* property rather than *be* property. So not much longer would they rank below pigs socially in New Guinea. Nor would it continue to be possible to buy a wife for \$4.00 as was still being done in West Africa when I was there flying cargoes in World War II. Even racial prejudice, notably difficult to purge from peoples' minds after millennia of injustice between races, is steadily diminishing this century, aided by improved education and legislation for human and civil rights throughout much of the world.

10. My tenth evidence of germination is the sudden great increase in literacy and education all over our planet. As a result, more than 60 percent of humanity can now read and write and the proportions of that majority are increasing about one percent a year as the illiterate elderly die. Predictably the change is accompanied by no little struggle, for literacy is not yet every man's dish. When an Arab in Algeria was approached recently about letting his wife join a reading and writing class, he asked in astonishment, 'You mean my wife should write letters? To whom?'

Yet somehow, little by little, the new ideas take hold, often aided by radio or movies, and the new teachings are having their subtle but profound effect on evolution, particularly on the mental and cultural evolution they are part of.

11. Standardization, the eleventh factor in germination, is rapidly uniting Earth by permeating all science and all nations. For not only does mankind as a whole already use the twenty-four-hour day, the seven-day week, decimals in mathematics, standard scientific

criteria from market scales to atomic energy and common traffic rules in shipping and flying, but soon the metric system will undoubtedly become universal, highway signs similar everywhere and, sooner or later, all countries driving on the right.

12. A universal language that all educated humans can speak and understand is my twelfth factor in this series, which also seems on its way to becoming a reality on Earth. Although about fifty artificial languages such as Esperanto have been devised, which offer the advantages of phonetic regularity, simplicity, and universality, no one of them has yet been officially adopted as the world language because they all bear the heavy initial disadvantage that there is no considerable population speaking them, no government or large institution promoting them and no literature to give them a tradition. So we are left with the natural evolutionary process of the roughly 4,000 known ancient tongues which fortunately are slowly filtering and amalgamating toward fewer and more universal modern languages with large vocabularies and literatures such as English, German, Spanish, French, Mandarin Chinese, Hindustani, Russian, Hebrew and Arabic.

Of these, English in the last century or two seems to have moved to the forefront as the one with the best chance of becoming a truly universal tongue, most of all in the last few decades. And today more than 60 percent of all scientific papers are published in English, work on simplifying it is being done, and it is the standard language of airports all over Earth.

13. My thirteenth evidence is the movement toward a world government which, although appropriately unlucky, has become such an obviously essential step in Earth's present development that it must be considered one of the factors in planetary germination even though it hasn't yet happened. Indeed should man's narrow nationalism or heedlessness continue to block the establishment of any sort of world political federation for many decades more, humanity's very survival will be increasingly threatened!

In the evolution of the many millennia just past, starting with families and clans that slowly combined into villages and city states that eventually became nations, federations, empires and superpowers, the custom known as war evolved along with political organization in a

parallel, feedback interrelation. Of the 14,550 wars fought since history began to be recorded in 3600 B.C. at the rate of one every 140 days, however, they were relatively local until this century, indeed generally conducted like sporting events with participants consisting of professional soldiers following traditional rules and led by individual heroes. And it is only now that suddenly something entirely new has emerged with the advent of nuclear weapons and intercontinental missiles which makes war not only all-out but so impersonal and instantaneously lethal on such a scale that the 'victor' must almost surely be destroyed along with the 'vanquished'. Not to mention all large cities and possibly half of mankind vaporized in a day.

How Earth will become federated or otherwise united under a world government strong enough to disarm the nations and guarantee peace and order is not yet clear, but the absurdity of continuing the present international anarchy is so obvious that perhaps the majority of all educated people already favor some form of world federation, including the sacrifice of national sovereignty essential to making it work, so it has a chance of finally coming into existence without too catastrophic a birth struggle.

14. The fourteenth factor of germination is the rise of the human spirit which must be swiftly, if invisibly, evolving—along with man's more obvious material and mental progress—and must, Bahá'u'lláh tells us, soon unite all people in a common bond of empathy that will bring such harmony and peace as was never before known on Earth.

This of course is not a scientific statement, nor is it provable nor (I presume) even believable to most people. Yet it is at the heart of the germination of the planet and must be, in some sense, measurable. I mean that it deals with a profound question, that seems to disturb many serious thinkers: is our world getting better or worse? Are we passengers on Earth evolving as we should? Or are corruption and pollution (with its 3 B's) overtaking us as we slide hopelessly down the drain?

The answer is not easy. At the very least, it calls for spiritual comparison between life on Earth today and life as it was on Earth a hundred or a hundred-thousand years ago—and it is a comparison bound to be controversial, both because no one lives long enough to gain first-

hand perspective over such spans of time and because spiritual things are so utterly intangible and elusive.

Nevertheless one can look at Stone Age life on Earth today which may be comparable to the pre-Eden days when man was a hunter and knew nothing of farming, his morality presumably on the level of the increasingly clever beast he had found himself to be and whose sense of right and wrong, if it could be called that, depended, as with other animals, on his instinctive urges to hunt, kill, eat, mate and defend the territory he regarded as his. Then as man settled into tribal and village life with all it involved in common defense measures, laws of property, adaptability to authority (including gods, devils and chiefs), inevitably disputes became louder and more frequent, leading to more laws that resulted in more violations as crimes became sins—and the evolution of virtue slowly advanced, significantly changing the killing of a rival from a noble deed to a shameful murder.

Of course it took a long time with innumerable ups and downs and inspirations and errors. The Dark Ages and the Middle Ages came and went with their interminable killings, often in the name of piety as when Bishop Peter Arbues (1441–1485) burned 40,000 'heretics' at the stake and was canonized as a saint for it.

But perhaps observation of a typical city scene would be enough to show the spiritual temper of the times—so let me say that a poor old man who fell down in the street in 1750 was likely to be left there unaided and, when Horace Walpole saw it happen outside White's coffee house in London that year, he recorded that the customers inside placed bets on whether the fellow were dead or not. And, when a passerby suggested he should be bled (standard first-aid treatment of the day), they loudly protested that this would interfere with the fairness of the betting.

At the same time, any well-dressed stranger, particularly if foreign-looking, was liable to be jeered at as a 'French dog,' have dead cats or worse thrown at him and, if he retaliated, he might well be mobbed and killed. And taunting victims in the pillory, staring at the inmates of 'mad houses,' or baiting animals, were favorite pastimes, only recently replaced by going to ball games or watching TV.

By such glimpses of history we can measure in a feeble way the unfolding of spirit through the centuries—noting that in enlightened England

there remained 223 offenses punishable by death in 1817, the year of Bahá'u'lláh's birth, while the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was founded in 1824, something that a historian was to call the first consciously organized action taken by any species of life on Earth solely for the benefit of another.

By the time Bahá'u'lláh had lived His life, however, and established the Bahá'í Faith as the first truly global religion on Earth, the concomitant germination was well under way, and the twentieth century unreeling its wonders. And since World War II, while the membership of most of man's religious organizations has been growing about twice as fast as his population, the speed of the Bahá'í Faith to virtually every corner of every country has exceeded all the others.

15. The final evidence of germination on my list is the very profound but hard-to-detect transcendence of the organism man into the superorganism mankind. This also involves the consciousness of mankind which is swiftly unfurling a new dimension as Earth becomes aware of herself for the first time, one might say turning (on a world scale) self-conscious!

It could be usefully compared, I think, to a fish in a school or a bird in a flock engaged in mass maneuvering. For such a fish or bird inevitably loses his individuality and independence and, to some degree, becomes a 'cell' in a greater 'body'. He must also, in effect, submerge his 'self' beyond the equivalent of an ant or bee in order to resurface collectively as an anthill or a beehive. And this means, in the case of man, that he not only transcends individually, each in his own mind and soul from finitude toward Infinitude, but he also transcends collectively from men and women to mankind while Earth herself (whose consciousness is primarily the mind of man) must ultimately transcend (beyond space-time-self) into what may be described as the divine essence of the Universe.

The philosophical message of Mr. Murchie's *The Seven Mysteries of Life* is summarized in his poem which follows:

I—ABSTRACTION

What's in an egg?
A song is there, in chemical notation,
Invisibly packed into the genes;

Also detailed instructions for nest building,
A menu or two, and a map of stars—
All in the one cell that multiplies into many,
All put at the disposal
Of the little feathered passenger
So, once hatched and fledged,
He will have more than a wishbone
To launch his life.

What's an ocean wave made of?
At first glance nothing but salt water;
But keep your eyes on it ten seconds . . .
twenty seconds . . .

You'll notice the water is roused
Only momentarily by the wave
Which passes it by,
That the wave leaves the molecules and
bubbles behind,

That the wave in essence is a kind of ghost
Freed from materiality by the dimension
of time,
Made not of substance
But energy.

And likewise with living bodies
And rocks, and all metabolizing matter
From atoms to stars,
Which all flow through space-time
Uttering the abstract nature
Of the Universe.

II—INTERRELATION

What relation is a white man
To a black man?
A yellow man to a red or brown?
Closer maybe than you'd think,
For all family trees meet and merge
Within fifty generations, more or less—
In round numbers a thousand years—
Which makes all men cousins,
Brothers in spirit, if you will,
Or, to be genetically precise,
Within the range of fiftieth cousin.

But relations don't stop here:
Man also has ancestors in common
With the chimpanzee and other apes,
Back twenty million years or so,
Plus all the mammals farther back—
His ten millionth cousins
If you'll abide my candor.
Still farther, the billionth cousin span
Takes in the whole kingdom,
And many vegetables, and trees;

The trillionth must include rocks and worlds.
 There is no line, you see, between these cousin
 kingdoms,
 No real boundary between you and the
 universe—
 For all things are related,
 Through identical elements in world and world,
 Even out to the farthest reaches
 Of space.

III—OMNIPRESENCE

Where did life begin?
 In the festering ooze of a primeval swamp?
 In a submicroscopic virus?
 In a stone? A star?
 Strictly speaking, in none of these.
 For, truthfully, the question is wrong.
 Life did not literally begin. Life is.
 Life is everywhere everywhen,
 At least in essence,
 And of course
 It depends on your definition.

Did you ever meet a living stone,
 A stone that stirs, that travels,
 That eats, grows, heals its wounds,
 A stone that breeds its kind?
 Yes, all stones are alive
 Essentially, potentially;
 At least they move around
 When weather and circumstances permit,
 Going mostly downhill,
 Sometimes waiting centuries
 In a deep pool in some stream
 For a torrent wild enough to drive them on.
 And stones are crystals,
 Rock crystals that grow, molecule by molecule,
 Filling their own cracks or wounds,
 Reproducing themselves slowly
 But perfectly.
 One kind is even magnetic and attracts iron.
 The ancient Chinese called it
 'The stone that loves.'

Larger mineral-like organisms also live
 In their patient, plodding way:
 Dunes drift and glaciers creep,
 As do mountains, islands, volcanoes and
 rivers—that are born in the clouds
 and die in the sea—and lakes and
 storms,
 All moving as is their wont,
 Even fires on Earth

And whirling spots on the sun.
 In fact there is compelling evidence
 That the earth lives as a superorganism,
 Along with moons, planets, comets, stars,
 galaxies
 And other celestial bodies,
 And that, most of all,
 The Universe itself
 Is a growing, metabolizing supersuperBeing
 In very truth alive.

IV—POLARITY

Do you think matter is made of particles?
 Waves? Or what?
 Where is the line between body and mind?
 How could God,
 Presumably the epitome of goodness,
 If He exists,
 Create a world harboring as much evil, pain,
 ugliness,
 Disease and war as we find in this world?
 How could He?

These are enigmas, paradoxes,
 Seemingly unsolvable;
 Yet somehow, if one relaxes one's heart
 And opens one's mind,
 And wonders the right wonders,
 They become resolvable.
 Take Saint George and his dragon.
 If Earth is a good world, one asks oneself,
 Why the dragon?
 Obviously because he was needed.
 Can you, in fact, imagine
 Any way George could have made it to
 sainthood
 Without him?

There is a polarity about good and evil, you see.
 To a baby, getting spanked for trying to climb
 out of his cradle
 Is a dreadful experience: an 'evil.'
 But to his anxious mother, trying to tell him NO
 In sign language, it is a constructive deed
 and 'good.'

The same act thus has two poles
 Expressing opposite aspects of good and ill.
 Similarly, to mankind as a whole, war is evil,
 A spanking of civilization,
 Something to be outlawed at all costs.
 Yet, for all we know, in the perspective
 Of spiritual or cosmic forces far beyond
 man's understanding

War could possibly serve some useful
 Maternal purpose as a sign language,
 A challenge to try our souls—
 Even perhaps, relatively speaking,
 A constructive, spiritual purpose.

For polarity is part of the symmetry of nature
 That brings a relativity, a complementarity
 To many qualities in this life,
 To cause and effect, to predator and prey,
 Male and female, Creator and creature,
 Concrete and abstract, science and religion,
 Mortality and immortality, yin and yang,
 And other seeming opposites.
 Free will, one of the most puzzling of these,
 Has for its counterpart, predestination,
 Which turns out to be really its expanded aspect,
 A sort of bird's-eye view of the familiar scene
 Beheld from one dimension more.
 And so it goes
 With body and mind,
 The first enmeshed in space, in time,
 The second free of both,
 Like poles of Earth and other paradoxes
 Which are, in a sense,
 Really just different sides
 Of the same thing.

V—TRANSCENDENCE

Have you ever wondered
 Why each year you live
 Seems to pass faster than the year before?
 There's a law at work here
 Called Transcendence,
 Influencing time and space and consciousness
 of self,
 For each year lived has to be a smaller portion
 Of one's experience to date.
 To the year-old baby a year is a lifetime,
 To the ten-year old a tenth as much,
 To the centenarian but one percent of his
 experience
 While people he knows appear, bloom and die
 Like flowers in a garden.
 The same is as true of space as time.
 The baby learns the inch and foot
 Before he knows the yard,
 Then, as his horizon expands,
 The mile, the acre . . . the light-year . . .
 Progression from the finite
 Toward the Infinite, you see.

Yet as you gain the mile, you do not lose
 the inch,
 Nor as you gain the year do you lose the
 minute or the hour,
 For finitude is a tool of learning,
 Learning the little before the big,
 The simple before the complex.
 Transcendence affects the self too,
 For one begins as a fertile egg,
 The seed-soul, stirring, seeking,
 Becoming a pupil in the Soul School of Earth,
 Growing in consciousness,
 In awareness of other beings,
 Using the tools of finitude,
 The self in space and time,
 The while developing spiritually
 Through life, through death—
 Death, which evolved only later in evolution
 because it had
 Survival value for the multicelled organisms—
 Death that we cannot live without.

VI—GERMINATION

A nova is an exploding star,
 Climax in the life of a blazing world,
 An example of the cyclic vitality of all worlds
 That grow and mature, ferment, germinate.
 Germination happens only once per world,
 A crucial event amid the unfolding phases of life
 That develop mind, speech and spirituality
 In ways still scarcely known to history,
 To science, to philosophy.
 Earth, for example, third planet
 Of a modest star called Sun,
 Is germinating right now.
 After five billion years of slow, quiet
 evolution
 Plus a few quick centuries of writing, printing,
 Industrial revolution, technological bloom
 And improved communication,
 Enabling her emerging mind for the first time
 To pool its knowledge,
 Suddenly in the twentieth century
 Earth, with her human population,
 Is practically exploding!
 Man has won the planetary tournament of
 evolution
 By dominating all competing forms of life,
 Speed of travel has climbed a thousandfold
 From the gallop of the horse

To the whoosh of the space rocket.
 Revolutions have occurred in nearly every
 branch of learning,
 Man has explored not only his planet's entire
 surface
 But penetrated from the atom to the sky
 And into outer space.
 He is now seriously trying to unite his home
 world
 Politically and culturally, through
 standardization,
 Liberalization, free compulsory education
 for all.
 Even spiritual unity must soon loom as an
 attainable goal,
 An aspect of Earth's flowering into a
 mature superorganism—
 All this in fulfillment of the natural,
 The inevitable, evolutionary process
 Of planetary germination.

VII—DIVINITY

Who or What runs the Universe?
 Is there a plan behind the daisy, the
 hummingbird,
 The whale, the world?
 Who conceived the eye back in the primeval
 darkness
 Of early evolution?
 Who designed the fish's air bladder in the
 ancient deep
 As if foreseeing its future as a breathing lung
 Upon the dry land?
 And out of what beginning evolved the mind?
 By any stretch could mind have been mindlessly
 created?
 Does science have an answer
 To the Voice out of the Whirlwind which
 asked Job
 'Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts?'
 Is the world really drifting along without pilot,
 Steering itself automatically,
 Running its own affairs at random?
 Could the Universe, just conceivably,
 Have created Itself?
 Surely there is Mystery in this Universe,
 Not only somewhere and somewhen but
 everywhere everywhen
 And far, far beyond the scope of man's feeble
 Capacity to comprehend.
 For man, puny, mortal and finite,

As he is in this nether phase,
 Is permitted to visualize neither an end to space
 Nor space without end;
 Nor can he even grasp a start or a finish of time,
 Nor any sort of beginning that hath no
 beginning
 Nor any end that hath no end.
 Hence the Mystery,
 The abiding, pervasive, universal
 Unknowability
 That many call by the name of God.
 But what matters it what you call It?
 It is abstruse, bewilderingly abstruse,
 and remains so
 Whether or no we accept that somehow by Its
 agency
 Out of utter nothingness is arisen
 Everything in the Universe.

Its station plainly implies intelligence,
 Indeed Intelligence so far beyond the human
 As to justify the adjective 'Divine.'
 And this seems to be relative.
 If a human adult represents divinity to a baby
 or an animal,
 So must the animal be divine to a vegetable,
 The vegetable to a mineral . . .
 Likewise, as wrote Paul to the Corinthians,
 'The foolishness of God is wiser than men.'
 And there is presumably a hierarchy in
 Divinity above
 As well as below—
 Even as the doings and thoughts of humanity
 and of Earth
 Are but a negligible jot
 In the eternal consciousness of God.
 Even as the horizon of knowledge expands
 outward from our planet
 Accompanied by the inexorable horizon of
 Mystery
 Which expands even faster and farther than
 knowledge,
 Leading man's consciousness
 To new dimensions.

Thus doth Divinity
 Embrace all the other six mysteries of life
 Even though callow man comprehendeth it not,
 Even though the Mystery remaineth
 So far beyond earthly finitude
 That no eye but God's Own Eye
 Hath the capacity to see
 GOD.

6. SOME THEMES AND IMAGES IN THE WRITINGS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

BAHÍYYIH NAKHJAVÁNÍ

Strive, O people, to gain admittance into this vast Immensity for which God ordained neither beginning nor end, in which His voice hath been raised, and over which have been wafted the sweet savours of holiness and glory. Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh.

IT is impossible for the reader of such words to remain detached, for he is a seeker as soon as he begins to read. Faced with the vast immensity of the written Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, he responds like a lover to its imagery, like a servant to its exhortations, and like a passionate believer to its message of Divine Unity. Indeed, the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh are some of the mightiest gates through which the seeker can strive to gain admittance into the courts of God, for here one can clearly catch the accents of that voice and can sense the sweet savours of understanding from its melodies; here one can discover, through the mysterious affinity shared by Books and Gates in this Dispensation, the symbolic archetype of the many metaphorical and literal gates that stand wide open in this Day, summoning mankind unto them.

From its inception this Cause has taught man the ways of worship through the medium of language which is alike the channel of his praise and the expression of his service: the Báb, through His Name 'The Primal Point', is both the Gate and the Initiator of language, in its most profound sense of divine revelation, and from the Bayán, 'the Mother Book', proceeds the inspiration that forms the Letters of the Living, those motions of spirit and sacrifice in the world of creation. The mystical harmony between the language of pen and spirit disclosed in the Writings is possible of expression between word and deed in the lives of men:

I render Thee thanks . . . that Thou hast taught Thy servants how to make mention of Thee and revealed unto them the ways whereby they can supplicate Thee through Thy most holy and exalted tongue and Thy most august and precious speech.

The reconciliation of word and deed is likewise reflected in the mingling of justice and

mercy in relation to the Writings, for while a single letter from the mouth of God is the *mother of all utterances* and the *begetter of all creation*, it can also decide *between all created things, causing them who are devoted to Thee to ascend unto the summit of glory and the infidels to fall into the lowest abyss*. At the same time words are the repositories of God's infinite grace; the sheer abundance and poetry of Bahá'u'lláh's language is an affirmation of the statement that *from eternity the door of Thy grace hath remained wide open*. Such words are tokens of His immeasurable bounty:

Through the power released by these exalted words He hath lent a fresh impulse and set a new direction to the birds of men's hearts and hath obliterated every trace of restriction and limitation from God's Holy Book.

O Comrades, He cries to those who whether reading or seeking stand before the vast immensity of His Cause, *the gates that open on the Placeless stand wide . . . This, He attests, is verily an evidence of His tender mercy unto men.*

To enter such gates requires both strength and submission: the strength of dichotomies and the submission to the widening wonder of paradox. The angels are of fire and snow; the food of them who haste to meet Him is the fragments of their broken hearts; the true believer is both a river of life eternal and a flame of fire. He must at one moment be consumed and also rise phoenix-like from the flame to become the source of another's attraction. The reader struggles against the limitations of antithesis in his mind in order to resolve them through action, and yearns like the angels, the lovers and the believers, to translate these words into acts of praise and dedication, to sing aloud of His glory, to circle with deeds of love around Him and stand in servitude before His throne. The traditional dichotomy between

words and deeds is strangely transformed so that words become deeds, for the reader cannot remain static in this vast immensity but must be characterized by the forward striving of a life as well as a mind. The understanding and insight he receives from the language of Bahá'u'lláh demands expression in his acts. Anything less would belittle the nature of the initial invitation to strive; anything else would indeed be blasphemy.

O miserable me! Were I to attempt merely to describe Thee, such an attempt would itself be an evidence of my impiety, and would attest my heedlessness in the face of the clear and resplendent tokens of Thy oneness.

Since limitation is the hallmark of any human endeavour, it might be in keeping with the nature of this article to begin with a necessarily limited consideration of dust as a symbol of that state in the Writings. Again and again the circumference of the human heart, like the surface of earth, is stressed as a fixed condition, one that may not be transcended. Bahá'u'lláh writes unequivocally that men *can never hope to pass beyond the bounds which by Thy behest and decree have been fixed within their own hearts*. We are children of dust, weeds that spring out of that dust, moving forms of dust and sons of earth. Easily overwhelmed by *shades of utter loss*, man keeps turning and returning to *water and clay*. Content with *transient dust* he sinks into the *slough of heedlessness*; the meadow of his heart too readily becomes a *pasture of desire and passion*. His hands are too easily soiled by the dust of *self and hypocrisy*. Within him and about him threatens the abyss of his limitations as he moves with stumbling slowness across the *dust-heap of a mortal world*.

The possibilities within these limits, however, are boundless. Once the reader recognizes his kinship with it, the metaphor invites him further. He realizes that both in the language itself and in the reality of his own being there lies a path across his earth-nature that beckons him beyond those gates he has already seen shimmering before him, a path upon which the particles of dust appear to gleam like gems. His dusty limitations become the expression of his most perfected virtues along these paths of service and ways of sanctity; his humility is his diadem on this highway of love and this pathway of *Thy loved ones*. The essence of his being is moulded and sustained by the clay of love and grace, and

words—the written expression of man both as mystery and limitation—like atoms of dust hold within them *a door that leadeth . . . to the station of absolute certitude*. Through such words *the rivers of Divine utterance* have flowed and caused the *tender herbs of wisdom and understanding* to spring from the soil of his heart, and from such soil the hyacinths of a greater knowledge may also grow. Indeed, such a heart is not merely *a garden of eternal delight* but a throne sanctified for His descent, a Sinai upon which His mysteries are vouchsafed, a place whose loftiness and dignity should never be defiled.

At the heart of this lofty station, however, lies the paradox of humility, for the earth can only be of such a transcendent nature when *ennobled by the footsteps of Thy chosen ones in Thy Path*. To be *a martyr in My path and shed thy life-blood on the dust* are fragments of the ideal evinced by the earth itself: *witness with what absolute submissiveness I allow myself to be trodden beneath the feet of men*. The actions of men must be of such humility that *every atom of dust beneath their feet may attest the depth of their devotion* and their words be of such quality that *these same atoms of dust will be thrilled by its influence*. Humility, therefore, is the station towards which one strives in approaching the immensity of service.

Having stepped forward onto this path and recognized the paradox inherent within the very dust upon which one treads, the motion forward both for the reader and the seeker is most simply conveyed by the imagery of courts and thresholds, steps and portals, canopies and shelters. The progress (if one can convey so multitudinous an approach by so flat a word) guides the reader through courts of ever increasing beauty and gardens of intoxicating nearness, like the worshipper in his approach towards the Shrines. Shoghi Effendi, in his creation of these literal gardens was not only providing a protection and establishing a respect around the holy places, but was also interpreting exquisitely the Words of Bahá'u'lláh; for these gardens reflect with haunting accuracy the shimmering presence of inner and outer courts, of marble steps that ever rise, and gates that ever open to the seeking spirit of the reader in his parallel progress through the language of Bahá'u'lláh. It is a language that is replete with the concept of kingship. This is the underlying theme that reverberates within the splendid architecture of courts and finds its nearest

resolution in its references to the awe, the beauty and the fragrance of the King Who occupies them. Both His Person and His courtly surroundings are metaphors of approach, degree and perspective by which the reader can comprehend the nature of attainment in this Cause.

To begin with he finds himself among those who *stand(s) at the gate of the city of Thy nearness* and is granted the inestimable bounty of approaching the courts of His presence, the canopy of His majesty and the precincts of His mercy. By the light of God *concealed in the well-hidden pavilions* he is able to see the path clearly enough before him and watch as it ascends *into the loftiest chambers of paradise*. With his whole being poised to follow in the direction of this insight, he sets himself towards the *adored sanctuary of Thy Revelation and of Thy Beauty* and is able to draw nearer the *habitation of Thy throne*. Finally, in his blessedness, he finds that he has *entered Thy presence and caught the accents of Thy voice*. It is here, in this dazzling proximity where he can cling to the hem of His Robe, smell the musk-scented perfume of His hair and hear the Words that flow from His *sugar-shedding lips*, that the reader confronts another paradox. He realizes that his considered proximity is nothing but remoteness in relation to the magnitude beyond the metaphor:

Now that Thou hast made them to abide under the shade of the canopy of Thy mercy, do Thou assist them to attain what must befit so august a station. Suffer them not, O my Lord, to be numbered with them who, though enjoying near access to Thee, have been kept back from recognizing Thy face, and who, though meeting with Thee, are deprived of Thy presence . . .

It is by now a familiar paradox and has been met before, but the relative simplicity of its presence in a single word such as 'dust' is further enhanced and its orbit of association and implication widened as the complexity of the language forces the reader to reconsider his original discovery through the application of a whole metaphor. Then again, within the image itself, are a number of layers of comprehension which the reader might approach. The topical allusions alone, with their disturbing reference to the treachery and egoism which constantly surrounded the Blessed Beauty both from within and without His household, are a disconcerting

enough interpretation of this paradox. But there is also an uneasy immediacy in these words which applies to the present instant in which they are being read, and implicates the reader as he stands preoccupied by his reading and is equally threatened by his preoccupation *from having near access to Thee and from attaining the court of Thy glory*.

An abrupt return to a reconsideration of one's abject limitations seems a necessary prerequisite to the motion of 'circling' that must accompany any step towards proximity along this path. The gulf of separation that yawns between the servant and his King, the lover and his Beloved, the reader and the Goal of his desire, is a measure of this process:

Others were able to approach Thee but were kept back from beholding Thy face. Still others were permitted in their eagerness to look upon Thee, to enter the precincts of Thy court, but they allowed the veils of the imaginations of Thy creatures and the wrongs inflicted by the oppressors among Thy people to come in between them and Thee.

Separation also has its own perverse architecture, for below the ascending tiers of court and pavilion that provide the pedestrian mind of the reader with a measure of the proximity of his Goal, there is a converse motion possible, down into *this darksome well which the vain imaginations of Thine adversaries have built, down farther into this blind pit which the idle fancies of the wicked among Thy creatures have dugged*. Suffocated by remoteness in the stale and cavernous dungeons of his separation from God the reader might also be dwelling in *a place within whose walls no voice can be heard except the sound of the echo, a place of thick darkness in which the croaking of the raven obliterates the melodies of the very Words he reads*. The Most Great Prison and the Síyáh-Chál become symbols of the contingent world bearing down upon the soul aspiring towards God. Just as gates were the means of literal and metaphorical approach and were always open, always beckoning, so prisons and the constraint of chains and veils are also always present, threatening and denying the seeker access to his Beloved. This separation, whether imposed from within or from without, is significantly felt at the instant when proximity seems imminent. *This is the Day, Bahá'u'lláh states, when every atom of the earth hath been made to vibrate and cry out: 'O Thou Who art the*

Revealer of signs and the King of creation! I verily perceive the fragrance of Thy presence . . . But within the same passage this very atom declares: *'I know not, however, O Thou the Beloved of the world and the Desire of the nations, the place wherein the throne of Thy majesty hath been established nor the seat which hath been made Thy footstool and been illumined with the splendours of the light of Thy face.'*

The 'unknowing' that must always impose itself between the reader and the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh is an ancient formless tradition in mystical poetry and finds its most tangible expression in the imagery of this Revelation. What was a cloud in an earlier dispensation is transformed by Bahá'u'lláh's pen, and through the metaphors of separation, becomes an intensely felt, almost physical anguish. At the instant that the reader grasps the significance of the Words he reads, he becomes overwhelmed by his devastating unworthiness to approach such meaning. He realizes, moreover, that the meaning he has grasped is necessarily puny and pathetic, a play of shadows, a feeble echo of *the Kingdom of Thy Names* which is far above his comprehension and is itself *created through the movement of Thy fingers and trembleth for fear of Thee*. The burst of praise that rises to his lips is a mere reflection of those same limitations against which he has striven with such zeal:

Whatsoever hath been adorned with the robe of words is but Thy creation which hath been generated in Thy realm and begotten through the operation of Thy will and is wholly unworthy of Thy highness and falleth short of Thine excellence.

And finally this anguish is stretched to its limits through the added dimension afforded to the reader of the presence, within the Words, of the Author Himself. He is not only, through His bounty and grace, speaking on behalf of man as his advocate with words of tender compassion that can be echoed; He is also speaking in His Own capacity, with His Own personal anguish, so that the separation experienced is that of the Manifestation from the source of His light:

And at whatever time my pen ascribeth glory to any one of Thy names, methinks I can hear the voice of its lamentation in its remoteness from Thee, and can recognize its cry because of its separation from Thy Self.

To the frail reader standing on the furthest shores of this vast immensity, dazzled by orb

within orb of light, it might seem that his initial presumption to strive can only set him adrift without direction on this luminous ocean, for he seems only able to measure his attempts by means of his progressive failures. Even when he thinks he has finally grasped, on the most superficial level, the rise and fall of the metaphors and can at least stay afloat upon the waves of language, he discovers that:

It should be remembered in this connection that the one true God is in Himself exalted above proximity and remoteness. His reality transcends such limitations. His relationship to His creatures knoweth no degrees. That some are near and others are far is to be ascribed to the manifestations themselves.

And with this new paradox, this new return to a contemplation of limitation as a means of reaching towards his Goal, the reader draws nearer than he ever has before to an understanding of the nature of Bahá'u'lláh's language.

Since God must remain unknowable and above all degree, and since the language of limitation is the only means whereby man can either know or express his unknowing, it becomes clear that the Manifestation becomes the spiritual reality of words, of metaphors and of language. He is the Word, the Primal Point, the song of the Nightingale; He holds within Him both extremes of proximity and remoteness in their most perfect balance; He is the vivid and acute stillness at the heart of all the polarities experienced by the reader, the seeker, the lover and believer. The palpable remoteness that lay couched in the imagery of dust all the way from the path through the gates to the Placeless, the play of attraction that resonated in the language of the lover, the tangible space that existed throughout the vast architecture of courts and kingship, all compel the reader to recognize his reliance on language as his only means of understanding, and recognize at the same time that any language other than that of the Manifestation, any word other than that most mighty Word, and any name that is not the King of Names, cannot hope to transcend the limitations of dust. This recognition or confession of the reader's powerlessness to strive beyond the limits of his understanding, or travel further than the Words themselves will go, constitutes

the utmost limit to which they who lift their hearts to Thee can rise; it is the highest station afforded both reader and seeker, for in this condition they come closest to discovering the hidden gift in the written storehouse of the Manifestation of God, and admit to their impotence to attain the retreats of Thy Sublime Knowledge. It is so intrinsic to the original desire of the reader to strive towards the unknown that he finds the intimate voice of the Manifestation uttering his most poignant thoughts:

Where can separation from Thee be found, O my God, so that reunion with Thee may be clearly recognized at the appearance of the light of Thy unity and the revelation of the splendours of the Sun of Thy oneness?

Now, as the reader is responding to the Words of the Manifestation as his most wished-for reunion while the Words themselves are giving voice to an experience of the uttermost separation, he is transfigured by the thrust and force of the hyperbole and ambiance into something comparable to angels, those embodiments of balance and conflict, who hang suspended above their own extremes of sorrow and joy by the grace of God. In this condition of helplessness and dependency upon the Words, the reader finds himself, like the angels of snow and fire, protected again from both extremities of reunion and separation by the merciful structure of Bahá'u'lláh's language. Instead of extinguishing his precarious being by the expression of a climax, by an arrival as it were at the furthest reaches of his understanding, Bahá'u'lláh controls the reader's inward state by presenting this climactic discovery not as an end in itself but rather as a means towards an end that, for his own protection, must still remain out of sight. In other words, instead of the powerlessness of man, his limitation, his weakness, his dependence upon grace being the focal point of the prayer, it becomes the grounds for his beseeching:

I, therefore, beseech Thee, by this very powerlessness which is beloved of Thee, and

which Thou hast decreed as the goal of them that have reached and attained Thy court . . . not to deprive them that have set their hopes on Thee of the wonders of Thy mercy, nor to withhold from such as have sought Thee the treasures of Thy grace.

Part of the mysterious subtlety and power of Bahá'u'lláh's language lies in the contrapuntal relationship between the grounds of His beseeching and its appeal. Often, as in the beautiful Dawn Prayer for the Fast, one cannot comprehend the object for which one is beseeching without listening more closely to the grounds on which one's appeal is raised. In this case the reader calls for grace to support and protect his limitations by *this very powerlessness which is beloved of Thee*. He seems to have come full circle. The limitations against which he struggled earlier now become the means of his attainment. Here in the vulnerability of his essence is couched the ageless Covenant of God; here in the midmost heart of his humility reposes the eternal promise of the Beloved, assuring him that he will be graced, he will be visited again and again, in spite of his weakness and because of his unworthiness. Here as he stands, small and insignificant on the edge of the vast immensity of his relationship with the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, the reader finds himself protected from utter loss by the promise that within this immensity may be found His footsteps also, and may be seen the lineaments of His blessed Face. And here again the cherished sweetness of this Covenant becomes the grounds of his beseeching and resolves the original exhortation that had challenged the reader to set out on this endless discovery:

I entreat Thee, by Thy footsteps in this wilderness, and by the words 'Here am I. Here am I.' which Thy chosen Ones have uttered in this immensity, and by the breaths of Thy Revelation and the gentle winds of the Dawn of Thy Manifestation, to ordain that I may gaze on Thy Beauty and observe whatsoever is in Thy Book.

7. BAHÁ'U'LLÁH'S MODEL FOR WORLD UNITY

DOUGLAS MARTIN

The following is the text of an address delivered under the title 'Bahá'u'lláh's Model for World Fellowship' at the fortieth anniversary meeting of the World Congress of Faiths, at Canterbury, England, 26–30 July 1976. The Congress was founded in 1936 by the British writer and explorer, Sir Francis Younghusband, and a group of like-minded thinkers from various religious backgrounds. Its purpose is to encourage greater harmony and understanding among the followers of all Faiths. In response to an invitation from the organizers, the Guardian asked Mr. George Townshend to present a paper on the Bahá'í Faith at the inaugural meeting in 1936. During the years which followed, Bahá'ís participated in various ways in the affairs of the Congress, and at the fortieth anniversary meeting were invited to provide one of the six major addresses, outlining the Bahá'í contribution to 'inter-Faith fellowship'. The Universal House of Justice arranged for Mr. Douglas Martin, secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada, to prepare and deliver the address which follows. Other papers discussed the contributions, respectively, of Buddhism, Judaism, Islám, Christianity and Hinduism.

IT is a great privilege to have the opportunity of addressing the World Congress of Faiths on this important anniversary. It is a great pleasure as well, and especially so for a Bahá'í speaker, conscious of the remarkable extent to which the central theme of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, enunciated over a century ago, finds itself reflected in the concept and purpose of the Congress.

Resting on the conviction that divine revelation is universal and that mankind is one family, the World Congress of Faiths seeks to find and share spiritual truths which are so transparently clear that anyone, in the words of Sir Francis Younghusband, 'would see that what we prayed to was what they prayed to, and what we worshipped was what they worshipped.'¹ The phrase which seems to have best stood the test of time in summing up this great purpose is 'spiritual fellowship.'² Such an ideal is not

merely in harmony with the Bahá'í teachings but lies close to their very heart. Over a century ago Bahá'u'lláh wrote:

*Gather ye together, and for the sake of God resolve to root out whatever is the source of contention amongst you. Then will the effulgence of the world's great Luminary envelop the whole earth, and its inhabitants become the citizens of one city . . . There can be no doubt whatever that the peoples of the world, of whatever race or religion, derive their inspiration from one heavenly Source, and are the subjects of one God.*³

My aim in the remarks which follow, therefore, will be to share with you the contribution which the Bahá'í Cause has made to the work to which the Congress has committed itself and to suggest some implications for the next stage in the prosecution of the task handed on by Sir Francis. I do so with some diffidence. Apart from my awareness of the spiritual and intellectual credentials of the group which has gathered together this weekend here in Canterbury, I am conscious, as I am sure all of us are, of the hopes which those who have gone

¹ Sir Francis Younghusband, address to the Conference of Some Living Religions within the British Empire, 1924: *Transactions of the Conference of Some Living Religions in the British Empire* (London: Messrs. Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 1925), p. 18. Younghusband, cited by K. D. D. Henderson in *Francis Younghusband and the Mysticism of Shared Endeavour*, 1976 Inaugural Younghusband Memorial Lecture (London: World Congress of Faiths, May 1976).

² Marcus Braybrooke, *Faiths in Fellowship* (London: World Congress of Faiths, 1976), pp. 6–7.

³ Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, trans. Shoghi Effendi, rev. ed. (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1952), p. 217.

before us must hold for this fortieth anniversary meeting: Sir Francis himself, Sir Herbert Samuel, Dr. Radhakrishnan, Sir 'Abdu'l-Qadir, Baron Palmstierna, Lady Ravensdale, Lord Sorenson, and a galaxy of others.

Beyond this, I am keenly sensible of my inadequacy before the standard set by my Bahá'í predecessor in this forum at the inaugural Congress in Queen's Hall in 1936. The organizers of the Congress had invited His Eminence Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, Guardian of the Bahá'í Cause, to deliver one of the major addresses. Although it was not possible, for a number of reasons, for Shoghi Effendi to take part in person, he placed very great importance on the work of the Congress and commissioned a paper which was prepared and presented by one of his closest Bahá'í collaborators here in Europe, Mr. George Townshend, formerly Archdeacon of Clonfert and Canon of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.¹ I will want to return in a moment to the subject of that paper.

Before moving into my theme, however, I would like to preface my remarks with digressions into two areas which seem to me to be essential to providing an intelligible context. The first concerns the history of the interfaith movement throughout the world; the second relates to the method which those of us who are interested in the subject must, I feel, pursue if we are to contribute effectively to it. The first may be dealt with briefly, as our friend Marcus Braybrooke has so concisely covered a part of the ground in the introduction to his recent and very interesting history of the Congress.²

It is to our credit here in the West that the first approaches to the study of other faiths were initiated in Europe and America. The reason no doubt has less to do with our particular religious background, which of course was Judeo-Christian, than with the fact that the West had become the most highly developed, the most expansionist, and the most self-conscious expression of material civilization. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the attention of a few enlightened minds in the West began to turn sympathetically toward the major sources of Asiatic philosophical and religious

thought, and translations appeared of such Indian classics as the Bhagavad Gita, Ramayana, and sections of the Upanishads, as well as of the major Islamic poets, Rumi, Hafiz, and Sa'di.³ These new resources deeply influenced the romantic renaissance in my own part of the world and in time attracted widespread popular interest, both in Europe and America.⁴ The comparative study of religion became a serious and respectable intellectual pursuit. A literature impressive both in its quantity and in the quality of its scholarship rapidly grew up, producing such classics as J. F. Clarke's massive *Ten Great Religions* and Max Müller's *Introduction to the Science of Religion*.⁵ By 1873 Boston University had established the first chair of comparative religion; and Princeton, New York, Cornell, and Chicago followed this lead over the next two decades. In 1890 the American Society of Comparative Religion came into being. Similar developments were occurring in Europe.⁶

The event which dramatically introduced the subject to the general public, however, took place in neither the academic nor the publishing world. On the morning of September 11, 1893, in the Hall of Columbus at the World's Fair in Chicago, representatives of the 'ten chief religions of the world' gathered in the first 'Parliament of All Religions'.⁷ No words at this late date can suggest the thrill of discovery which swept through the Parliament and through the reading public. It was this intense expectancy—the belief that mankind was poised on the threshold of a new age of human brotherhood and spiritual discovery—which accounts for the extraordinary scenes that took place in Chicago.

³ Arthur Christy, *The Orient in American Transcendentalism: A study of Emerson, Thoreau, and Alcott* (New York: Octagon, 1963). A survey of the original transcendentalist contacts with specific Oriental religious classics may be found in Farhang Jehanpur, 'Oriental Influences on the Work of Ralph Waldo Emerson,' Dissertation, University of Hull, 1965.

⁴ Louis Henry Jordan, *Comparative Religion: Its Genesis and Growth* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1905). Stow Persons, *Free Religion: An American Faith* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947). Joachim Wach, *The Comparative Study of Religion*, ed. Joseph M. Kitagawa (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958).

⁵ James Freeman Clarke, *Ten Great Religions: An Essay in Comparative Theology* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1887). Max Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion* (privately printed, 1870).

⁶ Jordan, *Comparative Religion*, pp. 383, 389–90.

⁷ For the complete collection of the papers delivered and a brief historical introduction see Neeley's *History of the Parliament of Religions*, ed. W. R. Houghton (Chicago: F. T. Neeley, 1893).

¹ 'Bahá'u'lláh's Ground Plan of World Fellowship,' in *Proceedings of the World Congress of Faiths* (London: World Congress of Faiths, 1936), pp. 299–311.

² See Braybrooke, *Faiths in Fellowship*.

One thinks, for example, of the storm of emotion which greeted the innocent salutation of a then obscure Hindu monk Vivekananda when he opened his address with the words 'sisters and brothers of America!', an emotion which swept the audience of four thousand participants to their feet, applauding uncontrollably, many of them in tears.¹

I mention this feature of the Parliament because no mere recital of the program and the list of participants can suggest the impact the Parliament had on North American consciousness. Beyond this spirit of enthusiasm the papers which were delivered make interesting and instructive reading in themselves. Although there were ample expressions of dogmatism and bigotry, and although a number of the participants apparently saw the study of comparative religion chiefly as another tool for proselytism, the great majority of those who took part clearly felt that a historical breakthrough had occurred in terms of human brotherhood. Marcus Braybrooke has traced some of the subsequent efforts to capitalize on this widespread sentiment, of which efforts the World Congress of Faiths has been the most impressive, the most consistent, and the most organized.²

However discouraging the struggle since then may often have seemed, and however difficult it may be to draw connections between the work of the Congress and developments in the world at large, there is no doubt that the vision of a handful of men and women in the latter half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries now enjoys widespread public sympathy throughout the world among people of all faiths and is served in varying ways by impressive educational, cultural, and ecumenical agencies at the national, the international, and even the local levels. We could well wonder whether activities such as this Congress may not be in danger of becoming the victim of their own success.

Any such concern quickly dissolves when we examine the modern condition against the background of the nineteenth-century hope. How far short of the vision has the achievement actually fallen! The early Transcendentalists who discovered Rûmî and the Gîta, and the masses of people who eagerly followed the sessions of the great Parliament did not hope merely to deepen their understanding of their

own and of other faiths or to overcome religious prejudices, important as these goals are. Nor did the impulse which moved them see itself as being fulfilled through interfaith dialogues or even through interfaith services of prayer, precious as are such experiences. The organizers of the Parliament summed up their vision in the following words:

'Believing that God is, and that He has not left Himself without witness; believing that the influence of religion . . . is the most vital force in the social order of every people; and convinced that of a truth God is no respecter of persons, but that in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him, . . . [we propose] to consider the foundations of all religious faiths, . . . and thus to contribute to those forces which shall bring about the unity of the race in the worship of God and the service of man.'³

The dream of these nineteenth-century idealists found one of its most articulate heirs and most able prosecutors in Sir Francis Younghusband. It is clear that Sir Francis saw fellowship among the followers of all faiths not merely as an end in itself but as the primary force contributing to the unification of the human race:

'A new world order is now the dream of men, but for this a new spirit is needed. This is the special concern of men of religion—non-Christians as well as Christians—all combined to create a world consciousness, a world conscience, a world loyalty, and a sense of world fellowship, and to provide the spiritual impetus, the dynamic and the direction to statesmen and economists whose business it is to give it bodily expression.'⁴

And it is this which brings me to the second part of the context in which I would like to set my remarks on the Bahá'í Cause. As you know, Bahá'ís have taken a very lively interest in the work of this Congress from the time of its inception. If it is not an impertinence for me to say so, we have been deeply impressed by the way in which the Congress has consistently avoided what Teilhard de Chardin has called the blind alleys of evolution which have so enticingly opened for you at every hand: the pressures to concentrate energies primarily on an examination of the minutiae of theological differences in a vain attempt to resolve them; the tendency to

¹ *ibid.*, p. 64.

² Braybrooke, *Faiths in Fellowship*, pp. 1-3, 3-9.

³ *Neeley's History*, p. 24.

⁴ Cited in Braybrooke, *Faiths in Fellowship*, p. 14.

see this universal forum as a platform for proselytism in the interests of this or that member faith; and the greatest lure of them all, the temptation to 'fill in the gap' in the divine scheme by seeking to create a synthetic universal religion.¹ In this respect the Congress clearly represents an important advance over the Parliament of Religions and over any of its other successor movements; to this integrity of purpose I know my fellow Bahá'ís around the world would expect me to pay particular tribute on this historic occasion.

The work of the Congress which has won our warmest admiration is that which can, I think, be fairly characterized as scientific in its general spirit and method, if by scientific method we mean the systematic, directed, and conscious application of our mental faculties to the phenomena of existence.² The method is universal in scope. Man's experience over the past century and a half indicates clearly that it can be applied to all phenomena, visible or invisible. The truths it yields are admittedly always relative—never absolute—proofs, but rather the most probable statements on given subjects which human effort has been able to produce, and in every case considerably more probable and acceptable than such a statement's negation. But these relative truths have also been the keys to the transformation of the conditions of life on our planet.

It is surely significant that intellectual history reveals a process in which the scientific method has been progressively applied to increasingly complex phenomena. Thus it is that, building upon the foundation which mathematics had earlier laid, physics, chemistry, biology, and anthropology each in turn emerged as a discrete and mature intellectual discipline. Nor is it surprising that in time the method should have been applied to the emotional, intellectual, and social aspects of human life and that we should see the painful development in our own day of psychology, psychiatry, and sociology, which are clearly destined in time to take their places as mature and responsible sciences in every sense of that word.

The work of the World Congress of Faiths

seems to me to lie directly in this great tradition. From its very beginning the interest in the underlying nature of all religions involved an attempt to apply the principles of scientific study to those phenomena which extend beyond even the social and emotional aspects of human life.³ I am speaking, of course, of the systems of spiritual and moral truth which the great majority of those most familiar with them have insisted are dimensions of the historical phenomenon they call Revelation.

The effort represents the most ambitious scientific undertaking which man has ever attempted or can ever attempt, since it aims at penetrating the most subtle, the most complex, and the most comprehensive aspects of existence, aspects which profoundly influence and perhaps determine those other phenomena which the social sciences seek to grasp. My point is that true science views all existence as a single continuum and recognizes, to use the marvelous words of Sir Julian Huxley, that humanity is '*evolution become conscious of itself*.'⁴

The problem is compounded by the fact that it is difficult or impossible to establish the features or in some cases even the existence of the original impulses which gave rise to the cluster of cultural forms and forces we group under the heading 'World Religions.' The real nature of the original teachings of the Buddha, the events of Jesus' life, the era in which Zoroaster lived and the nature of His influence, and even the historical existence of Krishna—all of these present the most serious problems to the student of the history of religions. The life and person of Muḥammad are, of course, much more accessible, as is the Qur'án, but even here disagreements so serious as to produce many conflicting schools of thought testify to the magnitude of the problems which the sources present. Let me say in passing that, much as we must respect the pioneer work done by Professor James and by his modern imitators, I do not see how the 'varieties of religious experience' can be realistically and profitably studied, as such, outside the scriptural and historical context of the great Revelations which gave rise to them. Pierre Teilhard's comment seems applicable to the study of all of

¹ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man*, [trans. Bernard Wall] (New York: Harper, 1959), p. 237.

² I am indebted to my friend Dr. William Hatcher, professor of mathematics at Université Laval, for his insights and guidance in the preparation of this section of the paper.

³ I am thinking here of Müller's work in comparative religion, William James' studies of the phenomena of mystical experience, the rise of the so-called Higher Criticism, and so on.

⁴ Cited by Teilhard de Chardin, *Phenomenon of Man*, p. 221.

the religious life of man: 'it is *beyond* our souls that we must look, *not the other way round*.'¹

I trust I have said enough to convince you that I do not underestimate the difficulties. Yet the challenge is both inescapable and urgent. I need hardly underline for this audience how late is the hour and how appalling the catastrophe which threatens to engulf mankind unless we can find a common humanity and a practical basis for world order, and do so very soon. All who are believers have no doubt that ultimately God's Will shall be done on Earth and His Kingdom established. But far from relieving us of responsibility such an awareness makes only the more pressing our responsibility to contribute to the process in whatever way it has been given to us to do. How much greater still is the challenge facing those of us who have been singled out for the gift of the conviction that God has revealed Himself in all ages, to all peoples, and to all religions.

Nor do I anticipate serious disagreement when I say that we hardly suffer from a shortage of ideas in this vast field of work. Rather the opposite. We run a serious risk of suffocating in a surfeit of ideas which are either so vast, so self-evident, and so urgent as to generate intense anxiety, or so esoteric and divisive as to preclude any unified approach to their examination and even to discourage any general interest. However important religious ideology may be, therefore, I do not feel that a discussion of it can ever be anything other than one aspect of the study of a given religion. If the disappointments and frustrations of the past century have taught us anything, they have surely proven beyond any possible doubt that an approach to religious truth which is not phenomenologically oriented is doomed to sterility.

Let me briefly recapitulate, then, the context in which I feel my remarks on the Bahá'í Cause must be set. For a century and a half now the feeling has steadily grown among people everywhere that the revelation of God is in some sense universal and not confined to any one of the historical religions. Those who were earliest, most intimately, and most strongly convinced of the truth of this idea also passionately believed that in it lies the secret of the unification of mankind and the establishment of world peace. But, as in all things, the hypothesis alone, no

matter how beautiful or how ardently held, is not enough. Real progress has always required, to use the words of the definition which I earlier offered, 'the systematic, directed, and conscious application of our mental faculties' in testing our hypotheses against the phenomena of life. What I am arguing, therefore, is that the challenge facing the World Congress of Faiths, at this critical moment in its history, and in the history of mankind, is the task of applying such study to promising religious phenomena in an even more intensively responsible and self-sacrificing way than ever before. I am emboldened to make this suggestion because of the inescapable fact that our world is now gripped in the final stages of a historical crisis which, long before another such anniversary as this present one has arrived, will most certainly have removed from our hands the opportunities and the instruments which, even at this late hour, we still possess.

In discussing the Bahá'í Cause in this context it is not my primary purpose to present it as a religion urging a claim on the sympathy and the understanding of this Congress. The Bahá'í communities around the world are not yet, at this early stage of their history, sufficiently large and influential, nor are they entangled in long-standing historical controversies so as to require this kind of attention (which this Congress can in any event ill afford to spare). Doubtless a proper education of the public and clergy in the origins, purpose, and teachings of the Bahá'í Cause would be of great assistance in some countries where it would serve to remove misunderstandings and relieve the members of the Cause of some of the serious and often tragic disabilities under which they are presently forced to live.² That, too, however, is not the primary concern of this Congress.

Rather, I have accepted your invitation, on behalf of my fellow Bahá'ís around the world, because I believe that the Bahá'í Cause has a vital contribution to make to the major work of this Congress, a contribution to the search for world unity. Its central theme was enunciated over a century ago in a remarkable series of letters which Bahá'u'lláh, Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, addressed from His prison cell in the Turkish

² These misunderstandings and the abuse of the Bahá'í Cause and its adherents are sadly most apparent in areas of the world where traditional religious systems still retain great influence. See 'International Survey of Current Bahá'í Activities: Efforts Toward the Emancipation of the Bahá'í Faith', pp. 136 to 138 of this volume of *The Bahá'í World*.

¹ *ibid.*, p. 260.

penal colony of 'Akká, to the temporal and spiritual leaders of His day. To these nineteenth-century monarchs Bahá'u'lláh declared that the world they knew was about to be burst apart by the emergence of a world civilization. The letters warned that God had set in motion historical forces which no man could resist and which would in time compel universal recognition of the truth underlying all existence, the organic oneness of the human race:

This is the Day in which God's most excellent favours have been poured out upon men, the Day in which His most mighty grace hath been infused into all created things. It is incumbent upon all the peoples of the world to reconcile their differences, and, with perfect unity and peace, abide beneath the shadow of the Tree of His care and loving-kindness.

O Kings of the Earth! . . . If ye pay no heed unto the counsels which, in peerless and unequivocal language, We have revealed in this Tablet, Divine chastisement shall assail you from every direction. On that day ye shall have no power to resist Him, and shall recognize your own impotence. Have mercy on yourselves and on those beneath you . . .

It is not for him to pride himself who loveth his own country, but rather for him who loveth the whole world.¹

Bahá'u'lláh's appeals were ignored by those to whom they were addressed, and mankind moved into its long struggle with the enormous new social and material forces of which He had warned, not in the context of a search for unity, but rather in one of attachment to the sectarian, political, nationalistic, and racial loyalties of the past. The result is the world we live in.²

Forty years later the leaders of thought and the general public throughout the major nations of Europe and America were the recipients of yet another appeal, this time on a scale which has no parallel in religious history. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Son of Bahá'u'lláh, upon His release from years of imprisonment and house arrest in 'Akká, undertook an epic journey to the West, during

the course of which He presented the essentials of Bahá'u'lláh's message to university faculties, church congregations, labor unions, statesmen, ecclesiastics, a host of societies for peace and reform, vast public audiences, and virtually all of the major newspapers in the cities He visited.³ In these addresses He said:

Today the world of humanity is walking in darkness because it is out of touch with the world of God. That is why we do not see the signs of God in the hearts of men. The power of the Holy Spirit has no influence. When . . . divine instruction and guidance appear, then enlightenment follows, a new spirit is realized within, a new power descends . . .

I now wish you to examine certain facts and statements which are worthy of consideration. My purpose and intention is to remove from the hearts of men the religious enmity and hatred which have fettered them and to bring all religions into agreement and unity. . . . For the foundation of the divine religions is one foundation.

The mission of the prophets of God has been to train the souls of humanity and free them from the thralldom of natural instincts and physical tendencies. They are like unto gardeners, and the world of humanity is the field of their cultivation . . . If all should be true to the original reality of the prophet and his teaching, the peoples and nations of the world would become unified and these differences which cause separation would be lost sight of. To accomplish this great and needful unity in its reality, His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh appeared in the Orient and renewed the foundations of the divine teachings. . . . expressed in principles and precepts applicable to the needs and conditions of the modern world; amplified and adapted to present day questions and critical human problems.⁴

Despite the widespread attention and respect which 'Abdu'l-Bahá received on both sides of the

¹ Bahá'u'lláh, *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh to the Kings and Leaders of the World* (Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1967), pp. 121, 7-9, 116.

² Individual Tablets were addressed to Emperor Louis Napoleon, Queen Victoria, Pope Pius IX, Kaiser Wilhelm I, Emperor Franz Josef, Tsar Alexander II, Sulţán 'Abdu'l-'Aziz, and Násiri'd-Din Sháh.

³ 'Abdu'l-Bahá entered 'Akká in 1868, as a young man of twenty-four, together with His Father, His family, and a number of companions. He remained under various forms of imprisonment and arrest until His release with other prisoners of State during the Young Turk's revolution of 1908.

⁴ The excerpts quoted are from 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace: Discourses by 'Abdu'l-Bahá during His Visit to the United States in 1912*, [rev. ed.] in 1 vol. (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1943), pp. 299, 402, 304, 308, the collected addresses of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Europe and America, 1911-1912.

Atlantic, His appeal cannot be said to have elicited significantly more response from the leaders of thought and the public at large than had that of Bahá'u'lláh Himself. Before His return to His home in Palestine in 1912, He predicted quite explicitly and repeatedly, on public platforms and in newspaper interviews, the world war which followed, as He said it would, less than two years later.¹

It was therefore in this long tradition that 'Abdu'l-Bahá's grandson and Guardian of the Bahá'í Cause, Shoghi Effendi, responded to the invitation of the inaugurators of the World Congress of Faiths in 1936. The paper, prepared and read on his behalf at that time by Mr. Townshend, made reference to its source in the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and the work of 'Abdu'l-Bahá but expressed Their vision in the form of a 'Plan for World Fellowship':

This plan, in every feature, plainly implies that nothing less than a concerted effort on a world scale, with the spiritual energies of mankind informing its practical energies, will now suffice to awaken the spirit of fellowship and secure deliverance from danger . . . In all its faculties the human race is passing from childhood and ignorance towards maturity; towards the tasks that befit manhood . . . It is called on to put into practice the lessons of moral principles and human fellowship in which it has been instructed for so long . . . We have accomplished enough to convict ourselves of being fitted for a better social order . . . and of lacking the resolution to put our ideals into effect. There is enough of good in our recent record to incriminate us, but not enough to deliver us . . . Since the whole world as a unit is involved, the ideals which are to guide this movement must be given definite shape. If there is to be concerted action towards a single goal, some map of the journey must be made. Vague sentiments of good will, however genuine, will not suffice. Some explicit agreement on principles will be required for any co-ordinated progress.²

Mr. Townshend then outlined the main features of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, conceived as a plan of practical effort, and concluded by asking:

In such an emergency does not this bold, original scheme of fellowship merit serious consideration and even the test of experiment? In advocating peace to a western audience 'Abdu'l-Bahá once said: *You have had war for thousands of years; why not try peace for a change? If you do not like it you can always go back to war.* One might hazard a similar suggestion about this fellowship plan. We have tried every other advice, why not now try this?³

For whatever reason the appeal did not evoke from the interfaith movement the effort of trial and study for which it called. By 1936, however, Shoghi Effendi had at hand the instrument through which he could act on the vast project conceived by Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá and touched on in Mr. Townshend's presentation to the inaugural conference of the World Congress of Faiths. For over a decade, ever since his assumption of the role assigned to him by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Shoghi Effendi, as Guardian of the Bahá'í Cause, had pursued the laborious task of constructing the framework of the Administrative Order conceived by Bahá'u'lláh and inaugurated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá.⁴ It included the creation of a system of democratically elected assemblies to conduct the affairs of the Cause at the national and local levels. By 1936, as the essentials of Bahá'u'lláh's plan of world unity were being presented to the first World Congress of Faiths, Shoghi Effendi was completing preparations to use this administrative instrument in implementing the plan on the scale which Bahá'í resources at that time made possible. For the next twenty years, until his death in 1957, and through a series of phased programs, he persisted in this extraordinary undertaking.⁵

The magnitude of his success is indicative of both the spiritual energies upon which he drew and the vast hunger for unity and the capacity to respond of the peoples of all faiths and lands. You might be interested and encouraged by the

³ *ibid.*, pp. 309-310.

⁴ The appointment and its functions and prerogatives were spelled out in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament. See 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá* (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1944), pp. 10-15, 25-26.

⁵ The first Seven Year Plan was launched in 1937. Following a two-year respite a second plan of the same duration was launched. Then in 1953 Shoghi Effendi launched the first fully global program of its kind under the title the Ten Year Crusade. He himself died in November 1957 at the midway point of this vast undertaking, but it was successfully completed by the Bahá'í community in 1963, as called for in Shoghi Effendi's original plan.

¹ See, for example, the *Montreal Gazette*, Sept. 11, 1912.

² 'Bahá'u'lláh's Ground Plan of World Fellowship,' in *Proceedings*, p. 229.

scope which Shoghi Effendi's project has now achieved. Let me, therefore, sketch briefly for you the outlines of the work.

In 1936, outside the land of its birth, the Bahá'í Cause had only a few thousand followers, living in fewer than perhaps a thousand localities in approximately forty countries and territories of the globe. Its administrative structure consisted of ten National Spiritual Assemblies, several of them serving two or more countries at the same time, and fewer than 120 Local Spiritual Assemblies. Only a handful of these bodies were incorporated. At its World Centre in the Holy Land, near the burial places of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, external circumstances had made it impossible for the Cause to pursue more than a token development. To the great mass of the people of the world even the name of the movement was as yet unknown.¹

Today, forty years later, the Bahá'í Cause is established in over 330 countries, territories, and major islands of the globe, from isolated villages in Canada's farthest Arctic to the remotest islands of the South Pacific. It includes in its embrace representatives of virtually every religious, racial, ethnic, national, and social group on earth. There are today as many National Bahá'í Assemblies as there were Local Assemblies in 1936, and the number of Local Assemblies now approaches twenty thousand, quite apart from the more than sixty thousand centers where Assemblies are being built by Bahá'í groups or by individual believers. Wherever this institutional development has occurred, the creation of Houses of Worship, schools, hospices, and administrative headquarters, and the acquisition of other properties for such purposes, have followed. In 1963, on the one hundredth anniversary of Bahá'u'lláh's declaration of His mission, the members of the fifty-six National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies, of whom more than 280 gathered on the slopes of Mount Carmel, brought into existence, in what may well have been the first democratic global election in history, the crowning unit of the Administrative Order conceived by Bahá'u'lláh. That body took the name which Bahá'u'lláh had given it a century earlier, 'The Universal House of Justice.' Through the

acquisition of consultative status in the non-governmental organizations of the United Nations, as well as through the continuously expanding recognition of its institutions and practices by scores of national and provincial Governments around the world, the Cause has secured those relationships with civil authority which are necessary to its various humanitarian purposes. Its literature, which in 1936 was translated into fewer than forty languages, can today be read in nearly 600, and includes not only the collected Writings of the Founders and the commentaries of Shoghi Effendi as Guardian but also a vast range of works which elaborate the principles and teachings of the Cause for both the scholarly and the popular reader. Most recently an intensive program for the use of various communication media has begun in order to assure that the message of Bahá'u'lláh is as accessible to the illiterate seeker as it is to his more fortunate brother, as comprehensible to modern youth as it is to adults. The total phenomenon may well represent the most rapid expansion of a serious religious movement in modern history.²

These statistics will suggest, as I say, the scope of the program undertaken by Shoghi Effendi. What is important to our concerns here is the qualitative development which has taken place within this outer structure. What Shoghi Effendi succeeded in bringing into orderly existence is a global community, a model inspired by the teachings which had been enunciated by Bahá'u'lláh and presented to the nations of the West by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, a model which faithfully incorporates all the features of these teachings.³ And it is because this model exists—because the past forty years have been spent in intensive, concerted, and, I am happy to say, successful effort—that I felt able, as a Bahá'í, to accept your invitation to this important anniversary conference. Because that model lies directly in the path of the central thrust of this Congress, directly in that particular path of the universal

¹ For a more detailed view of the Bahá'í Cause in 1936, see *The Bahá'í World, vol. VI, April 1934–1936*, comp. National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada (New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1937).

² The two most recent volumes of *The Bahá'í World* (vol. XIII, comp. The Universal House of Justice [Haifa: The Universal House of Justice, 1970]; vol. XIV, comp. The Universal House of Justice [Haifa: The Universal House of Justice, 1974]), although carrying the study only as far as 1968, provide a panoramic view of the development. Vol. XV which covers the period 1968–1973 is currently at press. (Published 1976).

³ For a summary of these features, see Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh: Selected Letters*, 2d rev. ed. (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1974).

search for Truth, which the founders of the World Congress of Faiths adopted for themselves and which you have since pursued with such single-mindedness and integrity. It is a model, to use the words of Sir Francis Younghusband, of 'World Fellowship.'¹

Forty years ago, at the completion of the presentation of the paper outlining Bahá'u'lláh's plan, Sir Herbert Samuel, who was then in the Chair, had the kindness to express his belief that:

If one were compelled to choose which of the many religious communities of the world was closest to the aim and purpose of this Congress, I think one would be obliged to say that it was the comparatively little known Bahá'í community. Other Faiths and creeds have to consider at a Congress like this, in what way they can contribute to the idea of world fellowship: but the Bahá'í Faith exists almost for the sole purpose of contributing to the fellowship and unity of mankind.²

Sir Herbert can, I think, safely be acquitted of any suspicion of partisanship or proselytism. Without doubt he was responding to an instinctive recognition of the role of the Bahá'í Cause not as a religion competing with other religions but as a social force with a very special, perhaps even a unique contribution to make to the aims of this Congress. If that is the case, the emergence of Bahá'u'lláh's model more than justifies remarks which, forty years ago, may well have appeared extravagant to some of Sir Herbert's listeners.

What are some of the features of this model which recommend it to the serious study of members of this organization? The first, and the one most relevant to our concerns here, is the model's *universality*. That is to say, that in attracting adherents from every race, class, and creed the process of assimilation has not occurred at the expense of cultural and spiritual diversity of its members. If we are to take our fellow human beings at their own word (and their testimony is both unanimous and emphatic), those who have entered the community of Bahá'u'lláh from Jewish, Buddhist, Muslim, Christian, Hindu, Sikh, or Zoroastrian backgrounds believe that they have done so with their

original faith fully intact.³ If I may be forgiven a personal note, I, for example, do not regard myself in any way as less a Christian today than when I was a member of one of the churches known by that name, or necessarily than is one who uses the term in an exclusive sense. Quite otherwise. It is a fact, established now through a century of experience, that a worldwide community can revere the Founders of all the great revealed religions equally; can draw for their devotions on the Bhagavad Gita, the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Qur'án; can experience the precious benefits of 'interfaith dialogue' in the homeliest occasions of local community life and in the truest sense of that much abused phrase.

A second feature of the model which has emerged from Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation and which seems to have special relevance to the concerns of this Congress is its success in remolding human conscience—in establishing a set of *universal moral standards* relevant to the age of mankind's maturity. Solely out of devotion to the Founder of the Bahá'í Cause ordinary people in every part of the world have surrendered themselves to a process of education in ideals as comprehensive and challenging as the goals of the most advanced social reformers: the eradication of prejudices, the independent investigation of truth, the assurance of equality of opportunity to men and women, a program of universal education, the attainment of social justice, and the establishment of an effective world order, to name only a few of these ideals. The point is that these principles are not merely matters of sociological theory within the Bahá'í community but integral parts of the psychological pattern and emotional life in which generations of human beings, one generation after another, are being patiently and deliberately raised.⁴

Third, a point dear to my own heart, Bahá'u'lláh's community enjoys its own *history*.

³ Beyond accepting the validity of all the great revealed religions, the Bahá'í Cause holds that, according to a predetermined order, they have revealed progressively more complete aspects of the Divine Will and have been the primary motivating force in the building of civilization.

⁴ Ethical teachings which relate purely to the individual life are such as would be familiar features of all or most of the existing world religions, although there is a reordering of moral priorities. (Backbiting, for example, is condemned in particularly strong terms, as a blight which *quenches the light of the heart, and extinguisheth the life of the soul*. Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 265.)

¹ Sir Francis Younghusband, *Vital Religion: Brotherhood of Faiths* (London: John Murray, 1940) and *The Gleam* (London: John Murray, 1923).

² 'Bahá'u'lláh's Ground Plan of World Fellowship,' in *Proceedings*, p. 311.

It has its 'noble army of martyrs,' some twenty thousand of them, whose self-sacrifice won the unstinted admiration of Sir Francis Younghusband, when he first encountered their stories several decades ago.¹ Apart from its lively interest in the spiritual giants of earlier Revelations it has its own archetypal heroes and saints (for whom its children are named), whose lives provide moral example, and whose spiritual achievements have already begun to evoke the first halting response of Bahá'í artists, writers, and musicians. Today, all around the world, an entire generation of Japanese, Italian, Bolivian, Ugandan, Canadian, and Persian children are being educated in this common tradition.

Finally, there is the feature of the Bahá'í community which is related to the pivotal teaching of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation: *The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens.*² Bahá'u'lláh asserts that: *The well-being of mankind, its peace and security are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established.*³ A feature of Bahá'u'lláh's model, therefore, which has enormous significance for the future, is the fact that it has passed safely through the first critical century of its history with its *unity* firmly intact. No single effort to create sects and factions has survived the generation which saw it appear. There is not, so far as I am aware, any other great movement in recorded history—religious, political, or social—of which this can be said. Time and again in all other forms of human association, the process of schism has taken hold in the early, vulnerable stages; and the originating impulse has had to continue its work through the activities of often contending parties and sects.⁴

A point which a Bahá'í speaker would wish not merely to acknowledge but to point out is that this model has been produced by and is identified with an independent world religion.⁵

¹ The life of the Báb, for example, Sir Francis described in *The Gleam* as a 'story of spiritual heroism unsurpassed in Svabhava's experience.'

² Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 250.

³ Bahá'u'lláh, quoted in Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 202.

⁴ The history of the various unsuccessful attempts to create schismatic groups within the Bahá'í community may be read in Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By* (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1944). Such attempts continue to arise from time to time and the Founders of the Faith have indicated that these aberrations will continue to present challenges to Bahá'í unity well into the future.

⁵ The distinction is suggested by the not entirely interchangeable terms 'Bahá'í Cause' and 'Bahá'í Faith.'

Like Christianity, Judaism, Islám, Buddhism, Hinduism, and all of the other major revealed religions, the Bahá'í Cause has a center of authority in its own Prophet, its own laws, and its voluminous sacred scriptures. As Buddhism respects the Vedic tradition out of which it emerged, as Christianity cherishes its Judaic origins, the Bahá'í Faith fully acknowledges and appreciates the Islamic matrix in which it first appeared. Unlike the many other admirable modern religious movements which have slipped early and inevitably into the role of sects of their mother religions, however, the Bahá'í Faith has entirely escaped the gravitational pull of the parent Faith, a fact of its history which both Western scholars and Muslim religious authorities have hastened to recognize.⁶

Indeed, Bahá'ís see the success the model enjoys as the result of its organic wholeness. This integrity, they further believe, arises from the fact that Bahá'u'lláh is the Manifestation of God to our age, the One promised in all the scriptures of the past.⁷ Is an acceptance of this extraordinary claim a prerequisite to a scholarly study of the Bahá'í community? Must a scientific examination of the evidence by a scholarly community be prefaced by a discussion of a principle of faith? Surely not. The influence of Bahá'u'lláh in the creation of the model must compel the attention of any serious observer; but this, too, is surely the province of detached and careful study. Indeed, it offers an opportunity which seems to be open to us in no other quarter. We have already noted that one of the most serious handicaps to a scientific study of the phenomenon of revelation is that the originating impulse in each case has receded so far in history as to be accessible to us in only a very limited and unsatisfactory degree. Far otherwise with the work of the Founder of the Bahá'í Cause. The details of His life are massively documented, as are the contributions of those whom He inspired

⁶ The Opinion and Judgment of the Appellate religious court of Beba in Egypt on 10 May, 1925, for example, held in a major case presented to it that 'The Bahá'í Faith is a new religion, entirely independent . . . No Bahá'í, therefore, can be regarded a Muslim or vice-versa, even as no Buddhist, Brahmin [sic], or Christian can be regarded a Muslim or vice-versa.' Cited by Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 365.

⁷ *Verily I say, this is the Day in which mankind can behold the Face, and hear the Voice, of the Promised One. . . . It becometh every man to blot out the trace of every idle word from the tablet of his heart, and to gaze, with an open and unbiased mind, on the signs of His Revelation, the proofs of His Mission, and the tokens of His glory.* Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 10–11.

and led. His spiritual and social teachings are available in the original texts, under His own seal, often in His own hand. The same may be said of the provisions He made for the organization of His Cause. The sequence of events by which these concepts, laws, and institutions molded the development of the Bahá'í community also lie open to our scrutiny, unobscured by time, by myth, or by the glosses of conflicting schools of interpretation.

One thinks inevitably of the statement of Professor T. K. Cheyne as he looked ahead to the spiritual struggle in which our generation is now engaged: 'The want of a surely attested life, or extract of a life, of a God-man will be more and more acutely felt. There is only one such life; it is that of Bahá'u'lláh.'¹

Here, then as with all forms of life, the qualified observer may examine in detail not only the organism itself, but the processes by which it has come into existence and assumed its form and functions. The fact, therefore, that the Bahá'í community stands identified with an independent religion in no sense disqualifies it as a model of the kind I have described. To impose limitations on research because of *a priori* assumptions about the nature of the phenomena which command our attention is clearly out of harmony with the scientific spirit.

Our common and consistent religious experience over the past three millennia would, in any case, argue quite the opposite. If a key to the realization of the spiritual and social unification of the race does exist and is to be found through human effort, experience suggests that it is far more likely than otherwise to be associated with another intervention of the Divine in human affairs. Such a possibility, moreover, would seem also to have been anticipated in virtually all of the scriptures of the past. And it would appear to be entirely in harmony with the original impulse which gave rise to the creation of the Congress. One thinks of the remarkable intimations which came to Sir Francis Younghusband on that memorable morning in 1904, near Lhasa, and which he later recorded in words familiar to us all: 'I had visions of a far greater religion yet to be and of a God as much greater than our English God as a Himalayan giant is greater than an English hill.'²

I do not in any way insist upon the point, which is incidental to my remarks here. My sole concern, as I have said, is to free our discussion of any lingering or transient assumption that the object of our long search must, by its very nature, be incompatible with a new Revelation of God, with a new religion. Science needs no more reassurance than that in order to begin its patient work of discovery. Faith we can safely leave to pursue its ends within each individual human heart, free of obligation to account to any other.

If I may then sum up: my remarks today have been essentially a progress report on the implementation of the plan suggested here at the time the Congress of Faiths was born forty years ago. The results, I think you will agree, could not be more encouraging. I have indicated that there now exists a promising, operating model for the spiritually-based world society which this Congress was founded to seek. The model is a global community which, far from seeing itself as already complete or self-sufficient, is embarked on an infinite series of experiments at the local, national, and international levels in its efforts to realize the vision of mankind's oneness which it finds in the Writings of its Founder and of all the Messengers of God. In this great undertaking all people of good will are free to participate.

I have thought it important to draw your attention especially to a number of notable features which the model demonstrates: universality, unity, a relevant and effective moral system, a common history, a coherent administrative framework, and an embrace which accepts all the varieties of human life. For a global community to manifest these features at this critical stage in history seems to me to be quite the most significant development which could come to our attention. For its existence is, so far as I am aware, the first convincing evidence that the goal we seek here is fully realistic and eminently attainable within the foreseeable future. No matter how limited in size or still restricted in influence the model may be, such a phenomenon deserves the most able and the most disinterested study mankind can bring to it. I trust I shall not be misunderstood when I express my belief that it is preeminently deserving of such attention from this Congress.

In closing, therefore, I warmly invite the World Congress of Faiths to undertake such a study, with all that term implies, and to share the findings with mankind. Such a project would

¹ Thomas Kelly Cheyne, *The Reconciliation of Races and Religions* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1914), p. 209.

² Cited by Braybrooke, *Faiths in Fellowship*, p. 6.

seem to me to be a natural extension of the Congress' work and fully in harmony with its founding principles. Admittedly, it implies a further major development in methodology, perhaps even in organization. Such challenges, however, are inherent in the very nature of the search for truth in any field of endeavor. Indeed, the Congress itself represented at the time of its founding nothing other than a practical response to these familiar challenges by those who were the heirs of the nineteenth century's spiritual visions.

What these methods and organizational developments should be I am obviously not competent to say. They will arise naturally out of the consultations of the Executive Committee and the Congress itself. And should another field of investigation emerge, demonstrating equally impressive possibilities for our purpose, let us by all means find the resources to respond appropriately to it as well. That is surely the spirit of truth.

The gloomy and sterile philosophy of materialism which, in one form or another, today dominates the minds of men everywhere owes its power and prestige to nothing more than the enormous productivity of science; this in turn has been the result solely of the faithful application of the method of science to material phenomena. But science is the heritage of all alike. What distinguishes the physical scientist is that he searches in the expectation of continual

discovery, and in that confidence transforms our environment. Search is not for him merely a feature of personal identity or a pastime. Why should those of us who are aware that the range of human possibilities extends far beyond the physical universe fear to take up this human birthright and demonstrate by serious study and experiment its limitless creativity in those areas of life on which human happiness and indeed human survival absolutely depend?

Bahá'u'lláh's model is a proof, a gage that the universe in which we live is rational, progressively evolving, and at its heart loving and joyful, the intended home of a united human race. We have only to claim it. Words Bahá'u'lláh uttered a century ago seem to be particularly appropriate to the decisions facing the Congress; I leave them with you:

Every age hath its own problem, and every soul its particular aspiration. The remedy the world needeth in its present-day afflictions can never be the same as that which a subsequent age may require. Be anxiously concerned with the needs of the age ye live in, and centre your deliberations on its exigencies and requirements.

*That which the Lord hath ordained as the sovereign remedy and mightiest instrument for the healing of all the world is the union of all its peoples in one universal Cause . . .*¹

¹ Bahá'u'lláh, *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 116, 67.

II

VERSE

Le Báb ou le premier jour¹

Je dormais d'un profond sommeil
Quand résonnèrent les trompettes
Qui annonçaient dans la tempête
Le premier jour de l'ère nouvelle.

Réveillé, je fus dans la crainte
D'entendre les cris et les plaintes,
Des morts et des agonisants
Balayés d'un souffle puissant.

Emporté par ce tourbillon
Je vis que je n'étais point seul
Et que les morts, les agonisants,
Revivaient d'un nouveau sang;

Du sang de celui qui offrit
Sa beauté, sa jeunesse
Pour réaliser la promesse
Que Dieu, un jour nous fit.

M. Lafaille (Belgium)

¹Reprinted from *La Pensée Bahá'ie*.

Le Cristal d'Amour¹

Désir particulier tu es sacré
Insaisissable comme les pollens de la pensée
Comme glisse la vie sur un miroir

Désir tu es au coeur
Où tu résides dans la splendeur
Comme une perle dans une huître en moire

Désir tu es sauveur
Ma méditation sans toi, oh malheur
De retour au jour
Répandrait mille pleurs
Si dans ce voyage d'amour
Tu n'étais apparu
Lointain éclat, splendide et pur
Cristal gemme

Désir tu es mystère dans un for intérieur
Reflet du secret dans une pyramide d'or
Pour parler de toi, tu vois, j'écris tout bas.

Annie-Joëlle Hurvy (France)

¹Reprinted from *La Pensée Bahá'ie*.

Je veux crier ton Nom¹

Depuis que tu m'as éveillée
Au souffle puissant de la Foi,
Je me suis abandonnée
Au charme si doux de ta voix.
Sur l'océan de ta parole
Je marche d'un pas tranquille,
Enfilant au long des jours
Les perles de ton amour;
J'en ferai une parure,
Pour que tu me reconnaises
Au grand jour de la promesse,
Car je veux crier ton nom:
Bahá'u'lláh, O Bahá'u'lláh,
A tous ceux qui dans le monde
Le coeur vide et pur attendent
Celui qui saura les aimer.

Ta force a changé mon coeur,
Et je sais que le bonheur
Est de vivre à tes côtés
En faisant ta volonté.
Sur le chemin que tu traces,
Je m'engage et prends la place
Que tu veux bien me donner.
Sois mon guide et donne-moi,
L'ardeur, l'amour et la foi
Qui me conduiront vers toi.
Et quand viendra la rencontre,
Aie pitié de ma faiblesse
Prends ma main et souviens-toi
Que je veux crier ton nom:
Bahá'u'lláh, O Bahá'u'lláh
A tous ceux qui à la ronde,
Le coeur vide et pur attendent,
Le plus grand amour du monde.

M. Lafaille (Belgium)

¹Reprinted from *La Pensée Bahá'ie*.

To a Pioneer Dead

Say this of her: That she was a petal
Blown from ecstasy to ecstasy,
From grave to grave.
Say: She has known many deaths.
Not this final closing of the eyes
In release of pain,
But the in-between-deaths
That are the greatest agonies.
Say, also, that her resurrections were glorious
And flamed like poinsettias in the noonday sun.

Olive V. Applegate (United States)

So steige immer zu!
 Und wolltest du auch fern den Höhn
 verweilen in den Gärten schön,
 du fändest keine Ruh.
 Drum steige immer zu!

Und bleibe immer du!
 Denn was auch links und rechts dir winkt
 und lockt und lächelt, singt und blinkt,
 ach, das verweht im Nu.
 Drum bleibe immer du!

Und steige immer zu!
 Und geht es hart, so soll es sein,
 denn dieser Weg ist dein allein
 und du allein bist du.
 So steige immer zu!

Adelbert Mühlshlegel (Germany)

Dein Auge ist mein Vertrauen. Bahá'u'lláh

Es ist wahr,
 daß Dunkelheit Dein Auge
 träge machte,
 wie es wahr ist,
 daß Du die Dunkelheit
 verschuldet hast.

Eher zögernd versuchtest Du
 in die Sonne
 zu blicken
 und warst doch
 sofort geblendet.

Du begannst von vorne,
 blicktest um Dich
 und aus dem Schleier
 kamen zuerst
 nur Farben.

Bald waren da Formen,
 erst Gräser, Farne,
 später Tiere
 und eben beginnst Du
 den Menschen zu sehen.

Es ist wahr,
 daß Du die Sonne suchen
 mußt,
 wie es wahr ist,
 daß sie zu hell
 ist.

Gerald Jatzek (Germany)

Riḍván

Enrobed in lilies' virgin bloom,
 Spring rises over winter's gloom;
 Perfumed in fruitful blossoming,
 Oh! Listen to Him sing:

'Riḍván! Riḍván! I rise aflame,
 and comb your soul with Heaven's Name.
 I give you voice: Arise, proclaim,
 Lay bare the Gem's prophetic claim.'

Shafiq Fathea'zam (United States)

Loose My Soul

Bleak wind, blow through me
 Loose my soul
 Carry to the depths of the world
 My restless soul.

In the cold, careless company
 Of the wind
 To flee the wearisome worries of the world
 Liefs my soul.

Pure wind, flurry me
 Across the ocean
 Hurry in fitful motion through the world
 My yearning soul.

Hasten by the wastes of Indy
 Listless wind
 Nor tarry in places lush and favoured
 of the world
 Wind of my soul.

The moving wind alone can still me
 Quiet the fevered harry
 Desires and passions of the world
 Leash on my soul.

But if there some still centre be
 Release my soul
 Free in the unrecked reaches of the world
 My lovely soul.

To which the wind: 'Hear thee—
 I move but as my Lord commandeth me.
 If thou wouldst escape all sorrows of
 the world
 Yield Him thy soul.

'For fly through the immensity
 Of space through all eternity
 Yet shouldst thou find thyself in every world
 A restless soul.

'But lose thyself in ecstasy
 Of love for Him
 Enfree in every one of His fair worlds
 Thy raptured soul.'

Wind of God, blow through me,
 Loose my soul,
 Carry to the heights of Thy eternal world
 My yearning soul.

Geoffrey Nash (United Kingdom)

Mi Plegaria

Señor: Yo quiero ofrecerte todo lo más bello de la creación, aunque todo es Tuyo; pero con mi anhelo formaré una preciosa alfombra tejida de todas Tus maravillas, para que Te recrees y poses Tus pies inmateriales . . . Y así, tomaré el rocío de la mañana, el aroma de las flores, el canto de los pájaros, el sonreír de las estrellas, la espuma blanquísima de los mares al despertar de la aurora y el beso de la tarde junto con la sonrisa de un niño . . .

¿Qué más puedo ofrecerte? El corazón de los hombres, ¡no! . . . porque este siglo todo lo ha infectado y bullen todas las pasiones, imperando la crueldad . . .

Señor: haz que Tu rayo divino disipe todas las tristezas y desaparezca esta noche en que yace el mundo . . .

Señor: vuelve Tus ojos a esta estrella pequeñita, que en este período de transición se está despedazando por falta de Unión, Paz y Amor.

Y que la antorcha que encendió de nuevo Bahá'u'lláh sea el faro que ilumine el mundo y ante su luz se olviden los rencores, se desprecien las riquezas y las ambiciones, para que todos vivamos en perfecta armonía libres de Miseria, Temor, y de todos los prejuicios que separan a la humanidad, y que todo el mundo sea pronto un solo hogar.

Tú eres el Sublime, el Poderoso, el Grande ¡oh mi Dios!

Blanca V. Mejía¹ (Nicaragua)

¹ See 'In Memoriam', p. 550.

A Metropolis of Owls

. . . It was not the Black Dungeon of Tīhrán, for all its horrors and chains, which He (Bahá'u'lláh) named the Most Great Prison. He gave that name to 'Akká . . . Not He Himself alone but the Cause of God was in prison. George Townshend

Named by her past suitors 'Akká, Ptolemais, St. Jean d'Acre,
she is no beauty, this aged courtesan, meanly rouged by sun,
squalidly abandoned to beg her bread
with perversely tasteless baubles and tawdry bits of tarnished brass,
her historically frequented bed
the nest of roach and rodent.

The moon's cosmetic kindness does not erase
the horror-hollowed haggardness of her pocked, stone face.
The enthusiastic stars fail to cajole
nor can the soaring birdsong raise in her joyless breast
an answering trill.

The wafting apotropaic perfume of the Bahjí rose, seeking to condole,
pleads for entry at her unrelenting gate, but is turned back,
its forgiveness spent among children playing on Napoleon's Hill.

With disconsolate dusk the carnival of her bazaar subsides
leaving her in darkness, with no warming fire,
leaning toward the water's edge where the mortified day will expire.
Low-squatting, knees clasped to her thin unsuccouring chest,
she does not raise her bat-encircled head
at the hawk's cry,
nor heed the querulous questions of the owl.
The pale paste jewel of her lighthouse beckons wanly
but the senile, impotent mosque can only lewdly smile.

She does not see the stricken night huddling comfortlessly
 by her garment's soiled, unfastened hem
 nor hear her own demented keening echoed in the lamenting surf's low moan,
 much less gaze adoringly at Carmel entreating greenly
 from across the bay.
 Indifferent to the lascivious mist obscenely fingering her lank hair
 her stare is inward,
 fixed upon her private stunning grief,
 turned from the world,
 consumed beyond self-pity or contrition.
 She knows the moment when she chose her death,
 knows it, lives it nightly
 as the murmurous sin-whispering waves pile in, forty upon forty,
 restless with accusation :
 —the Cargo of cargoes ignominiously spewed ashore;
 —the metallic futile protest of the rusted chain;
 —the thickening indignation of the sordid, misled mob;
 —the unwilling lock-key turning in a prison cell;
 —the infamous farmán piously read—she knows it well,
 the parchment crackling wildly in her reeling brain;
 —the shattered skylight and the frail youth's twisted frame;
 —the mother's sob;
 and then,
 and then,
 Oh then, unbearably, the scratching of a Pen!

The dawn releases her to trinkets, plastic wares,
 the haggling of housewives,
 and leering merchants' trivial affairs.

She rises shivering, and disfiguring her face,
 rehearses a grotesque, coquettish smile
 for her reeking market-place;
 but leaving, looks back to where the denunciatory waves recede,
 her unspeakable, lip-locked, bosom-buried crime
 (till their eve's retelling)
 a secret aqueously kept:
 To have seen the loneliness of God
 and not have wept!

Roger White

Pas de Deux for the Divided Self

*Take the cup of the Testament in thy hands; leap and dance with
 ecstasy in the triumphal procession of the Covenant! 'Abdu'l-Bahá*

Had the King decreed my head upon the spear
 or bade me thrust my breast against the lance!
 So sweet a death, the martyr's circumstance,
 asked not of me. His enemies I fear
 not, nor a crimson end, life not so dear
 I'd not haste to die and thereby win His glance.
 Another madness summons me. I dance
 to music I but faintly, dimly hear
 and, dancing, slay my dearest, closest one;
 with every breath affirm this cruellest vow.
 Let lute and drum and cymbal sound, that none
 hear my weeping at this private death. How
 long the dance! Faltering, I leap and run:
 Do you weary yet, love? Do you tire now?

Roger White

The Dedication at Rabbit Creek
(of the National Ḥaziratu'l-Quds of the Bahá'is of Alaska)

i

The name of our Lord
Is as the sun in summer.
On light mornings with wings like razors
A rustle of gulls strikes the air.
The thin blood rises like smoke.

The cold beneath the river
Had darkened the water. The creek
Had eaten snow all day and gone black.
It glistened like glazed steel, strong, bent,
Lifted me seaward. The name of our Lord
Is as the sun in summer.

At the terminal's edge ice weighted the last buttercup.
Summer said to winter: behold,
I have waited all autumn to bring you
This five golden-petaled memento.

Already stretched aboard the plane
The crushed and broken fisherman
Waited his pain. In the air
I glimpsed the coast of the island
Struck by the first cold and bordered with fierce lace.
The flight was at night over water.
The full plane told me nothing.

ii

Lift if it can
Be lifted the heart weighted
With fear, the man
Shriveled to dust who was fated
For glory. Lift him
Or his brother who never surrendered
Yet dropped in defeat,
Who suffered the ordinary
Dimness and saw clearly only
The void in his purpose.

Wed us,
Muse, apothecary, enchantress,
To something.

'Teach!' she said and called it 'Love.'
'Teach!' she said and spoke of 'Praise.'
She said to us, 'Teach!' and wrote 'Protect.'
She said to us, 'Teach!'

How did we ever arrive
Forgetful of ourselves,
Together intent only on those four walls,
A roof, a door carved with fire,
A house grounded in glory.
All in it are lifted toward Heaven.

iii

The corners of this house are in Klukwan,
Ft. Yukon, Bethel, Akutan.
The roof leans over Hyدابurg,
And tips the ragged sea at Diomedé.
Carpets are green islands in this house
That has for windows glacial waterfalls,
And hallways where wide rivers go;
Rooms dense as forests, deep as coasts;
Light echoes from both sun and moon.

We cannot praise, we cannot,
Cannot dedicate, how celebrate?
This building is a corner of the earth.
No celebration can exalt its birth,
This Sacred Fold, this shelter from the wind,
Beyond the first expression of His mind:

'Exalt your effort and magnify your aims.'

Forever may He bless
This house without address
And bless its servants each
Who love, protect, praise, teach.

Ray Hudson (Alaska)

Dawn-Breaker¹

Ablaze
with candles sconced
in weeping eyes
of wounds,

He danced
through jeering streets
to death; oh sang
against

The drumming
mockery God's praise.
Flames nested in
his flesh

Fed the
fires that consume
us now, the fire that
will save.

Robert Hayden (United States)

¹ Ḥájí Sulaymán Khán. See *God Passes By*, pp. 77-78.
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permission.

Poems by Bernard Leach

Yin, Yang¹

Yin, Yang,
 Day and night,
 Sun and moon,
 Land and sea,
 Me and the not me.
 Perhaps the Lord
 His work to see
 Smiles in eternity.
 But here and now
 We laugh and cry
 Torn between duality.
 Oh God!
 To find the meeting place
 Once more
 In Thee.

Transmutation¹

When by sin
 I am furthest
 From my Lord
 He is nearest me,
 His feet so close behind.
 Thus, by contrast,
 Does He know Himself.
 Can there be light
 Without a shade
 In this our world?
 He made us
 'In His Own likeness'
 It is written,
 Hence direct knowing,
 A click of certitude
 Which states
 'I know that I know'.
 It shouts in the shell
 Of my ear,
 It is silent
 In the heart
 Of a stone,
 It bleats;
 Not the lamb,
 Nor yet the ewe,
 But that which is the Whole 'I am'.

Empty and Full

The time shall come
 When there shall be
 No Thee or me,
 But only Thee;
 Utterly to be empty
 Of myself
 Filled to the very brim
 By Thee.

Totality

He, in His totality, sees me
 And I with His borrowed eyes see Him
 He in His utter freedom gave this
 tentacle the choice
 To turn away,
 As I so often do.
 Yet at that worst moment
 He, with tenderest hand withheld,
 Awaits my free return,
 So loath am I
 To find Him
 With my inmost will.

A Potter's Cry

Oh God, that Thy heart-beat
 may be my heart-beat,
 informing my hands.

On the Martyrdom of the Báb²

They killed you once
 with wood and nails,
 hammers in place of swords,
 the tools of your trade;
 you hung heavily upon the branches of the tree of life,
 wood and nails
 could not support both God and man;
 only a handful of enemies,
 two thieves,
 and a few friends
 stood by
 to witness your agony
 while it lasted,
 to hear the final cry
 that split the Temple veil
 and raised the dead.
 This time
 a thousand rifles filled the air with smoke
 and, as it cleared,
 the dust that filled ten thousand watching eyes
 covered the sun in shadow
 as it hung, heavy and dim with blood
 upon a sky
 that was to know Hiroshima.

Denis MacEoin (United Kingdom)

¹ From *Drawings, Verse and Belief*, Adams and Dart, 1A Queen Square, Bath, Somerset. Reprinted by permission.

² Reprinted from United Kingdom *Bahá'í Journal*.

The Time of Turmoil¹

Yes, I remember certain things . . .
 I mean, that dreadful storm
 That swept so suddenly across Tabriz
 The whirlwinds seemed to come
 From everywhere at once
 Stinging the eyes and skin
 No one was able to escape
 It caused so much turmoil
 The sky, you see, completely dark
 From midday on, with quakes
 Such trembling of the earth
 And all the buildings shaking
 Damaging the wells
 We found no water fit to drink.

We left Tabriz a few days after that
 Before the pestilence
 Although my wife was ill
 And died of cholera on the way
 Our younger children crying
 Unable to buy food, starving
 And sleeping in the fields.
 Yes, it was a fearful time
 With distraught people searching . . .
 I wondered at the time
 What have we done
 To bring all this about.

You know, I did not see
 The act take place
 I thought it best to stay at home
 So many angry people in the streets.
 I heard it from my eldest son
 Who stood among the crowds
 Along the barrack roof
 He said they took the two of them
 The one they called the Báb
 And with His friend
 Suspended them by ropes
 Beside the square
 And fired shots until
 Their bodies mingled into one,
 Then dragged them both
 Through dusty streets
 To leave them on the moat
 Outside the city walls.

My eldest boy
 He followed them a way
 It was so dark by then
 The clouds of red and yellow dust
 Hiding the noonday sun
 He could not see a thing
 And so returned to home.
 My wife was much upset
 By things that he described
 It was as if she sympathized
 With what the Bábis taught.

I never learned to read
 Never really thought
 If what they did was wrong
 I live alone here
 In this empty place
 My children gone
 My eldest son teaching
 In a foreign post.
 I pray, of course,
 Five times a day
 And find but little peace
 Among these barren hills,
 Keeping a few goats.
 And now you come to me
 And mention many things
 Speak of a winter's end
 An Age of Spring, and these
 I barely understand,
 Forever talking of a Newer Day
 Just like my eldest son.
 It's made me wonder now—
 The persecutions still go on,
 I think—can it be true
 We killed a Messenger of God!

Larry Rowdon (Canada)

¹ The martyrdom of the Báb and His companion, Mírzá Muḥammad-'Alí-i-Zunúzí, 9 July 1850. See *God Passes By*, pp. 49–60.

The Pilgrimage²

This one bruised, was not immune, coughed, caught cold,
 Bought, sold, loved and forgot love; unable to find
 Anything worth discomfort he grew rich and old.
 Beauty assaulted his indifferent mind,
 Broke open his soul, tossed all his comfort out.

Now old, in love and foolish, he destroyed his eyes.
 Only the young give up their eyes for love.
 He crossed 'Iráq. His heart kept in disguise.
 His heart brightened in that blinding sun.
 He stood before the Prison of his Lord.

And stood before salt-scalded sea walls,
 Barred from light—Look there! Look there!—
 O unable to pass into prison,
 Unable to glimpse—There! At that window!—
 The gloveless hand waving him home.

Ray Hudson (Alaska)

² The pilgrimage of Ustád Ismá'íl-i-Káshí. See *God Passes By*, pp. 187–188.

The Pioneer

— for all the lovely ladies —

Ye are . . . the soft-flowing waters upon which must depend the very life of all men . . . the breezes of spring that are wafted over the world . . . Through you the countenance of the world hath been wreathed in smiles, and the brightness of His light shone forth. Bahá'u'lláh

i

You will meet her anywhere,
the river, market, roadside, bus,
in Carcross, Nairobi, Liverpool, Duluth,
and the old girl will be smiling: she knows.
The sincere costume, the workworn hands, say little.
Satin or leather, the good, earnest face
belongs on a chocolate box, affirms,
could endorse nutritional causes on billboards
or in glossy magazines;
but she has far greater power
than Westinghouse or General Mills.
I warn you, she is dangerous.
In her bag there is a weapon
more potent than a gun.
If her lips move noiselessly
she is not litanizing her grievances
nor reading subway signs.
She carries more than recipes in her head.

ii

It is fatal to speak to her,
no comment so mundane
she cannot bend it to her own design.
Chance a remark about the weather
and she may tell you of The Tempest,
leave you re-examining the roots of social unrest
and worrying about the fate of the House of Hapsburg.
She is not dismayed by headlines,
calls them as her witness,
carries answers like neat balls of coloured yarn,
familiarily handled, spun of truth.
The mysteries are few and she lives with them companionably,
sibyl or saint, mystic or madwoman,
in ready-made dress and sensible shoes.

iii

She has faced it, reconciled it all,
the whole human struggle,
the journey from the cave,
the love and the ashes,
the song and the blood,
the suffering, the stillborn, the greed;
ordered, forgiven, reconciled it all.
Her compassion spans eras and epochs,
finds room for Luther King, Lenin, Lao-tse,
all our lost leaders,
sorted, accommodated like the memory
of good or wayward children she has known; finds room
for the Aztec, Ibo, Tlingit, Vietnamese,
she might be one of them.
Fashions in indignation puzzle her.
It did not come as news that black is beautiful
(may be herself black);
knows Eskimos (or is one);
calls the Kalahari Bushmen brothers;

counts the Maoris as friends;
 would have shielded the hapless
 of Nagasaki, Warsaw, Buchenwald,
 with her own body, if she could.
 Long ago she wept and worked for causes
 not then named,
 knows symptom from disease
 and is not resigned to evil.

iv

No, you do not imagine her authority;
 dynasties might dissolve before it
 or her concern melt mountains.
 She is dangerous; she cannot be dismissed.
 Your eloquent despair does not dissuade her:
 ‘The future is inestimably glorious,
 and when one considers the life to come . . .’
 You will want to hurt her, destroy her dream,
 but her words hang like heavy golden pears
 and she knows your hunger.
 Even as you strike she heals you
 and in so doing heals herself.
 You may crush her but she will not die;
 she yields like grass
 and is as indestructible.
 She knows what you defend;
 many times a midwife, she understands rebirth.
 Your credentials don’t impress her; she tinkers with souls.

v

Do not accept the invitation to her home
 to meet her friend from Adelaide, Tīhrán, Kaduna;
 they are conspirators and drink from the same well.
 Her own certitude is baked
 into the cakes she serves with tea
 tasting of her own contentment
 that leaves you crazed,
 thirsting forever for assurance.
 Be warned, she is dangerous.

vi

The moment is selected.
 You will not see all heaven’s angels,
 all ancient good,
 the very weight of history
 rush to her support as she gathers breath
 (her smile never more gentle)—
 ‘Have you heard the Message of Bahá’u’lláh?’—
 nor will you know that God Himself
 throughout all worlds
 gives ear to your reply.
 I tell you, she is dangerous.

Roger White



Le Ballet Shayda, a dance company formed in the period 1973–1974, is based in Ottawa, Canada. The troupe's many performances, including presentations of dances with Bahá'í-inspired themes, before live audiences and on television, have provided considerable publicity for the Faith.

III
MUSIC

SJÅ GUD

NORWAY

Lasse Thoresen

Andante

Sang

1. Sjå _____

2. Sjå _____

Klaver

mp

rep. 3 times

Gud _____

Gud _____

simile

Sjå _____ Gud _____ Ver-da

Sjå _____ Gud _____ Vi er

li - der Fol - ket yn —
 ar - me ut - an Deg

kast i lå - ke kår
 vinn vi al - dri fram

8t *più lento*
f *mf rit. e dim.*

(1) Sjå Gud

Krig og u - rett

knu-gar

(2) Sjå Gud
a tempo
mp

vi er sva-ke gjev oss

Detailed description: This system contains two vocal lines and a piano accompaniment. The first vocal line (treble clef) has lyrics "(1) Sjå Gud" and "Krig og u - rett knu-gar". The second vocal line (treble clef) has lyrics "(2) Sjå Gud" and "vi er sva-ke gjev oss". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) includes a right-hand part with chords and a left-hand part with a melodic line. Dynamics include *mp* and *a tempo*. There are some accidentals like flats and naturals.

tungt

og gjer

dju -

hjelp av Di mi - -

mf *dim.*

Detailed description: This system continues the musical score. The vocal line (treble clef) has lyrics "tungt" and "og gjer dju -". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a right-hand part with chords and a left-hand part with a melodic line. Dynamics include *mf* and *dim.*. There are triplets in the piano part.

pe sår

lde hand

lde hand

f

Detailed description: This system continues the musical score. The vocal line (treble clef) has lyrics "pe sår" and "lde hand". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a right-hand part with chords and a left-hand part with a melodic line. Dynamics include *f*. There are triplets in the piano part.

Musical score for the first system, featuring piano accompaniment. The score is written in a key with two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature. It consists of a treble clef staff and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The piano part includes several triplet figures. Dynamic markings include *p* (piano), *f* (forte), *dim.* (diminuendo), and *rit.* (ritardando). A fermata is placed over the final measure of the system, with the number "81" written below it.

Men ik - kje sørg,o

Musical score for the second system, including vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in the treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in the grand staff. The lyrics "Men ik - kje sørg,o" are written above the vocal line. The piano part features a triplet in the bass clef and a melodic line in the treble clef. Dynamic markings include *p* (piano) and *mp* (mezzo-piano). The tempo marking *a tempo* is present. The instruction *con pedale* is written at the bottom right. A fermata is placed over the final measure of the system, with the number "81" written below it.

jor-das folk, eit ljøs er kveikt for de: Ba -

Musical score for the third system, including vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in the treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in the grand staff. The lyrics "jor-das folk, eit ljøs er kveikt for de: Ba -" are written above the vocal line. The piano part features a melodic line in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef. Dynamic markings include *f* (forte) and *cresc.* (crescendo). A fermata is placed over the final measure of the system, with the number "81" written below it.

- há u' lláh er kom-men

"Den

8t *tr* *mf* 19

3 3 *f*

stö - rste fred skal vakse fram

"Den min - dre fred kjem

tr *f* 19

3 3

snart i stand

All

krig

vil ver-te

lyst i

bann, og

8t 3 3 3 8t 3 3 3 *mf* *mp*

jor - da jor - da vert eit ei - na - ste

The first system of the musical score features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line consists of a single melodic line with lyrics. The piano accompaniment is written for both the right and left hands. It includes several triplet figures in both hands. A *p* (piano) dynamic marking is present at the beginning, and a *cresc.* (crescendo) marking appears towards the end of the system.

ei - nas-te | 1 land | 2 land.

The second system continues the musical score. The vocal line has two endings for the word "land". The piano accompaniment features a trill in the right hand and various dynamic markings including *mf*, *p*, and *f*. There are also triplet figures in the piano part.

The third system shows the piano accompaniment. It includes a *poco più lento* (slightly slower) instruction. The right hand features a trill, and the left hand has a melodic line. A *mf* dynamic marking is present.

The fourth system continues the piano accompaniment. It features triplet and quintuplet figures in both hands. A *dim.* (diminuendo) instruction is present. The system concludes with a final chord in the right hand.

DARKNESS HATH FALLEN UPON EVERY LAND

UNITED STATES

Prayer of Bahá'u'lláh from
"The Choice", a cantata

Rosamond Brenner

Moderato

Alto

(La la) *simile*

Bass

pp
p *cresc.* *f* *ff*

Soprano *mf*

Lau - ded be — Thy Name, O Lord my God! Lau - ded be — Thy

Alto *mp*

(Ah) *simile*

Tenor *mp*

(Ah) *simile*

Bass *mp*

(Ah) *simile*

Name! Lau - ded be — Thy Name, O Lord my God!

cresc. *f* *mf*

Lau - ded be — Thy Name! (Ah)

cresc. *mf* *mf*

(Ah)

cresc. *f*

Lau - ded be — Thy Name, O Lord, my God!

cresc. *mf*

ff

Lau - ded be Thy Name!

f

(Ah)

mf *f*

Lau - ded be — Thy Name! (Ah)

f

Lau - ded be Thy Name! (Ah)

Lau - ded be Thy Name! Lau - ded be Thy Name! Lau - ded be Thy Name!

simile

simile

simile

Slower

mf *mf*

(Ah) *mf* *mp* Lau - ded be ___ Thy

f *mf* (Ah) *mf*

Lau - ded be ___ Thy Name, O Lord, my God Lau - ded be ___ Thy

Lau - ded be ___ Thy

f *ff* *a tempo*

Name! Lau - ded be ___ Thy Name!

f *ff* *subito pp*

Name! Lau - ded be ___ Thy Name! Lau - ded be Thy Name!

f *ff* *pp*

Name! Lau - ded be ___ Thy Name!

Lau - ded be Thy Name! Lau - ded be Thy Name!

pp

Lau - ded be Thy Name!

Dark - ness — hath fall - en — u -

ppp

Lau - ded be Thy Name! (La, la, la, la, la) *simile*

Lau - ded be Thy Name!

- pon eve - ry land, dark - ness — hath

Alto

fall - en — up - on ev - e - ry land.

Tenor

mp

Dark - ness_ hath fall - en_ u - pon eve - ry

p
(La la, la, la, la) *simile*

p
(La, la, la, la) *simile*

p

land, dark - ness_ hath fall - en_ u -

mp

- pon ev - e - ry land, And the for - ces of

mp

mp

mp

mis - chief have en - com - passed

and the for - ces of mis - chief

all — the — na - tions and the for - ces of mis - chief

mp

mp

have en - com - passed all — the — na - tions,

have en - com - passed all — the — na - tions, *f* Dark - ness — hath

f

and the for - ces of

Alto

fall - en — u - pon eve - ry land,

Bass

mis - chief have en - com - passed all — the — na - tions, and the

dark - ness hath fall - en u - pon ev - e - ry

for - ces of mis - chief have en - com - passed

land, and the for - ces of mis - chief

all the na - tions. Dark - ness hath fall - en u -

and the for - ces of

have en - com - passed all the na - tions, and the for - ces of

- pon eve - ry land, dark - ness hath

- pon eve - ry land, dark - ness hath

mis - chief have en - com - passed all — the — na - tions.

mis - chief have en - com - passed all — the — nations, and the

fal - len — u - pon ev - e - ry land.

fal - len — u - pon ev - e - ry land.

mf Through them, how - ev - er, *f* I per -

for - ces of mis - chief have en - com - passed

p Dark - ness hath fall - en — u - pon eve - ry

p Dark - ness hath fall - en — u - pon eve - ry

- ceive the splen - dors of — Thy —

all — the — nations and the for - ces of mis - chief

land, dark - ness hath fall - en — u -

land, dark - ness hath fall - en — u -

wis - dom, *mf* through them, how -
 have en - com - passed all the nations and the for - ces of
 - pon ev - e - ry land. dark - ness hath
 - pon ev - e - ry land, dark - ness hath

- ev - er, *f* I dis - cern the
 mis - chief have en - com - passed all the nations and the
 fall - en u - pon eve - ry land,
 fall - en u - pon eve - ry land,

bright - ness of the light of Thy pro - vi - dence.
 for - ces of mis - chief have en - com - passed
 dark - ness hath fall - en u - pon ev - e - ry
 dark - ness hath fall - en u - pon ev - e - ry

mp
Through them, how - ev - er,
mp
all the na - tions. Dark - ness hath fall - en u -
pp
land, and the for - ces of mis - chief
pp
land, and the for - ces of mis - chief

mf
I per - ceive the splen - dors
pp
- pon eve - ry land dark - ness hath
have en - com - passed all the na - tions and the for - ces of
have en - com - passed all the na - tions and the for - ces of

of Thy wis - dom,
fall - en u - pon ev - e - ry land.
mis - chief have en - com - passed all the nations and the
mis - chief have en - com - passed all the nations and the

through them, how - ev - er, I dis -

mp Dark - ness hath fall - en u - pon eve - ry

for - ces of mis - chief have en - com - passed

for - ces of mis - chief have en - com - passed

- cern the bright - ness of the

land, dark - ness hath

all the na - tions, and the for - ces of

all the na - tions and the for - ces of

light of Thy pro - vi - dence.

fall - en u - pon eve - ry

mis - chief have en - com - passed

mis - chief have en - com - passed

f
 Dark - ness hath fall - en u -
 land, and the for - ces of mis - chief
 all the na - tions (La, la, la, la, la) *simile*
 all the na - tions

pon eve - ry land, dark - ness hath
 have en - com - passed all the na - tions and the for - ces of

fall - en u - pon ev - e - ry land.
 mis - chief have en - com - passed all the na - tions.

Slower
mf
 Through them, how - ev - er, I per - ceive the
 (Ah) *mp* *simile*
 (Ah) *mp* *simile*
 (Ah) *mp* *simile*

splen - dors of Thy wis - dom,

(La, la, la, la)

Detailed description: This system contains a vocal line and three piano accompaniment staves. The vocal line begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are "splen - dors of Thy wis - dom," with a long note on "dom,". The piano accompaniment consists of three staves: the top two are in treble clef and the bottom is in bass clef. The piano part features a steady bass line and chords in the right hand, including a prominent F# chord.

through them, how - ev - er, I dis -

simile (Ah) *simile*

Detailed description: This system contains a vocal line and three piano accompaniment staves. The vocal line continues with the lyrics "through them, how - ev - er, I dis -". The piano accompaniment continues with the same instrumental texture as the first system, providing harmonic support for the vocal melody.

- cern the bright - ness of the light of Thy

Detailed description: This system contains a vocal line and three piano accompaniment staves. The vocal line concludes with the lyrics "- cern the bright - ness of the light of Thy". The piano accompaniment maintains the same instrumental texture, supporting the vocal line with harmonic accompaniment.

pro - vi - dence. through them, how -

(La, la, la, la, la) through them, how -

through them, how -

ev - er, I per - ceive the splen - dors

- ev - er, I per - ceive the splen - dors

ev - er, I per - ceive the splen - dors

- ev - er, I per - ceive the splen - dors

of Thy wis - dom, through them, how -

of Thy wis - dom, through them, how -

of Thy wis - dom, through them how -

of Thy wis - dom, through them, how -

- ev - er, I dis - cern the bright - ness of the

- ev - er, I dis - cern the bright - ness of the

- ev - er, I dis - cern the bright - ness of the

- ev - er, I dis - cern the bright - ness of the

light of Thy pro - vi - dence.

light of Thy pro - vi - dence, pro - vi - dence

light of Thy pro - vi - dence.

light of Thy pro - vi - dence.

a tempo

Narrator: They that are shut out as by a veil from

Alto only

Dark - ness hath fall - en u -

subito pp

(La la la la la) *simile*

pp

Narrator: Thee have imagined that they have the power

- pon eve - ry land, dark - ness hath

to put out Thy light, and to quench Thy fire,

fall - en — u - pon ev - e - ry land.

and to still the winds of Thy grace.

p Dark - ness hath fall - en — u - pon eve - ry land,

pp (Ah) *simile*

pp (Ah) *simile*

pp

(Ah) *simile*

Nay, and to this Thy might beareth me

dark - ness hath fall - en — u - pon ev - e - ry

witness!

Stop music:

land, u - pon eve - ry land.

u - pon eve - ry land (Ah)

Narrator: Had not every tribulation been made the bearer of Thy wisdom and every ordeal the vehicle of Thy providence, no one would have dared oppose us, though the powers of earth and heaven were to be leagued against us. Were I to unravel the wondrous mysteries of Thy wisdom which are laid bare before me, the reins of Thine enemies would be cleft asunder.

Glorified be Thou, then, O my God! I beseech Thee by Thy Most Great Name to assemble them that love Thee around the law that streameth from the good-pleasure of Thy will, and to send down upon them what will assure their hearts.

Potent art Thou to do what pleaseth Thee. Thou art, verily, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.

mf Through them, how - ev - er, I per -

mp (Ah) Through them, - how -

mp (Ah) simile

(Ah) simile

ceive the splen - dors of Thy

- ev - er, I per - ceive the

mf Through them, how - ev - er,

mf Through them, how - ev - er,

wis - dom. Laud - ed be Thy Name

mf splen - dors of Thy wis - dom.

I per - ceive the splen - dors

I per - ceive the splen - dors

Laud - ed be Thy Name! Laud - ed be Thy Name! Laud - ed be Thy Name!

Laud - ed be Thy Name! Laud - ed be Thy Name!

of Thy wis - dom

of Thy wis - dom

Through them, how - ev - er, I dis -

Through them, how - ev - er,

Detailed description: This system contains four staves. The top staff is a vocal line starting with a forte (f) dynamic. The second staff is another vocal line, also starting with a forte (f) dynamic. The third and fourth staves are piano accompaniment, with the third staff being a treble clef and the fourth a bass clef. The lyrics are split across the vocal staves.

- cern the bright - ness of — the light — of — Thy

I dis - cern the bright - ness of — the

Detailed description: This system continues the musical score with four staves. The vocal lines continue with the lyrics. The piano accompaniment remains in the third and fourth staves. The lyrics are split across the vocal staves.

pro-vi - dence, — pro-vi - dence —

light — of — Thy pro-vi - dence, —

mf (Ah) —

mf (Ah) —

Detailed description: This system concludes the musical score with four staves. The vocal lines continue with the lyrics. The piano accompaniment remains in the third and fourth staves. The lyrics are split across the vocal staves. The dynamic marking *mf* (mezzo-forte) is present in the third and fourth staves.

O Lord my God!

f pro - vi - dence.

f Laud - ed be Thy Name,

f Laud - ed be Thy Name,

O Lord my God! *ff* Laud - ed *fff*

ff Laud - ed be Thy Name, *fff* Laud - ed

ff Laud - ed be Thy Name, *fff* Laud - ed

ff Laud - ed be Thy Name, *fff* Laud - ed

Laud - ed be Thy Name, Laud - ed

be Thy Name!

be Thy Name!

be Thy Laud - ed be Thy Name!

be Thy Name!

Í FJARLAEGD

ICELAND

(In the Distance)

Jonas M. Bjarnason

Andante

1. Svo oft í fjar-lægd má, Hey-ra rad-dir sem pig
 prá. O Ba-há'-u' lláh.
 En-ginn um sig veit, Né æs-ku sin-nar
 heit. O Ba-há'-u'-lláh.
 Chorus: O þú allt els-kan-di (echo)
 O þú sem lo-fa-dur ert
 fyr-ir pen-nan dag.

1. Svo oft í fjarlægð má,
 Heyra raddir sem pig prá.
 O Bahá'u'lláh.
 Enginn um sig veit,
 Né æsku sinnar heit.
 O Bahá'u'lláh.

Chorus:
 O þú allt elskandi (elskandi)
 O þú sem lofadur ert
 Fyrir Pennan dag.

2. Valdmestur þú ert,
 Allt hefur þú gert.
 Fyrir mannkyn allt.
 Verk Þín sanna má
 Ad frá gudi komstu frá.
 O Bahá'u'lláh.

3. Þínar kenningar
 Hljóma allstadar.
 O Bahá'u'lláh.
 Sem blóm í einum gard,
 Og öldur sama hafs.
 O Bahá'u'lláh.

1. So oft from far away
 One hears longing voices say
 O Bahá'u'lláh.
 No one knows from where
 Nor is anyone aware.
 O Bahá'u'lláh.

Chorus:
 Thou Who art all-loving (all-loving)
 Thou who art the Promised One
 For all mankind this day.

2. All-powerful Thou art
 With a message for the heart
 Of all mankind.
 Your writings testify
 That the voice of God is nigh
 O Bahá'u'lláh.

3. Your teachings are so rare
 And make music everywhere.
 O Bahá'u'lláh.
 Like leaves of just one tree
 And waves of the same sea.
 O Bahá'u'lláh.

UNIDOS SEREMOS FELICES

ECUADOR

Ralph Dexter

Chorus:

U - ni - dos se - re - mos fe -

- li - ces her - ma - nos de to - das las ra - zas.

Verse:

1. Si a - ma - mos a Ba - há - 'u' - lláh.

si o - be - de - ce - mos a Ba - há - 'u' - lláh.

Chorus Together we will be happy,
Brothers of all races.

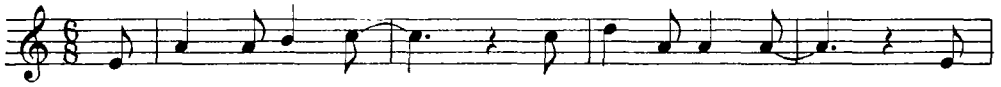
- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Si a - ma - mos a Bahá'u'lláh
Unidos por Bahá'u'lláh. | 1. If we love Bahá'u'lláh
If we obey Bahá'u'lláh. |
| 2. Guiados por Bahá'u'lláh,
Unidos por Bahá'u'lláh. | 2. Guided by Bahá'u'lláh,
United by Bahá'u'lláh. |
| 3. Toda religion es de Dios,
Adoramos todos a un mismo Dios. | 3. All religion comes from God,
We all worship the same God. |
| 4. Ahora ha venido Bahá'u'lláh
Reuniendo todos en la Fé Bahá'í. | 4. Now Bahá'u'lláh has come
Uniting all in the Bahá'í Faith. |

EL QUE HA MANDADO DIOS

ECUADOR

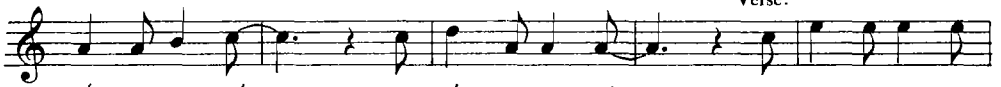
Raúl Pavón

Chorus:




A - lláh ' u ' Ab - há, ___ A - lláh ' u ' Ab - há, ___ A -


Verse:



- lláh ' u ' Ab - há, ___ A - lláh ' u ' Ab - há, ___ 1. El Que ha man - da -



- da Dios El Que ha man - da - do Dios Ha ve - ni - do ya ___ a la tie -



- rra Ha ve - ni - do ya ___ a la tie - rra.

2. Se llama Bahá'u'lláh
y ha venido ya a la tierra.

3. Ahora yo soy un Bahá'í
Por El que vino a la tierra.

Quechua translation:

1. Dios Taita Cachamún
Pay shamurcami cay alpaman.

2. Paipag shuti Bahá'u'lláh
Pay shamurcami cay alpaman.

3. Chaimanta canimi Bahá'í
Pay shamurcami cay alpaman.

English translation:

1. The One whom God has sent us
Comes with a great light for all people.

2. His name is Bahá'u'lláh
And He comes with the light for all people.

3. And now I am a Bahá'í
For He came to me and all people.

PASO A PASO

PUERTO RICO

Julio José Pérez Jr.

Moderato

Chorus:



Pa-so a pa-so por un ca-mi-ni-to, pa-so a pa-so con mis Ba-há-í-ci-tos.



Pa-so a pa-so con un gran a-mor, pa-so a pa-so ya no hay do-lor.



pa-so a pa-so ya no hay do-lor. No e.-sta-mos so-los, e-sta-mos u-



- ni - dos, no e - sta - mos so - los, so - mos a - mi - gos.

INKUGE Y'UBUROKORE

(The Ark of Deliverance)

RWANDA

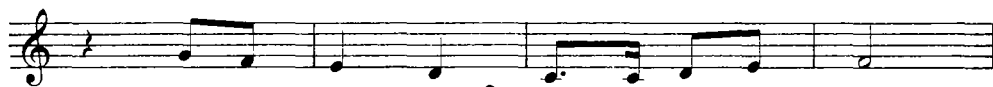
Kitoko Mangi



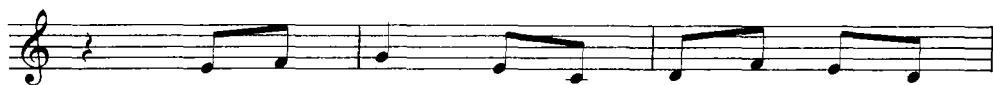
1. Ba - há' u' - lláh ya - te - ge - tse byo - se



U - mu - si w'i - za - ry'ur - a - ge - ze;



A - ba - ntu bo - se ba - be ha - mwe,



kan - di ba - reb 'u - bu - mwe mu - ma -



na. Ba - ntu ba Ba - há Ba - ntu bi - ma -



- na du - ku - zi - ma - na ku - bwa Ba - há'



u'lláh, Tu - la - ba - ba - há - í mu nku - ge -



- y' u - bu - ro - o - ko - re .

2. Twishimir'uwo musi mukuru
Uduh'ubuzima bwiteka,
Kuko twaba gamumwijima
Dor'u-munsi wukururageze.
3. Twihatire gukiza abandi
Bayo beye emuzindinzira
Bakuri krinzira y'imana
Ibajyana mu bwami wimana.
4. Muturebe tugeze mu nkuge
Tugende tugani y'imana,
Tulirimba 'Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá'.
Kandi hose tuvuga 'Alláh-u-Abhá'.

French translation:

1. Bahá'u'lláh a tout bien ordonné;
Par sa venue l'heure a sonné,
Que tous peuples soient dans l'unité
Et qu'en Dieu ils voient l'unicité.

REFRAIN:

Peuple de Bahá, peuple de Dieu!
Par Bahá'u'lláh rendons grace a Dieu!
Nous sommes Bahá' ís dans l'Arche de la délivrance.

2. Soyons tous tres fiers de ce grand jour,
Qui nous donne la vie pour toujours;
Car nous vivions dans l'obscurité
Mais voilà la jour de verité.
3. Efforçons-nous pour sauver les autres,
Egarés dans des chemins tout autres,
Qu'ils suivent le vrai sentier de Dieu,
Les menant au royaume de Dieu.
4. Nous voilà embarqués dans l'Arche,
Vers notre Dieu, faisons la marche,
En chantant 'Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá'
Et partout nous disons 'Alláh-u-Abhá'.

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH ASIFIWE

TANZANIA
Lyrics in Swahili

Words and music by Dominic
Kalulu and Bornhappy Sikazwe

Chorus:

Ba - há' u'lláh A - si - fi - we, Ba - há' u'lláh A - si - fi - we, Ba - há' u'lláh A - si - fi - we m - kom - bo - zi wa du - ni - a. 1. Ba - ba mun - gu wa ma - pen - zi, U - ni - sa - me zam - bi zan - gu, Mi - mi ki - po - fu ma - si - ki - ni mbe - le ya - ko.

Repeat Chorus

Chorus:

Bahá'u'lláh Asifiwe (3)
Mkombozi wa dunia.

1. Baba Mungu wa mapenzi,
Unisamene zambi zangu,
Mimi kípofu masikini mbele yako.
2. Utawala wa imani,
Umeisha unganisha,
Kwa kila mfasi wa mtume Bahá'u'lláh.
3. Baba Mungu waupendo
Ulisema mpendame,
Mkisha kupendama mitatuma roho yangu.

Rough translation:

Give praise to Bahá'u'lláh, we should do so.
How wonderful it is when we work together in
the Order of Bahá'u'lláh.
Father God, when we are united, then
the spirit comes down.

WARRIORS OF THE RAINBOW

UNITED STATES

Roger D. Olsen

Verse:



Vis-ions of a new day's dawn-ing stir with-in my mind, of



Peace to be and har - mo - ny for all of man - kind;

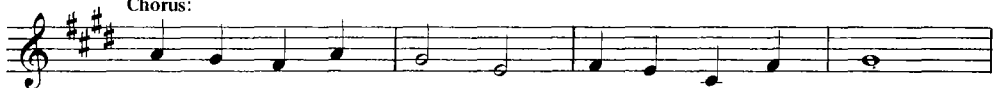


'Till love dwells in ev - ery breast, Peace our hearts a - dorn - ing,



God's own warr-iors take no rest, ride on un-til the morn - ing.

Chorus:



Warr-iors of the rain - bow raise your lan - ces high;



Pierce the veils of gloom and sad - ness o'er my bro-ther's eye.

2. The stars have fallen from the sky; the ancient hoop is broken.
The tribes are scattered far and wide, words of hope not spoken.
Look! the Light shed from the East upon our hills is breaking;
Come my brother, dance with me, for this my heart is aching.
3. Listen! you with ears to hear, the sky above is weeping;
Your brother lying in the dust is now in your keeping.
Let us rise with one accord, blest is our endeavor;
The road is called eternity, the direction is forever.

THE QUEEN OF CARMEL

UNITED STATES

Jeanne Rebstock Murday

1. Stand -ing on the Moun - tain Look -ing a - cross the
 bay _____ The Queen of Car - mel reigns _____ She
 reigns ma - jes - ti - cally. _____ Cry out O
 Zi - on! Cry out _____ to your Lord!
 Cry out O Zi - on! Cir - cle round in
 a - do - ra - tion, Cir - cle round your Lord. _____

2. Unto God the Lord of Lords
 Belong Kingdoms of earth and heaven.
 Land and sea rejoice this day,
 The day of revelation.
3. Robed in white and crowned in gold
 She stands for unity.
 God will sail His Ark on Thee,
 As mentioned in the Book of Names.

THE PRISONER

UNITED STATES

Dan Seals and John Ford Coley

Slowly

Flute

Guitar

Bm Bm^{sus}(9) Bm Bm^{sus}(9) Bm Bm^{sus}(9)

Bm Bm^{sus}(9) Bm Bm^{sus}(9) Bm Bm^{sus}(9) Bm

Take us to the Pris - oner, let us gaze

Bm/A G D/F

— in - to His eyes to see what kind of man... it takes a na -

Em C(9) Bm

— tion to de - spite — take us to the pris - oner let us

Bm/A G D/F

Look u - pon... His face... to see why twen - ty thou - sand men... would

Em C(9) C-5(9) C

glad - ly take... His place... Won't

G G D/F G G/A

some - one give a drink... to Him, - Re -

D/F Em C(9) G C/G G ⊕ C/G G C/G G

- move the chains and let Him live? let Him live

Cm

We know where we're go___ in' for we've heard the new__ wind blow - in' and we've

G D/F Em Em/D C

got to know___ for our - selves it won't help to list - en to some-one

Fmaj7 Bm E G A Bm Bm^{sus(9)} Bm Bm^{sus(9)} *D.S. al* ⊕

else.

CODA C/G G C(9) G C/G G C/G *rit.* G C G

Let Him live let Him live.

2. Take us to the Prisoner
 Let us listen to His voice
 To see why worlds of wisdom's
 In a cell without a choice.
 Take us to the Prisoner
 Torn and bent beneath the chains
 We wonder if the world is really
 Worthy of His name.
 Won't someone give a drink to Him
 Remove the chains and let Him live?
3. Take us to the Prisoner
 With His eyes so full of grace
 The priests have lied and kings have died
 Filled with their own disgrace.
 Won't someone give a drink to Him
 Remove the chains and let Him live?

HE IS SO QUIET

UNITED STATES

Judith Garis

Tranquillo

Am

He is so qui - et

Dm Am

He does not stomp or scream or cause a ri - ot

Dm Am

But at the thun - der of His words all hearts are sha - ken,

E

I'm not mis - tak - en _____

Am Dm

He is so qui - et Yet His mel - o - dy still

Am Dm

lin - gers round my head _____ His song could raise the

Am E

sleep - ing or the dead, _____ He must be Ho - ly

Am

He must be Ho - - -

Dm

ly. He's such a young man But I've

Am

nev - er seen an - oth - er do what He can

Some-thing's chang - ing. The stars have left their
 hea-vens, re - ar - rang - ing. En - large our eyes so we may see their
 splen - dour. Such strength is ten - der Sur -
 - ren - der! He's such a young man,
 But I've nev - er seen a - no - ther do what He can He must be
 Ho - ly He must be Ho - ly.

Chords: Dm, Am, Dm, Am, E, Dm, Am, E, Am

GOD IS SUFFICIENT UNTO ME

UNITED STATES

Kerry McCord

Softly $\text{♩} = 60$
A capella unison voices

God is suf - fi - cient un - to me _____ He

ve - ri - ly is the All - suf - fi - cing. In Him _____

_____ let the trust - ing trust, in Him let the trust - ing

trust _____ God is suf - fi - cient un - to me. _____

_____ He ve - ri - ly is the All - suf - fi - cing. In

Him _____ let the trust - ing trust in Him let the trust - ing

_____ (Hi - - - im) let the trust - ing trust in Him let the trust - ing

trust _____ God is su - fi - cient un - to me _____

trust _____ God is su - fi - cient un - to me _____

God is su - fi - cient un - to me _____

Am C G Am C Am

(me) He ve - ri - ly is the all su - fi - cing. In

(me) He ve - ri - ly is the all su - fi - cing. In

(me) He ve - ri - ly is the all su - fi - cing. In

C G Am 1. G

Him _____ let the trust - ing trust, in Him let the trust - ing

Hi - - - im) let the trust - ing trust, in Him let the trust - ing

Him _____ let the trust - ing trust, in Him let the trust - ing

Am Am 2. G Am

trust _____ Him let the trust - ing trust, in

trust _____ Him let the trust - ing trust, in

trust _____ Him let the trust - ing trust, in

G Am G G Am Am

Him let the trust - ing trust, in Him let the trust - ing trust _____

Him let the trust - ing trust, in Him let the trust - ing trust. _____

Him let the trust - ing trust, in Him let the trust - ing trust. _____

YÁ BAHÁ'U'L-ABHÁ

To the American Bahá'í pioneers in Switzerland

SWITZERLAND

Daniel Schaubacher

Largo ♩ = 60

Yá Ba - há 'u'l - Ab - há, Yá Ba - há 'u'l - Ab - há,

- há, Yá Ba - há 'u'l - Ab - há,

Yá Ba - há 'u'l - Ab - há, Yá Ba - há 'u'l - Ab - há,

- há, Yá Ba - há 'u'l - Ab - há,

Yá Ba - há 'u'l - Ab - há, Ya Ba - há 'u'l - Ab - há,

há, Yá Ba - há 'u'l - Ab - há

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, PE A GALO 'OE FA'APEFEA?

SAMOA

Tupuola Sione Malifa

Slowly

Ba - há - 'u' - lláh, Ba - há - 'u' - lláh,

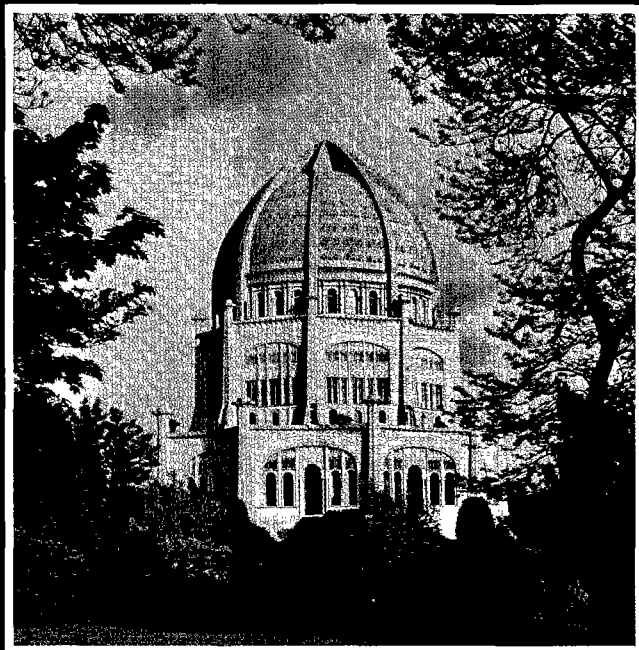
Pe a ga - lo 'oe fa' - ap - e - fea?

Lo'u mi - ta - mi - ta - ga in - á ia tu - mau pe - a,

Lau Ta - gá - va - i in - a ne'i toe av - e' - se - a.

Translation:

Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'u'lláh,
 How can I ever forget You?
 Let my pride remain in You forever,
 Thy World Order stays in me not to be removed.



A Token of our Highest Hope

When the French-Canadian architect Louis Bourgeois conceived the nine-sided Bahá'í House of Worship, he dreamed of a new world order in which America would play a significant part. His dream was inspired by Bahá'u'lláh, founder of the Bahá'í Faith, who proclaimed over a century ago the advent of the unity of mankind.

Rising on the shores of Lake Michigan, in Wilmette, Illinois, amid exquisite formal gardens, the Bahá'í House of Worship welcomes all people to a haven of unifying thought and experience within its nine doors. This unusual edifice, recognized worldwide as structurally unique, represents a major architectural achievement of America's two hundred years. Yet the ideal it expresses—the oneness of mankind—remains among the unfinished business of the democratic experiment which began in 1776. It stands, then, as a token of the highest hope of the peoples of the United States and the entire world—the hope for universal peace and unity.

The members of the Bahá'í Faith in over 5,000 localities throughout the Republic salute the nation on its Bicentennial and are proud and happy in sharing this worthy token of unity with all Americans.

All are especially invited during this Bicentennial year to visit the Bahá'í House of Worship, just north of Chicago, in the heart of America.

For further information write: Bahá'í Information Office, 112 Linden Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois 60091